

BRYCHEINIOG

Cyfnodolyn Cymdeithas Brycheiniog
The Journal of the Brecknock Society

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Editor

MIKE ALUN WILLIAMS

*Dedicated to Mr Ken Jones on his retirement as President
of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, April 2017*

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CYMDEITHAS BRYCHEINIOG A CHYFEILLION YR AMGUEDDFA
THE BRECKNOCK SOCIETY AND MUSEUM FRIENDS

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EDITORIAL

After my appointment as Editor of *Brycheiniog*, I reflected on how Brecknock Society and Museum Friends council members might react to my new role. In particular, I thought about Ken Jones, at that time, our President. What would he think of me, with his great knowledge and experience of everything ‘Breconshire’? I felt like a mere interloper at the feet of a colossus. The first event I attended after becoming Editor was with trepidation. Maybe, I thought, I would just bypass Ken for the duration of the evening. I need not have worried. Almost as soon as I had entered the room, a voice rang out above the general chatter. It was Ken. “Ah! There is the Editor of *Brycheiniog*”. He bustled over to discuss his thoughts for an article: would I be interested? As if he had to ask!

This volume of *Brycheiniog* is fittingly dedicated to Ken, who stood down from his role as President at last April’s AGM. Others, more qualified than me, have written an appreciation of his time with the Society and his many achievements. By happenstance, Ken also appears as author in this journal, providing a paper in appreciation of another great Breconshire personality: Sir John Lloyd. Two great men bookending the journal of the Society they led for so many years. It is a privilege to offer this volume of *Brycheiniog* to Ken in recognition for all he has given the Society, and all he has given to this Editor in encouragement and support. *Thank you, Ken.*

Those who attended the annual Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture in March 2017 will remember Rowan Williams holding us spellbound as he read work by Henry Vaughan and George Herbert, offering his thoughts on the two great poets. What many attending may not have realised at the time is that we had asked Theatr Brycheiniog to record the talk, which they did. After having the lecture transcribed, and after Dr Williams kindly filled in gaps missed by the recording, the result forms the first article in this volume. As Vaughan himself might say, “Holy writing must strive (by all means) for perfection and true holiness, that a door may be opened to him in heaven” (*Silex Scintillans, &c: Sacred Poems and Pious Ejaculations*, p. 10). Dr Williams achieves this to all our benefit.

Taking the modern A40 past Vaughan’s grave at Llansantffraed Church, a driver does not have to be speeding to arrive quickly at Crickhowell and the landscape of our next article by Pamela and Martin Redwood. After discovering a neglected custumal relating to Crickhowell Manor in the National Library (a sixteenth-century translation of a lost original in Latin, thought to date to the thirteenth century), Pamela Redwood set about translating it. This article recounts and explains what she found. It is also supplemented by a thumbnail biography of Sir Hugh Turberville, part of a larger study, who was almost certainly the author of the custumal. Medieval life has never felt more immediate.

If thirteenth-century Wales was a turbulent time, the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were not much better, particularly for the Anglican Church. In our next article, Ann Selwood introduces us to three rectors who held the Parish of Penderyn in the hundred years from 1830 to 1930. It sounds all a bit parochial, until you realise that the concerns and challenges of their lives mirror wider events in Wales as a whole. These were Anglican clergymen struggling with the rise of the Nonconformists, the fall and limited recovery of the Church of England in Wales, with its unwieldy parish structure, over-politicised (and mostly English) bishops, and unenthusiastic clergymen. Eventually, events moved to disestablishment and the old endowments to the Church were secularised, the effects of which the Anglican community is still feeling today. It is a fascinating tale of our recent past; I was completely engrossed by Rev. Llewelyn Jenkins' outburst at one particular funeral. He arrived late, always. His congregation knew that, but the mainly Nonconformist funeral party did not. Read the article to find out what happened next.

From actual history to faux-history; it is unlikely that anyone reading *Brycheiniog* has not heard of J. R. R. Tolkien and his *Lord of the Rings* books. Many of you will know the local tradition that Buckland in Middle-Earth is based on Buckland in Breconshire, but possibly without seriously weighing up the evidence or thinking about the reason for the connection. Seamus Hamill-Keays uses his article to do both. In a carefully researched argument, the author proposes that Tolkien visited the area when he was 13 years-old and that the visit, and his encounters, stayed with him until he came to write his epic many years later. Seamus Hamill-Keays has not yet found the 'smoking-gun' that would confirm the visit (the evidence is compelling but conjectural) but research is continuing, and we will provide an update if one is found.

Tolkien's visit to Wales, as envisaged in this article, took place in 1905, less than ten years before the terrible storm that rolled across Europe, manifesting itself in World War I. The centenary of the start of the war, as well as specific battles fought, has led to several publications outlining its effects on our local area (two are reviewed in this volume of *Brycheiniog*, and two in 2017). In our next article, Ryland Wallace focuses on the experiences of people who rarely feature in other works on war: women. It might have been the men that fought, but women also died for the war effort and their sacrifices should not be overlooked. There are harrowing tales of loss, as well as a growing realisation that the mobilisation of women meant that things could never go back to how they were. And we know they did not. For instance, this volume of *Brycheiniog* comes out in the year in which we celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage.

Women, in the guise of Princess Marchell and her 12 handmaidens, form a central part of Brynach Parri's article on the Companions of Anlach (Cydmeithion Anlach). Marchell, daughter of King Tewdrig of Garth Madran, fled to Ireland to escape a disaster in the kingdom. She stayed with the Déisi,

landless Irish, until they all sailed for Dewisland in Pembrokeshire. There, Marchell married Anlach (in one version of the story) and bore a son, Brychan. Since he was heir to Garth Madrun (the only grandchild of Tewdig), Anlach (and another 12 companions) returned to our county to guarantee Brychan's dynasty (and the naming of the county in his honour). On the back of this story, the author proposes, we can trace Ogam inscriptions, that adorn monumental stones, from Pembrokeshire up into Breconshire.

Some of those stones now reside in our county museum, which, as you will read in our reports, is now not far from its reopening. Ken Jones, our man of the volume, writes about the founding of the first museum in Glamorgan Street and the huge role played by Sir John Lloyd in getting it up-and-running. The first accession was the Llangorse log-boat: the actual boat is illustrated in Ken Jones' Note and Query, and a picture of a replica is to be found on the cover.

Our letters section provides an update from Glyn Mathias on Joseph Cobb, who would certainly have bought the English Congregational Chapel in Glamorgan Street had he known it was wanted for a new museum. He would have then held the property to ransom, just as he did with the property earmarked for the route of a new railway. No wonder he was Breconshire's first multi-millionaire.

Reviews complete your journal and I hope, as always, you will be delighted with the outcome.

Now, before, I hand you over to our Chairman, John Gibbs, for his annual report, we have a tribute to Ken Jones, made on his retirement as President of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, and marking the dedication to him of the 2018 volume of *Brycheiniog*.

It is with grateful appreciation that I acknowledge grants towards the publication of this volume of Brycheiniog from Brecon Town Council and the Community Foundation in Wales under the Welsh Church Acts legislation. Thank you.

KEN JONES: A BRIEF APPRECIATION

This short feature is adapted from the speech given by John Gibbs at the 2017 AGM on the occasion of Ken Jones' standing down as President of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends (BS&MF).

Ken Jones served for 20 years as Chairman and then nine years as President of the BS&MF. There are so many things to which one could refer in a brief note of appreciation, but I will pick out just a few.

First, there has been his persistence and position of authority in the matter of the refurbishment of the Museum & Art Gallery, which is now coming to fruition. And, here, his masterly grasp of the whole historic sweep of affairs has been vital. This includes his knowledge of how the Museum originated, both from documents, and from his recollections as young boy of visiting this building, 'The Muse', when it was the museum.¹ Moreover, his knowledge is not just of the Museum building but of the Museum contents: how they came to us, and under what terms. These are important points both for the past and, no doubt, for the future.

Secondly, there has been his initiation of the Sir John Lloyd memorial lectures. Establishing them was a masterstroke in terms of the reputation of the Society. Thus, when writing to Dr Rowan Williams 18 months ago to invite him to give the 20th Sir John Lloyd Lecture, it gave me great pleasure to be able to say that, "we are inviting you to deliver what has become recognised as the as one of the foremost annual public lectures in Wales in the field of culture and history". Elizabeth Siberry used similar words when inviting Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, then the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, to give the 21st lecture in March 2018. The reputation of the lecture must have greatly influenced the willingness of these eminent people to accept!

Thirdly, there is his standing as a scholar. Those of us who have heard his remarkable series of lectures to the BS&MF on the eighteenth-century men of Breconshire who were employed by the East India company, are well aware of the diligent and imaginative investigations he has carried out over the years. Accounts of some of this have appeared in *Brycheiniog*, and much more is being prepared for publication. He is an inspiration to the aspiring researcher!

Ken has announced that, after standing down as President, he does not wish



to be a member of the Executive Council. However, he is happy to be our 'Honorary Archivist' and to make his wealth of knowledge available to us. I have no doubt that we will draw on it frequently.

For example, one of the consequences of being Chairman of the BS&MF is that my telephone number and email address appear on the website and, every now and then, I get an interesting enquiry.

Just such an enquiry concerned the 'Dan-y-Gaer Mill', a little below the Museum in Danygaer Road. My internet contact, Mr Norman Barnes, wished to know if it was originally part of an adjacent brewery. He said, "The Brecon Brewery Co. was certainly trading here in 1892, when (according to the date-stone) the 'mill' was erected. Furthermore, the building looks very much like a typical tower-type brewery which would have lent itself ideally to the gravity-fed brewing process. Any information would be very welcome."

Well, of course, I turned to Ken. Here is his response:

All the information that I can give at present is that Dan-y-Gaer became the seed and corn mill of Evan Morgan who was a former insurance agent in Tredegar. His son, Ivor, and my father were close friends, as my brother and I were with Ivor's children. I recollect my father saying that Evan Morgan came to Brecon just before or very close to the outbreak of World War I and acquired what became the corn mill. He then made a substantial fortune supplying the army with corn for horses. The Morgans became a significant family in Brecon, Ivor was a town and county councillor for many years and was later mayor.

And then again, a little later, another email to Mr. Barnes,

At last I have a little more information about Dan-y-Gaer mill. Joan Morgan, the granddaughter of Evan Morgan, who is now 87 and lives in London, remembers going into the corn mill and that in the early days there was equipment which might have been used by a brewery. I well remember around 1937 going with my father into the small front office of the corn mill but I am not sure which of the premises, the current furniture shop and small restaurant, it was. As you know the furniture shop was the original theatre and at the store room at the back of the shop you can see how it had been used for this purpose.

Is that not wonderful?! And so very typical!

¹ The AGM took place in 'The Muse', the building that formerly housed the Brecknock Museum, Powell, P. 2012. A Brief History of the Former Glamorgan Street English Congregational Church, Brecon, and the Subsequent Use of its Chapel as a Museum. *Brycheiniog* 43: 15-18.

Ken, we are honoured to dedicate this volume of Brycheiniog to you in thanks for all you have done for the Society over the years and we look forward to further gems—indeed, whole treasures—of wisdom and knowledge in the future. Thank you so much.

REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2017

This is the fourth year in which a Chairman's report on the activities of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends (BS&MF) has appeared in *Brycheiniog*. At our AGM in April, Ken Jones stood down as President. In recognition of the vital role he has played in the Society for so many years, we are dedicating this volume of *Brycheiniog* to him and a tribute can be found in these pages. We are very pleased to record that he will be continuing to provide a service to the Society under his suggested title of 'Honorary Archivist'. In his stead, I am delighted to welcome Glyn Mathias as President. Glyn has served on the Executive Council for several years and brings relevant experience, local knowledge, and national standing to the position. Kate Bosset stood down after four years on the Executive Council and we thank her warmly for her contribution. Diana Altmeyer rejoined the Council after a gap of several years and we are very pleased indeed to welcome Jan Bailey and Paul Silk.

'Y Gaer'

A great deal has happened during this past year to, what has previously been known, as the Cultural Hub, Brecon. The Museum & Art Gallery is beginning to emerge from scaffolding after cleaning and repair of the stonework, and there has been a very successful 'topping out' ceremony for the new building that will house the Brecon Library. For a more detailed account of progress, please see the report of Nigel Blackamore, the Senior Curator. For the BS&MF, Mervyn Bramley remains our principal link with the Powys County Council (PCC) project team over the redevelopment, and we are most grateful to him for his work.

A financial contribution from the BS&MF ensured that a proper process of consultation and debate preceded the choice of the name for the Cultural Hub Brecon. While some may not have welcomed the name *y Gaer*, I myself respond positively to it, feeling, *inter alia*, that it shows that what may start as the camp of an invader can become, through the processes of assimilation, a manifestation of the rich cultural mixture that characterises Breconshire today.

As many readers of this journal will know, the BS&MF and the Brecknock Art Trust are the local funding partners for that part of the *y Gaer* project that involves the renovation of the Museum. In order to keep down costs, in what are very difficult times for local authorities, some items were left out of the main project, leaving a funding requirement for distinct 'additional projects'. Collectively, the partners in the scheme have taken up the challenge of raising these funds—together totalling some £300,000—grouping them together under the title 'Enhancing the Visitor Experience (EVE)'. Early in the year, I

accepted the responsibility of chairing the relevant PCC project group, which reviews and stimulates progress in this matter.

For its part, the BS&MF, taking advantage of its status as a charity, is seeking to raise £110,000 of this sum, specifically for the Museum & Art Gallery. The fund-raising falls under two main headings: the Interpretation project (£55,400) and the Conservation & Display project (£54,600). We are seeking support from a major charitable foundation for the former project and are approaching a range of individuals, local family trusts etc. for help with the latter.

Elements in the Conservation & Display project include the purchase of some additional cabinets, including a specially-designed cabinet for the storage and display of works in the very important water-colour collection. Among the Museum's treasures urgently in need of conservation work are John Thomas' bronze statue of Boadicea (Fig. 1) and a straw work box (Fig. 2), made by a

French prisoner of war c. 1812. Appeal letters were sent out to members of the BS&MF, and to a wider selection of potential donors, and an 'information evening' was held in September at Fennifach by kind permission of David and Gloria Jones Powell. As of the end of 2017, just under £25,000 had been raised and it is known that several local Trusts will be considering our appeal



Figure 1. Statue of Boadicea, John Thomas.
Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery



Figure 2. Straw Work Box.
Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery

shortly. In addition, the BS&MF Council has decided to commit £10,000 of its remaining uncommitted funds to this project

It is fully recognised that once the Museum & Art Gallery has reopened, volunteers will play a key role in welcoming people and in helping them make the most of their visit. In this connection, we held a well-attended meeting in October and were very encouraged when a show of hands indicated that about three-quarters of those present would be interested in the idea of becoming a volunteer in the reopened museum. This being in addition to the very important team of volunteers who are already doing invaluable work on the collections while they are in store in Watton Mount. PCC together with the BS&MF and other local partners will announce details of this volunteering role in the coming months.

The 20th Sir John Lloyd Lecture: Dr Rowan Williams: A Poet's View of Henry Vaughan

On 24 March, a full Theatr Brycheiniog was privileged to hear a spell-binding lecture in which Dr Williams compared the poetry of our own Henry Vaughan with that of the great George Herbert. The audience had been given copies of the relevant poems and these were an invaluable aid to appreciation and understanding. As is his normal practice, Dr Williams spoke without a script



Figure 3. Rowan Williams giving his address at Llansantffraed Church. Mike Williams

but, with his permission, a recording of the talk was made, and we are delighted to be able to include it in this year's volume of the journal.

Just a few weeks later, Rowan Williams was again in Breconshire; this time giving the address at the Annual Memorial Evensong service for Henry Vaughan that takes place at Llansantffraed Church on the Sunday nearest his death: this year 23 April. It was an all-ticket event with the choir of St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny, and Dr Williams speaking on the images of human life in Vaughan's poem *Quickness*. (Fig. 3).

We were delighted that, Mrs Anne Penton, a representative from the Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship joined the BS&MF President in laying wreaths on Vaughan's grave (Sassoon, of course, wrote a poetic tribute to Vaughan after visiting his grave in 1924) (Fig. 4). After the service, Dr Williams opened the new Henry Vaughan Visitor Area that is situated at the rear of the Church and to which the BS&MF made a contribution.



Figure 4. From right to left: Rev Kelvin Richards (Priest in Charge of Llansantffraed Church) Dr Rowan Williams, Mr Glyn Mathias (President of the BS&MF) and Mrs Anne Penton (Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship).
Mike Williams

Two conferences in conjunction with University research groups

Windows on the World: C18th & C19th travellers to and from Breconshire

Having, in 2016, developed a very happy working arrangement with Gavin and Davina Hogg at Penpont House over the Penpont 350 celebration,¹ we used the facilities there on Saturday 6 May for a very well-attended conference

in conjunction with the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies at the University of Wales (CAWCS). This linked in to their Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project: Curious Travellers: Thomas Pennant and the Welsh and Scottish Tour 1760–1820.

Society members contributed significantly, with William Gibbs speaking about the artist, fisherman, and antiquarian Sir Richard Colt Hoare (Fig. 5) and Elizabeth Siberry about the travels to Persia of Sir William Ouseley of Crickhowell.² Jonathan Williams gave a delightful local flavour to the occasion with his account of the tour journals and sketchbooks of the Penpont family; this talk being linked to an exhibition designed and mounted by Jonathan. From CAWCS, Mary-Ann Constantine gave a talk ‘The mosquito genus called tourists: Theophilus Jones and responses to the Welsh Tour’, while Elizabeth Edwards spoke on ‘Curious travellers to Brecon and South Wales’. There were two other papers. Peter Wakelin spoke to ‘That constant scene of action’: industrial tourism in Brecknock’, and Michael Freeman to ‘Landladies, harpers and guides: providing services for tourists in Wales, 1770–1870’.



Figure 5. Watercolour of Llangynidr Bridge nicely illustrating the theme of the talk by William Gibbs ‘Richard Colt Hoare: Artist, Fisherman and Antiquarian’.

Brecknock Art Trust

Justice and Joy: Breconshire estates from the perspectives of landlord and tenant

We were at Penpont again on Saturday 9 September; this time for a conference in conjunction with the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates (ISWE) at the

University of Bangor (the title of the conference came from a remark of T. J. Wheldon, quoted by John Davies in his masterly 2004 Sir John Lloyd lecture³). We were delighted to welcome participants from across Wales to this event.

There was an introductory talk by Shaun Evans, Director of ISWE, showing how one can investigate the history, culture and landscapes of Wales through the 'prisms' of estates. Contributions also came from staff at the National Library and Powys Archives. However, almost all the other papers were given by members of the Society. Jonathan Williams talked about the history of the Penpont Estate⁴ (Fig. 6), Glyn Mathias spoke on Joseph Cobb of Brecon, entrepreneur and castle owner,⁵ Miriam Griffiths on the Macnamaras of Llangoed,⁶ and David Raikes on his own family at Treberfydd. A tenant's view was presented by Alison Noble; this drawing on the 1930–1950 memories of Viv Parry who grew up on the Venables-Llewelyn Estate, Merthyr Cynog. There was also a tenant's perspective to Nigel Clubb's talk on the 1915 disposal of the Breconshire part of the Tredegar estate.⁷ Rosemary Evans, past mayor of Brecon, described starting her working life as an indoor servant in a large country house.

This conference formed the Society's contribution to the Brecknock History Festival, arranged by the Brecknock History Forum, an informal body that links all the local history societies in Breconshire.



Figure 6. Penry Williams III, seen here in his Lord Lieutenant's uniform, c. 1836, featured in both the talks given by Jonathan Williams at the Penpont conferences.

Jonathan Williams

Other meetings of the Society during the year

As has happened in several previous years, we began 2017 with a talk by Ken Jones. This January, the theme was 'Captain Frederick Jones: adventures in the East India Company and diary accounts of social life in Brecon 1789–1827'. In February, Mervyn Bramley spoke to us on the theme 'Landscape of three Marcher poets: the border country of George Herbert, Thomas Traherne, and Henry Vaughan'. In June, some 25 members of the Society had a fascinating visit to Hay Castle to learn about the major refurbishment work that is being undertaken there. We had a most informative and stimulating guide in the Project administrator Mari Fforde. Our November meeting was a sequel to the meeting in November 2016 on the Brinore Tramroad that connected to the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal at Talybont. On this occasion, David Viner and David Morgan of the Canals and Rivers Trust gave us an excellent account of the importance of limestone in the economy of the canal

and of the remarkable series of lime-kilns that were built at strategic points to enable its conversion to quick-lime.

With the pressure of other things, the 'Buildings of Breconshire' group has not met during the year, but we hope for further meetings in 2018. In the last issue of our Journal, I wrote about the extraordinary research on our buildings conducted during the 1960s by Stanley Jones and John Smith.⁸ At that time, I noted the very recent death of John Smith and I must now record the death of Stanley Jones, at the age of 90. He was the draughtsman of the pair⁹ and together they formed a remarkable team to whom we in Breconshire owe a great debt of gratitude.

Reports on the Victor Jones History Project Competition and on the Roland Mathias Poetry Prize for 2017 appear elsewhere in the Journal.

In summary, 2017 was again a busy and productive year. For support and encouragement, I would like to thank all the members of the Executive Council, and especially our Programme Secretary, Elaine Starling, and our Executive Council Secretary, Gwyneth Evans.

JOHN GIBBS

Notes

¹ Gibbs, J. 2017. The Chairman's report for 2016. *Brycheiniog* 48: 7-12, for more details.

² Siberry, E. 2013. From Crickhowell to Teheran: The Life and Travels of Sir William Ouseley. *Brycheiniog* 44: 77-90, for more on Ouseley.

³ To paraphrase the quotation: For a tenant the payment of the rent is an act of justice, but the purchase of the freehold is an act of joy. (T. J. Weldon to the Commons Select Committee on Town Holdings in 1887, as quoted in, Davies, J. 2004. The Landed Families of Breconshire. *Brycheiniog* 36: 69-82. Landlords, no doubt, also had experience of justice and joy!

⁴ Jonathan Williams' paper contained much new information but an introduction to the subject can be found in Williams, J.P.D. 2012. *Penpont: History, Buildings, Landscape, People*. The Penpont Estate.

⁵ Mathias, G. 2017. Cottages and Castles: Glimpses of Victorian Brecon and Some of its Prominent Citizens Through a Study of One Property in the Nineteenth Century. *Brycheiniog* 48: 131-47, and in Letters, this volume, for more on Joseph Cobb.

⁶ Miriam Griffiths' talk had several unique features, but information can be found at http://www.ewyaslacy.org.uk/-/Macnamara-Myths-relating-to-John-Macnamara-of-Llangoed-Hall-/1790s-1840s/nw_lty_1001 and http://www.ewyaslacy.org.uk/-/Mary-s-Stones-investigating-the-Mrs-Macnamara-Boundary-Stones-in-the-Black-Mountains/1820s/nw_lty_1002 (Accessed 5 February 2018).

⁷ Nigel Clubb has done a considerable amount of unpublished recent research on this subject, but some background information can be found in Bell, A.J. 2014. The 1915 Tredegar Estate Sales in Breconshire. *Brycheiniog* 40: 21-53.

⁸ Gibbs, J.N, 2017. The Investigation of the Breconshire House During the 1960s by Stanley Jones and John (J.T.) Smith. *Brycheiniog* 48: 58-63.

⁹ For an obituary, *Salon* 39, 1 August 2017 (the online Newsletter of the Society of Antiquaries).

THE ROLAND MATHIAS PRIZE

My account this year of the Roland Mathias Prize for poetry begins in a rather different place from usual. The Prize is a constituent part of the Wales Book of the Year and it has been a turbulent year for Literature Wales who organise it. As a result, there was a delay of several months in staging the awards, so that it was not until November 2017 that the winners were announced. In turn, the event that we hold in Brecon to celebrate the work of the winner of the Roland Mathias Prize also had to be delayed until 2018: February 23 to be precise.

I am writing before this event takes place, but I know it will be worth the wait. The winner is John Freeman (Fig. 1), who lectured in English at Cardiff University for many years, and the prize was for a collection called *What Possessed Me*, published by Worple. It was described by the poetry judge, Jonathan Edwards, as “a brilliant, witty, charming, accessible and above all moving collection of poems about family, about place and about the past.” I am pleased to say that Jonathan Edwards (Fig. 2) has agreed to chair our poetry evening on February 23 and give his insight into the poetry of John Freeman.

John Freeman himself states that he writes “to celebrate the small epiphanies of ordinary life, the moments of illumination which often pass disregarded”. The reader can see this in poems such as *Swallows*, where he is struck by the elusiveness of the sighting:

*...at the periphery of vision,
shadows are swooping against walls, and beyond
living shapes transforming wires to staves,
whispering their music into the darkness
of memory like a nest high in a barn
they will return to summer after summer.*



Figure 1. John Freeman.

He says that to be outdoors offers food for perception and imagination, and a number of his poems have grown out of lengthy walks in the open air. I particularly enjoyed *A Lost View*, where he suddenly rediscovers a long-remembered view of Llandaff Cathedral:

*...and I climbed the little mound with fallen stone
and a dainty path round the stone which leads
nowhere and doesn't look interesting
which is why I haven't climbed it for ages
and oh! there it was at last, my lost view,
with the west front three-quarter face
below me in the hollow...*

Jonathan Edwards praises his ability to dip into the past and summon up people, places, and the conception of time. In *My Grandfather's Hat*, for instance, he conjures up in a handful of words a picture of the old man in his nineties wearing a trilby:

*It was grey and sleek like a new plush toy.
No-one had ever made our two front steps
more like a staircase in a stately home,
not even Mum with her polio feet.
Crowning himself slowly, his own archbishop,
holding on to a handrail like a sceptre,
he turned with no more haste than one of the ships
he had sailed round Cape Horn as a boy...*



Figure 2.
Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edwards describes reading this volume as like having the best grandfather that any of us could wish for at our elbows; a grandfather with a treasure trove of memories.

I must not forget the two other short-listed writers, whose collections were only just beaten to the Roland Mathias Prize. Maria Apichella's *Psalmody* (Eyewear) is a book-length sequence of poems about a single romantic relationship, described by Jonathan Edwards as combining "the strengths of lyric poetry with the pleasures of reading a novel". Rhiannon Hooson's *The Other City* (Seren) is also praised, with "poems as artworks in which every single sentence is beautifully and elegantly constructed".

I should now go back to the turbulent year endured by Literature Wales, and what that might mean for the future of the Roland Mathias Prize. The delay in holding the awards was followed by a critical report into the organisation (strongly disputed by Literature Wales), which recommended that the Wales Book of the Year should in future become the responsibility of the Welsh Books Council. Pending a decision by the new Culture Minister, Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas, Literature Wales will continue to stage the Wales Book of the Year for 2018. Whatever the outcome, it is my hope that the Roland Mathias Prize will continue to be the poetry award in this prestigious competition, albeit while funding permits.

GLYN MATHIAS

BRECKNOCK MUSEUM & ART GALLERY REPORT 2017

Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery has been closed for redevelopment since 31 October 2011; it will remain closed until it is fully restored, and its expanded facilities are completed in 2018 (Fig. 1). A branding exercise has now been undertaken, in consultation with the public and the new name for the Museum and Town Library will be *y Gaer*. This replaces the working title of Cultural Hub, Brecon and will be widely publicised as we draw closer to the reopening.



Figure 1. Y Gaer in September 2017 showing the erection of the steel frame.

Brecknock Museum

During the last year, conservation and construction work on *y Gaer* has increased in pace, with significant events including the raising of the first steel on site on 17 July, the topping-out ceremony on 27 October (Fig. 2), and the completion of the demolition of the waffle slab within the Assize Court Hall during November. This demolition has revealed the original size and scale of the hall space for the first time since its conversion to a museum in 1974 (Fig. 3).



Figure 2. The topping-out ceremony at *y Gaer* on 27 October 2017.

Brecknock Museum



Figure 3. The Assize Court Hall after demolition of the waffle slab.

Brecknock Museum

The Connecting Communities and Collections Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project aims not only to see the restoration of the Grade II* listed Shire Hall and Assize Court but also the reinterpretation of the Museum collection, along with increased engagement with the local community. During the last year, our volunteers have provided 2,143 hours towards museum projects, with assistance being provided in improving database records, digital recording projects, care of collections, and educational activities.

2017 was a very busy year for the Museum's Education and Access Officer and other staff. We participated in 21 Community Events, five of which were solely facilitated by the Museum. The remaining events were arranged in partnership with other organisations including Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Brecon Town Council, Brecon Young Archaeologists Club, the Civil Service, and the Brecknock Play Network. We also ran a Museum stand at the very popular Secondary Schools Careers Fayre, held at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground in March. In total, we engaged with 6,160 participants during the year. While we wait for y Gaer to be completed, we continue to partner with other venues including Brecon Cathedral, Theatr Brycheiniog, and the Town Library. We also participated in outdoor community events such as the Fforest Fawr Geopark Festival at Craig Y Nos, which was particularly popular. Our School sessions have also been successful this year and 24 workshops were delivered to Breconshire school groups. Sessions were held at Brecon Cathedral, including our annual Tudor and Victorian Christmas Workshops, as well as at our Watton Mount base, where we looked at farming. 1,181 pupils were reached through our Education Service during the year.

We have continued to engage with Social Media, with images of our events, developments, and selected objects, shared on our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages; these have resulted in over 2,000 online followers for the Museum and are a useful way to keep in touch with the local community. We have also continued to contribute a monthly column to the *Brecon & Radnor Express*, which has garnered much comment on our activities.

Over 850 items have been added to the Museum collection during the year, including an assemblage of Mesolithic flints to the archaeology collections, prints and artworks to the art collection, and many more photographs and social history items. Newly accessioned objects of particular interest include a group of Railway posters, the Florence Morris collection, and a banner displayed at the Agincourt celebrations.

In late spring, a special gift arrived in the post from Mr Graham Larkbey, of London. He had collected five Railway posters relevant to Breconshire. Four related to the 1962 closure of the lines into Brecon, and the fifth, a 1959 poster extolling: "no worry—no strain—much better by train", advertised half-day excursions to Brecon by train. The Public Notices relating to the line closures were dated 15 October 1962, for the Neath (Riverside) line, and 31 December

1962, for the Hereford, Moat Lane Junction, and Newport lines (Fig. 4). One wonders what would have been the differences to the area had the train service survived the Beeching axe.

During late summer, we were given a small collection of items by former Brecon resident Harley Simpson, who had returned to the area on a visit. The objects had been passed down through his family and he had decided now was the right time to gift them to the Museum, thereby preserving them for future generations. The collection included a hand-written notebook dating from just after the First World War, recording the trip his grandmother, Margaret Florence Morris, had made to the war cemetery at Pont du Hem in 1922, along with a YMCA ticket for access (Fig. 5). Her husband, Sapper James Morris had died from a sniper's bullet at the battle of Vimy Ridge. James was originally from Brecon but had moved to Tredegar with his wife and six children to work in the coal mines. In 1918, he signed up to re-join the army, having previously served before the war. With his mining skills he became a sapper in the Royal Engineers. Early on 8 August, as he was shoring up a trench, he was shot by an enemy sniper; he had been in France for only a few weeks. Florence was subsequently evicted from her home by the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company and so she and her six children had to return to family home in The Struet, Brecon.

Florence was one of the first women to be allowed to see the graves and battlefields and made the journey to Flanders Fields as part of a scheme set up by the YMCA. In more recent times, both Harley and his late mother, Nellie, visited the grave. A few weeks after Harley made the gift to the Museum

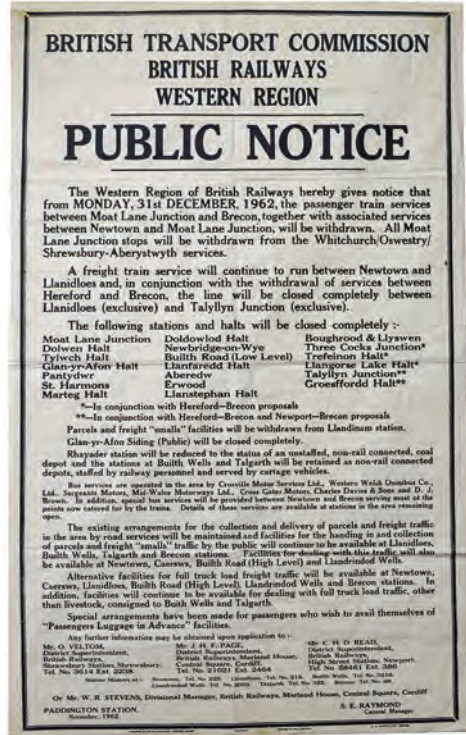


Figure 4. Poster advising of the closure of Moat Lane Junction. Brecknock Museum



Figure 5. YMCA ticket for access to the war graves in France. Brecknock Museum

Collection he sadly lost his fight against cancer. It was a pleasure to have met him and to have guaranteed the safety of these personal objects.

In late autumn, the Museum was very happy to accession the Agincourt Celebration Banner, created in 2015 by Patricia Woolford and members of the Brecon U3A, for the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt, back in 1415 (Fig. 6). The embroidered applique wall hanging was inspired by the history of the battle, and the Welsh archers engaged in the action, along with the coats of arms of the knights taking part in the battle. The banner, which toured several local venues during the anniversary year, was also displayed at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds and now finds its permanent home here in Brecon. Associated with this banner was a replica of Henry V Woodstock Standard, also made for the anniversary which travelled all the way to the battlefield in France for the official celebrations, kindly gifted by Bryan Davies.



Figure 6. Agincourt Celebration Banner.
Brecknock Museum

During the year we also had support from the Usk Valley Trust, who gave us a map of land recorded near Abercrave, in the parish of Ystradgynlais. The map is attributed to William Weston Young (1776–1847) who included land surveying among his many professional skills. It features a small watercolour illustration of a man viewing the scenery (Fig. 7).

In preparation for the redisplay in the new galleries, Museum staff successfully gained funding from the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries Wales (Welsh Government), to run two conservation projects in partnership with Cardiff University Students and Alumni. The projects, which were supervised by local accredited conservator, Cath Lloyd Haslam, ran over a five-week period. This work will continue and will be supported by the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends 'Conservation & Display' initiative (Fig. 8).

As co-location moves closer, restructuring has taken place to properly link the Museum and Library staff ahead of the opening in 2018. This has seen an increase in front of house posts in readiness for the high numbers of people expected to visit y Gaer and, as is the trend nationally, an increased reliance on volunteer roles. A new post has been advertised for an additional Volunteer



Figure 7. William Weston Young's watercolour on a map of Abercrave.

Brecknock Museum

Coordinator and we look forward to welcoming the successful applicant to the team soon. The restructuring has necessitated some other changes and it is with sadness that we say goodbye to Assistant Curator, Conan Daly. Conan joined us in the autumn of 2013 from Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales, and made great progress recording our geological collections on the Museum database, as well as supporting our volunteers as they photograph the social history collections. We wish Conan the best of luck for the future.

Once again, we continue to be grateful for the financial support the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends has provided towards both the conservation and development of the collections, alongside the developing facilities at y Gaer.



Figure 8. Conservation at Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery.

Brecknock Museum

NIGEL BLACKAMORE MPhil.
Senior Curator, Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery

VICTOR JONES HISTORY PROJECT COMPETITION

The aim of the Victor Jones History Project Competition is to encourage Year Six pupils of Breconshire schools to find out and write about local history. The competition is held in memory of Victor Jones, who was a founding member of the Brecknock Society, and taught in Breconshire for 35 years.

As well as the top three prizes, there is also an Art and Design prize, and a school prize of £200 for the school that gains the greatest number of individual marks.

We had some clever Art and Design entries this year, and first prize was awarded to Bean Warry of Llangors School, who created an eye-catching and powerful drawing of a prisoner of war, which decorated the front cover of his project called 'The Felinfach Prisoner of War Camp'.

This year, as usual, we received a high standard of projects covering a vast array of historical topics and it was a difficult job narrowing it down. Hence, five 'highly commended' prizes were awarded to Lewis Axford of Crickhowell School, Layla Phillips of Llangors, Eryn Stephens of Cradoc, Seren Lewis of Talgarth, and Daniel Ricketts of Clyro.

We also struggled with choosing the top three winners this year, because of all the projects being so good, but we eventually agreed on the winners (Fig. 1).

Third prize went jointly to Jack Organ of Llangors School, and Freddie Johnson and Thomas Willett, who worked together on their project and are from Crickhowell Primary School. Jack wrote a detailed account about the history of St Brynach Church, Llanfrynach. It was a very well presented and informative project with lots of maps, drawings and photographs to back up his research; it was of a very high standard. Freddie and Thomas told me when I visited their school that they might like to write a project together about World War II crash sites in the Brecon Beacons and they certainly did a fantastic job of it. Their project gave



Figure 1. The presentation of the prizes. Back row: John Gibbs, Rowan Williams, Martine Woodcock. Front row: Molly Jones, Eleanor James, Freddie Johnson, Jack Organ, Bean Warry.

a lot of information about where the crash sites were, who tragically died, and what type of plane crashed. They even walked a five-hour round trip to take photographs. That certainly is dedication for you!

Joint second place went to Bean Warry and Saskia Henry-Davies, who are both from Llangors School. Saskia’s project was titled ‘The New Inn Pub and other Public Houses, Bwlch’. Saskia spent a lot of time interviewing previous landlords and providing maps and census information, as well as a variety of old photographs. Her project was inviting and very interesting. Bean, who had earlier won the Art and Design prize, wrote about ‘The Felinfach Prisoner of War Camp’. His interest in the subject matter was apparent from start to finish and this is backed up with photographs of him visiting the old prisoner of war camp site. He enhanced his research by interviewing residents, who remembered the POW’s working on local farms. It really was a captivating project.

Finally, we awarded a joint first prize to Eleanor James of Crickhowell School, and Molly Jones of Llangors School. Eleanor’s project was called ‘Women’s Roles in War in Breconshire’ (Fig. 2). This was a topic that has never been covered before and not only did Eleanor provide lots of information about World War I, and the Land Army Girls, she sourced a lot of information and photographs about local Crickhowell women, who did a great deal for the war effort. She also included a pencil rubbing of the ‘Death Penny’ that belongs to her family. It was extremely interesting to read.

Molly’s project also covered a topic new to the competition. She wrote about her community in ‘Dyffryn Crawn Valley, Llangynidr’ (Fig. 3). Molly wrote a passionate account of valley life and what it used to be like. She included maps and photographs, and talked about how she would like to have lived in the village when the school was open. Her project was beautifully presented and a joy to read.



Figure 2. The joint first prize winning entry by Eleanor James.



Figure 3. The joint first prize winning entry by Molly Jones.

ARTICLES

A POET'S VIEW OF HENRY VAUGHAN

ROWAN WILLIAMS

It is always a huge pleasure to be back in Brecon and I am very grateful indeed for the opportunity of sharing thoughts and perceptions this evening on one of this locality's greatest figures. I realise that many of you in the audience will know more about Vaughan than I do, so I hope you will bear with me for the sake of those members of the audience who perhaps do not know more about Henry Vaughan than I do!

What I want to do this evening is to speak a little about Vaughan's life overall and a little about his relationship with the other greatest poet of the seventeenth century, George Herbert; a relationship which was formative for Vaughan in many ways. I believe that by putting Vaughan and Herbert together, we learn something about what was going on in poetry in the seventeenth century and something about the different voices or registers in which all poets have to find themselves (Fig. 1).

Vaughan was born in 1621, in Newton near Scethrog, and died in 1695. It was a life, therefore, which spanned the greatest upheaval of the century, perhaps one of the greatest upheavals of British history, the Civil War and the Commonwealth Period. That great trauma in the seventeenth century affected Vaughan as a person and as a poet in all kinds of ways, and we see that, exactly in the mid-century, and almost precisely in his own mid-life, the crisis which he underwent, shaped partly by his own health, partly by the collective trauma of the Civil War, radically changed his direction as a poet.

He was one of twins. His brother, Thomas Vaughan, who died in 1666, is still one of those figures to whom people turn to get some sense of what the



Figure 1. The Swan of Usk (a name attributed to Henry Vaughan): a design for a stained-glass window by Clive Hicks-Jenkins.

Brecknock Arts Trust

odder reaches of seventeenth-century science were like. Thomas Vaughan was a passionate alchemist, a believer in natural magic and wrote a number of almost unreadably-complicated treatises on the subject. He was also a fluent and rather bad poet; though he admired his brother's work, I am glad to say.

The brothers were brought up in the area of their birth and went to Oxford together, though Henry never took a degree. Although he practised as a doctor in later life, he never actually seems to have obtained a medical qualification either. In the seventeenth century that was probably something of an advantage for general practice. Accounts of medicine in this period, as those of you who know anything about Pepys' diaries will be aware, are hair-raising, and the less one knew about surgery in the seventeenth century, probably the better!

Vaughan and his brother, shaped by an upbringing which seems to have been bilingual, Welsh and English, and that also involved a great immersion in classical literature under the guidance of a local parish priest, Matthew Herbert in Llangattock, belonged to an intellectual world which had a great deal of vigour and a great deal of quirkiness about it. The vigour of the intellectual life of the period hardly needs to be underlined. This is indeed a seminal period—the development of the sciences in Britain—but as with all seminal periods, it is a period of chaotic conflict, a period where nobody quite knows the difference between a good and a bad argument. This is part of its interest and part of its oddity to us.

Also in the seventeenth century, some of the tribal demarcation lines, which we might be tempted to take for granted among literature, science, and theology, simply did not exist. People like the Vaughans were able to wander in and out of territories that we now regard as fenced off from each other. Thomas Vaughan, a poet, alchemist and rather idiosyncratic theologian, represents some of the things that are most typical of seventeenth-century intellectual culture.

It is, incidentally, always worth noting that the origins of scientific research and scientific creativity in seventeenth-century Britain were often deeply rooted in theological questions. Of the founders of the Royal Society, what we would now regard as a rather unexpected number were, in fact, clergy, theologians, and philosophers. I mention that because there are aspects of Vaughan's poetry which make best sense when viewed against such a rich and unusual intellectual background.

Vaughan practised medicine in Brecon and then in the countryside around it for most of his adult life. He married twice. His surviving daughter of the second-marriage seems to have had a number of legal wrangles with him in his last years and Vaughan does come across as a person of somewhat cantankerous temperament (at least, in his older years). Do not be completely deceived by the wonderfully luminous and spiritual language of his poetry. Like many of us, he wrote more piously than he lived; and yet there is no doubt about the sincerity and depth of his conversion (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. A view up the Usk Valley from near Llansantffraed.

Philip Coyne

Sometime around 1650, after Vaughan had already been involved in the conflicts of the Civil War, he fell seriously ill and almost died. It was during this illness that he came across the poetry of George Herbert. Herbert, who had died in 1633, was already a sanctified figure in the hagiography of the Anglican Church, somebody who was appealed to as a hero and a saint by a wide variety of people within the Church of England. He was even popular with some we would now think of as Puritans.

Vaughan himself writes about his encounter with Herbert in these terms, in the preface to *Silex Scintillans*. He is talking about his own early attempts at poetry, and other kinds of writing, and looking back on them without any very great satisfaction.

The first, that with any effectual success attempted a diversion of this foul and overflowing stream, was the blessed man, Mr George Herbert, whose holy life and verse gained many pious converts, (of whom I am the least) and gave the first check to a most flourishing and admired wit of his time. After him followed diverse, – *Sed non passibus aequis* [but with steps which match not his]; they were more of fashion than of force: and the reason of their so vast distance from him, besides differing spirits and qualifications (for his measure was eminent) I suspect to be, because they aimed more at verse, than perfection...

Vaughan's poetry is meant to be, at some level, an imitation of Herbert as a man as well as Herbert as a poet; but it is a very distinctive kind of imitation. Poets, of course, imitate all the time. The saying is ascribed to T. S. Eliot, among others, that "immature poets imitate, mature poets steal"! But Vaughan does something slightly different from both. Vaughan reads Herbert's great work, *The Temple*, and picking up its themes, its idioms, and often its images and phrases, reworks the whole of Herbert's vision for a completely different cultural world.

Scholars of Vaughan have underlined the fact that, for Vaughan, writing as he did in the period of the Commonwealth, what Herbert had taken for granted was no longer part of the mental and spiritual furniture of the culture in which he lived. Herbert could still appeal to the 'obviousness' of the Church of England, so to speak. The church was there in every parish. The church's liturgy, the church's calendar, and the church's buildings were all part of what everyone took for granted. But the immense interruption of the Civil War and the Commonwealth had left the Church of England, in its historic form, a persecuted, harassed, and disorganised body of people.

Clergy, like Henry's brother Thomas, were ejected from their parishes. Many went underground to pursue an Anglican ministry according to the Book of Common Prayer, quite illegally. John Evelyn, in his diary, famously describes going to church on Christmas Day under the watching eyes of heavily armoured Parliamentarian soldiers, and coming back from the altar rail looking into the barrel of their muskets.

Vaughan is writing in that climate; and part of what he is doing—to paraphrase what some recent critics of Vaughan have noted—is a kind of 'rebuilding' in his poetry of the imaginative world that Herbert inhabited, recognising that what has to be done now is to build up in verse and imagination what was once a straightforward physical reality. The availability, the always 'at-handness' of the old church is no longer there; and perhaps this comes over most vividly if we look at the poems both of them wrote about the British church.

First, Herbert's poem, *The British Church*, and then Vaughan's poem under the same title. Here is Herbert.

I joy, dear mother, when I view
Thy perfect lineaments, and hue
Both sweet and bright.
Beauty in thee takes up her place,
And dates her letters from thy face,
When she doth write.

A fine aspect in fit array,
Neither too mean nor yet too gay,
Shows who is best.
Outlandish looks may not compare,

For all they either painted are,
Or else undress'd.

She on the hills which wantonly
Allureth all, in hope to be
By her preferr'd,
Hath kiss'd so long her painted shrines,
That ev'n her face by kissing shines,
For her reward.

She in the valley is so shy
Of dressing, that her hair doth lie
About her ears;
While she avoids her neighbour's pride,
She wholly goes on th' other side,
And nothing wears.

But, dearest mother, what those miss,
The mean, thy praise and glory is
And long may be.
Blessed be God, whose love it was
To double-moat thee with his grace,
And none but thee.

For Herbert it is a rather unusually triumphalist poem. The 'British' church, the Church of England, is so much better than the Roman Catholic Church and so much better than the Calvinists because she follows the mean between the two extremes; what one other seventeenth-century writer, Simon Patrick, called the "virtuous mediocrity" of the Church of England, although I do need to say that 'mediocre' had a different meaning in the seventeenth century. It has taken several centuries to make it appropriate to present usage but that is another story.

But here is Vaughan's *The British Church*.

Ah, he is fled.
And while these here their mists, and shadows hatch,
My glorious head
Doth on those hills of Mirrhe, and Incense watch.
Haste, haste my dear,
The Soldiers here
Cast in their lots again,
That seamless coat
The Jews touched not,
These dare divide and stain.

O get thee wings.
Or if as yet (until these clouds depart,
And the day springs,)

Thou think'st it good to tarry where thou art,
Write in thy books
My ravished looks
Slain flock, and pillaged fleeces,
And hast thee so
As a young Roe
Upon the mounts of spices.

There could hardly be a greater contrast: this is a church persecuted and humiliated, its only possibility being to rise above its sufferings, or, if this is too demanding, to make sure that it faithfully records the sufferings themselves to stir up longing for the mystical union figured in the imagery of the Song of Songs, which Vaughan loves and often uses.

The contrast is, in a way, unexpected. We usually and rightly read Herbert as more typically a poet of spiritual struggle, witnessing to the pain and inconclusiveness of the experience of the life of faith, asking, ‘Why does God demand the impossible from us?’: “I struck the board and cried, ‘No more’”, in the opening words of one of his greatest poems. But it is not completely unintelligible. Herbert is reflecting on the individual soul’s struggle and rebellion, and his poetry is often a breathtaking and tense exercise in articulating and controlling that rebellion. It is not that Herbert is, in any sense, a complacent writer. But Vaughan is dealing with something different—not with the individual struggles of a prayerful soul wondering what the will of God is in a world of suffering and frustration—but with a radical loss of orientation, of landmarks for the spirit. Vaughan never actually gives us very much insight into his own feelings, except in these collective expressions of lament. What he does instead is to evoke in many of his poems a sense of absolutely pervasive loss (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. Rowan Williams addressing the Annual Memorial Evensong service in Llansantffraed Church regarding Vaughan’s poetry.
Mike Williams

Something has happened in the mid-seventeenth century which has, to all intents and purposes, changed the relationship between God and the world. The removal of the traditional landmarks of the Church of England has left a whole society, a whole population, spiritually astray. Where do we look now for spiritual clarity and for hope? Let me turn to a poem which expresses this in a way which again owes a great deal to one of Herbert’s poems, to which I will return in a moment, but has a very distinctive Vaughan-ish feel to it. It is a poem called *Religion*.

My God, when I walk in those groves
 And leaves, Thy Spirit doth still fan,
 I see in each shade that there grows
 An angel talking with a man.

Under a Juniper some house,
 Or the cool myrtle's canopy;
 Others beneath an oak's green boughs,
 Or at some fountain's bubbling eye.

Here Jacob dreams, and wrestles; there
 Elias by a Raven is fed;
 Another time by the angel, where
 He brings him water with his bread.

In Abraham's tent the winged guests –
 O how familiar then was heaven –
 Eat, drink, discourse, sit down, and rest,
 Until the cool and shady even.

Nay, Thou Thyself, my God, in fire,
 Whirlwinds and clouds, and the soft voice,
 Speakst there so much, that I admire
 We have no conference in these days.

Is the truce broke? or 'cause we have
 A Mediator now with Thee,
 Dost Thou therefore old treaties wave,
 And by appeals from Him decree?

Or is't so, as some green heads say.
 That now all miracles must cease?
 Though Thou hast promised they should stay
 The tokens of the Church, and peace.

No, no; Religion is a spring.
 That from some secret, golden mine
 Derives her birth, and thence doth bring
 Cordials in every drop, and wine.

But in her long and hidden course.
 Passing through the Earth's dark veins.
 Grows still from better unto worse,
 And both her taste and colour stains;

Then drilling on, learns to increase
 False echoes and confused sounds,
 And unawares doth often seize
 On veins of sulphur underground;

So poisoned, breaks forth in some clime.
And at first sight doth many please;
But drunk, is puddle, or mere slime.
And 'stead of physic, a disease.

Just such a tainted sink we have.
Like that Samaritan's dead well;
Nor must we for the kernel crave
Because most voices like the shell.

Heal then these waters, Lord; or bring Thy flock,
Since these are troubled, to the springing Rock;
Look down. Great Master of the feast; O shine,
And turn once more our water into wine

Once upon a time, God walked with human beings. God sat down and ate meals in a tent with Abraham. And God revealed himself in fire and cloud, and the still small voice. So why does he not do it now? Has he not promised that his miraculous presence will abide with the church till the end of time? Vaughan does not give an answer to this but turns to reflect on what happens to water as it rises: "Religion is a spring, / that from some secret golden mine / Derives her birth". Religion, faith, the Gospel; Christianity begins deep underground.

It is a very typical Vaughan image; because faith *begins* deep underground, as we might say, because its roots and its workings are deeply buried in the human psyche, any number of things can go wrong in its journey *from* underground. There will be echoes and confused sounds. You may find that the stream runs into veins of sulphur and the water, when it breaks the surface, becomes poisonous: "stead of physic, a disease".

And that is where we are. In this world of loss and disorientation, religion has been corrupted. This human spiritual reality, which begins deep underground, deep under the surface of our humanity, when it breaks the surface in this corrupted world, can be poisonous. What can we do about it? Nothing, except appeal to the Master of the feast who turns water into wine: "Or bring thy flock, / since these are troubled, to the springing Rock". The same rock that is Christ, from whose broken side water flows, as it did for Moses.

Once again there is a Herbert parallel. Herbert's *Decay* begins with something deceptively similar but does not move into anything quite as poignant as Vaughan's imagery.

Sweet were the dayes, when thou didst lodge with Lot,
Struggle with Jacob, sit with Gideon,
Advise with Abraham, when thy power could not
Encounter Moses strong complaints and mone:
Thy words were then, Let me alone.

One might have sought and found thee presently
 At some fair oak, or bush, or cave, or well:
 Is my God this way? No, they would reply:
 He is to Sinai gone, as we heard tell:
 List, ye may heare great Aaron's bell.

But now thou dost thyself immure and close
 In some one corner of a feeble heart:
 Where yet both Sinne and Satan, thy old foes,
 Do pinch and straiten thee, and use much art
 To gain thy thirds and little part.

I see the world grows old, when as the heat
 Of thy great love once spread, as in an urn
 Doth closet up it self, and still retreat,
 Cold Sinne still forcing it, till it return,
 And calling Justice, all things burn.

Although Herbert ends with that rather apocalyptic image—all things burning as justice returns to the world—the weight of the poem is really to do with what is happening in the human heart, the individual human heart. For Vaughan, it is a more public kind of crisis, a more dramatic social loss and although Herbert hints at it, (“I see the world grows old”) nonetheless the weight of the feeling in his poem is much more clearly to do with the struggling self of the poet.

That is one of the contrasts that I would draw between Vaughan and Herbert. Vaughan is, as those two poems clearly show, reworking Herbert with courage and creativity but also with a very different kind of sensibility; and one of the things this means is that Vaughan does not share what I would call Herbert's irony. One of the things most characteristic of George Herbert's poetry is a sort of light touch, an ironic flick, a self-deprecating wit, a sense that ‘yes, this is very serious but you must not take yourself too seriously!’. Herbert notably ends his poems repeatedly with the verbal equivalent of a shrug and a rueful smile. “But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild. At every word, Methought I heard one calling, Child! And I replied My Lord.” That is a very characteristic Herbertian sensibility, as you might say.

Vaughan does not do that. He will end his poems very powerfully sometimes, but not with quite that sideways flick of the head that you can sense in Herbert. But this means that Vaughan, less ironic than Herbert, less engaged in working through the dark nights of piety and individual struggle with God, more conscious of a kind of global and social challenge, stands at the beginning of Romanticism in poetry; and if I had to characterise what separates the two poets, I would say that this is near the heart of it.

Vaughan is an incipient Romantic. That is to say, he is interested in the story of the imagination, the fall or collapse of imagination, how one restores depth to a

disenchanted world, how one allows the springs to break forth once again; and that, perhaps, throws some light on why some of Vaughan's most memorable poems are about childhood. His near contemporary, Thomas Traherne, yet another from (broadly speaking) this part of the world, famously spoke about the experience of the world in childhood: "The corn was orient and immortal wheat".

What is probably Vaughan's most famous poem, *The Retreat*, is one that crystalizes that sense of a lost innocence of vision which now has to be worked for, which poetry now has to reconstruct.

Happy those early days! when I
Shined in my angel infancy.
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;

When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;

When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;

Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O, how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train,
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady city of palm trees.

But, ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
Some men a forward motion love;
But I by backward steps would move,
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

This is the first real poetic celebration in English literature of childhood transparency: a childhood openness to the natural world; spontaneity; the unspoiled vision of things; the capacity to spend an hour gazing on some gilded cloud or flower; the sense in this imagined childhood of “bright shoots of everlastingness” because the spirit has not yet been completely trapped by the body.

And Vaughan, like the good Neoplatonist he was, flirts with the idea of, if not reincarnation, at least a kind of pre-existence for the soul. The soul comes into the world, into the body, into “this place / Appointed for my second race”, and still carries with it a kind of recollection of where it has been. Very much a platonic and neoplatonic theme with that lovely image of the “plain / Where first I left my glorious train”. We come surrounded, escorted by angels; crowds of angels, the train of angels, and at some point, we begin to say farewell to them, and so fail to see what they see (Fig 4).



Figure 4. At Vaughan’s graveside. From left: Anne Penton (rear, Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship), Wendy Camp (front, who read Sassoon’s poem), Glyn Mathias (President of the BS&MF), Dr Rowan Williams, Rev. Kelvin Richards (Priest in Charge of Llansantffraed Church), Rev. Liz Bramley (Local Ordained Minister), Tim Pratt (Director of Music), and members of St Mary’s Priory Church Choir.

Mike Williams

Here he is again, a later poem called *Childhood*.

I cannot reach it; and my striving eye
Dazzles at it, as at eternity.

Were now that chronicle alive,
Those white designs which children drive,
And the thoughts of each harmless hour,
With their content too in my power,
Quickly would I make my path even.
And by mere playing go to heaven.

“By mere playing go to Heaven”. What an extraordinary phase for the seventeenth century! He ends like this.

An age of mysteries which he
Must live twice that would God's face see
Which angels guard, and with it play,
Angels which foul men drive away.

How do I study now, and scan
Thee more than e'er I studied man,
And only see through a long night
Thy edges and thy bordering light
O for thy centre and midday
For sure that is the narrow way

We have to live our childhood twice. We, somehow, must rediscover the landscape, the light that now we can only see through the darkness. We have to come back to the centre and midday of childhood vision. So that is one of the Romantic elements in Vaughan; that recovery of the child's spontaneity as a way of healing a soul and an imagination that has to live in a disrupted, disenchanted, flattened, or thinned-out, world.

Herbert has no sense at all of that disenchanted world. The half century that divides the publication of Herbert's poetry from Vaughan's old age is a half century in which the spiritual climate of the country has turned on its axis inexorably and, in Vaughan's eyes, destructively. But some of the language in that pair of poems, *The Retreat* and *Childhood*, reminds us that Vaughan, in celebrating childhood, in seeking a restored vision, also picks up a regular insight of mystical writers: you only attain to a vision of the light, you only attain to clarity, by the experience of darkness and frustration. Not the robust protest of Herbert banging on the table and objecting to God's will, but something rather different: a deeper and deeper entry into a sheer wordlessness, an enveloping darkness of spirit and imagination in which, and out of which, somehow a vision comes.

And so, to Vaughan's poem, *The Night*.

Through that pure virgin shrine,
That sacred veil drawn o'er Thy glorious noon,
That men might look and live, as glow worms shine,
And face the moon,
Wise Nicodemus saw such light
As made him know his God by night.

Most blest believer he.
Who in that land of darkness and blind eyes
Thy long-expected healing wings could see,
When Thou didst rise
And, what can never more be done,
Did at midnight speak with the Sun.

O who will tell me where
He found Thee at that dead and silent hour?
What hallowed solitary ground did bear
So rare a flower,
Within whose sacred leaves did lie
The fullness of the Deity?

No mercy-seat of gold,
No dead and dusty cherub, nor carved stone,
But His own living works did my Lord hold
And lodge alone;
Where trees and herbs did watch and peep
And wonder, while the Jews did sleep.

Dear night, this world's defeat;
The stop to busy fools; care's check and curb;
The day of spirits; my soul's calm retreat
Which none disturb.

Christ's progress, and His prayer time;
The hours to which high heaven doth chime;

God's silent, searching flight;
When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all
His locks are wet with the clear drops of night;
His still, soft call;
His knocking time; the soul's dumb watch,
When spirits their fair kindred catch.

Were all my loud, evil days
Calm and unhaunted as is thy dark tent,
Whose peace but by some angel's wing or voice
Is seldom rent,
Then I in heaven all the long year
Would keep, and never wander here.

But living where the sun
Doth all things wake, and where all mix and tire
Themselves and others, I consent and run
To every mire,
And by this world's ill-guiding light,
Err more than I can do by night.

There is in God, some say,
A deep but dazzling darkness, as men here
Say it is late and dusky, because they
See not all clear.
O for that night! where I in Him
Might live invisible and dim.

In my judgement, this is Vaughan's greatest poem. The light of this world is effectively darkness. It confuses, muddles, and tires us. And in that light, I consent to and run into every kind of error. What I need, therefore, is night. I need a curtain to fall on all of that busyness of the world and, in that silence, in the depth of night, like Nicodemus visiting Jesus in the depth of night, God knocks. Again, the imagery is from the Song of Songs, potently evoked in that wonderful verse: "God's silent searching flight / When my Lord's head is filled with dew". The imagery is of the lover knocking on the door of the beloved in the Song of Songs, the beloved's heart turning over with longing, yearning, "the soul's dumb watch", the silence of a waking soul in the depth of night. "And spirits their fair kindred catch"; in the night your fellow (disembodied) spirits can actually see you and draw you into their company (Fig. 5).

For Vaughan, that experience of the darkening of imagination at one level is the route towards the reawakening of imagination at another level. In a world where images and words are so corrupted, so stale, so muddled and tired, we need silence, we need that soft enveloping night, which, as he presents it, is so vividly evoked in terms of the starry velvety darkness sprinkled with damp that he must have known going out to visit his patients in the Usk Valley. For me, if I



Figure 5. Detail of stained-glass window design by Clive Hicks-Jenkins incorporating lines from Vaughan's poem *The World*. Brecknock Arts Trust

may be personal for a moment, this particular aspect of Vaughan's language and imagery is one of the things which most vividly brings alive for me this part of the world, that night-time damp, silence, and softness by the river.

But Vaughan is interested also, unsurprisingly, in stars. Look at *The Star* and see another way into this question.

Whatever 'tis, whose beauty here below
 Attracts thee thus and makes thee stream and flow,
 And wind and curl, and wink and smile,
 Shifting thy gate and guile;

Though thy close commerce nought at all imbars
 My present search, for eagle's eye not stars,
 And still the lesser by the best
 And highest good is blest;

Yet, seeing all things that subsist and be,
 Have their commissions from divinity,
 And teach us duty, I will see
 What man may learn from thee.

First, I am sure, the subject so respected
 Is well disposed, for bodies once infected,
 Depraved, or dead, can have with thee
 No hold, nor sympathy.

Next, there's in it a restless, pure desire
 And longing for thy bright and vital fire,
 Desire that never will be quenched,
 Nor can be writhed, nor wrenched.

These are the magnets which so strongly move
 And work all night upon thy light and love,
 As beauteous shapes, we know not why,
 Command and guide the eye.

For where desire, celestial pure desire
 Hath taken root, and grows, and doth not tire,
 There God a commerce states, and sheds
 His secret on their heads.

This is the heart he craves, and who so will
 But give it him, and grudge not, he shall feel
 That God is true, as herbs unseen
 Put on their youth and green.

Here is Vaughan, very much within the same mental and imaginative world as his brother Thomas. This is the world of neo-platonic and hermetic cosmology. The stars are fires and the light of the stars, the fiery-light of the

stars, is drawn down through the dark by our desire. Our desire is a magnet, which pulls light down through the darkness. And the way in which starlight resonates with or attunes itself to our own limited vision is a metaphor for how the ultimate fiery light of God is drawn down by a simple, unceasing, restless, pure single-hearted desire in us.

So, what is going on in the night is not just the wrapping round of what I call the velvety darkness, there is also the looking at the stars and the sense of a fiery kindling reality penetrating the darkness, connecting with our longing for peace, meaning, love, and so forth and then we grow, "as herbs unseen put on their youth and green". Herbs unseen, that is in the darkness under the soil; plants begin in their youth to put on their green, their life. So, under the surface once again, Vaughan is fascinated by this language of faith being underneath, so in us something is kindled, 'greened' (how like Vaughan to use 'green' as a verb!), brought alive by the fire of the stars.

Herbert wrote a poem about stars as well, called *The Starre*, but it is a remarkably different one from Vaughan and I just turn, once again, to give you some sense of the contrast.

Bright spark, shot from a brighter place,
Where beams surround my Saviour's face,
Canst thou be any where
So well as there?

Yet, if thou wilt from thence depart,
Take a bad lodging in my heart;
For thou canst make a debtor,
And make it better.

First with thy fire-work burn to dust
Folly, and worse than folly, lust:
Then with thy light refine,
And make it shine.

So disengag'd from sin and sicknesse,
Touch it with thy celestial quicknesse,
That it may hang and move
After thy love.

Then with our trinitie of light,
Motion, and heat, let's take our flight
Unto the place where thou
Before didst bow.

Get me a standing there, and place
Among the beams, which crown the face
Of him, who dy'd to part
Sinne and my heart:

That so among the rest I may
 Glitter, and curle, and winde as they:
 That winding is their fashion
 Of adoration.

Sure thou wilt joy, by gaining me
 To fly home like a laden bee
 Unto that hive of beams
 And garland-streams.

No less great a poem, I think, and you will see some of the deliberate echoes there that Vaughan picks up. “Wind and curl and wink and smile”, says Vaughan. “Glitter, and curle, and winde as they”, says Herbert. But for Herbert it is a slightly simpler transaction that is envisaged. A star’s light comes to me, wakes me up, warms me, and now we take our flight to that place where the star lives in the presence of Christ and I become star-like, glittering and curling and winding. “Flying home like a laden bee” is just a wonderful Herbertian image.

Great poems both, but I put them side by side in order to underline yet again the way in which Vaughan, using some of the tools of his philosophical and metaphysical education, his world view, is able to say something more about how the work of God belongs in and penetrates to a sort of dark pre-conscious level. Our work, if we want to renew our language as much as our faith, is to quarry down to that level. Once again, it is a kind of Romantic imagining, which says that for a poet really to be doing his or her job, they must draw on all kinds of pre-conscious, barely recognised elements in the psyche, in what one modern philosopher, Sri Aurobindo, calls the “crypt of the soul”.

We could go on putting Vaughan and Herbert side by side in this way but the point of reading these poems alongside each other is to get some sense—not of which is ‘better’ than the other—because I think the habit of assigning comparative marks to great poets is a thoroughly stupid one, but to see how they represent different kinds of poetic strategy (Fig. 6). Herbert, I have said, is, in many ways, an ironist. He sets out the narrative, the language of a troubled and not very intelligent self. That is the persona of the poems. The rebellious self who allows the sheer frustration of a wounded ego to run almost to the edge of the cliff, only to be reined in sharply at the last moment!



Figure 6. Dr Rowan Williams and Mervyn Bramley at the opening of the Vaughan Visitor Area in Llansantffraed Church.
 Eryl Jones

Herbert is not unlike Luther in some respects. That is, the Luther who tells us that it is perfectly all right to shake your fist at God, who loved the way in which the psalms evoke that register of protest and rebellion, and yet rein it in. Herbert displays a flawed, challengeable, criticisable self, ironised by its own representation. Hence, what I described as the ‘sideways tilt of the head’ at the end of some poems is a great deal more than just that. It is a breakdown. The monosyllables that Herbert loves at the end of his verses become a kind of nail inserted into the flesh of the poem to bring it to an almost violent stop, with sometimes very audible pain.

Vaughan will not use that kind of rhetoric; and although once or twice he tries a Herbertian ending, it seldom quite comes off. And that is because his whole sensibility is addressing a rather different kind of question. For Herbert, the question for the poet is how do I save my poetic language from being egotistical, self-serving, and unspiritual? And his answer is: I do it by displaying exactly how egotistical, self-serving, and unspiritual my language is. I cope with my failure by stating my failure. And that ironic penitent, wry tone of Herbert is one way of dealing with the question of how you write honest poetry. It is a little bit like T. S. Eliot in the *Four Quartets* notoriously saying at one point, “That was a way of putting it—not very satisfactory”. Vaughan does not do that kind of irony. For him, the problem for the poet is not just how I write honestly but how the world is opened up again to depth, mystery, and illumination. So his poetry is, characteristically, a poetry than invites grace, presence, and fullness into a world where it is recognised as being absent, yet, at the same time, like a good proto-Romantic, Vaughan believes that the world around us is actually glowing with divine presence if we could only see it.

He is again, perhaps, one of the first British poets to write about landscape in, for example, *Retirement (II)*.

Fresh fields and woods, the Earth's fair face,
God's foot-stool, and man's dwelling-place.
I ask not why the first Believer
Did love to be a country liver?

Who to secure pious content
Did pitch by groves and wells his tent;
Where he might view the boundless sky,
And all those glorious lights on high;

With flying meteors, mists and showers,
Subjected hills, trees, meads and flowers;
And every minute bless the King
And wise Creator of each thing.

I ask not why he did remove
To happy Mamre's holy grove,

Leaving the cities of the plain
 To Lot and his successful train?

 All various lusts in cities still
 Are found; they are the thrones of ill;
 The dismal sinks, where blood is spilled,
 Cages with much uncleanness filled.

 But rural shades are the sweet fence
 Of piety and innocence.
 They are the Meek's calm region, where
 Angels descend and rule the sphere,

 Where heaven lies leiger, and the dove
 Duly as dew, comes from above.
 If Eden be on Earth at all,
 'Tis that, which we the country call.

Returning to nature, returning to the mists, the wells, the clouds, the meteor showers, the stars; all of that to Vaughan is a reminder of a grace that is obscure but always present, most visible when we can see least clearly the ordered surface of the world, and are drawn down into the roots of order and beauty in God's silent act.

To put it like that is to say that there is always going to be a diversity of poetic voices. For some poets, the challenge really is, how do I speak honestly? And to cope with that, you need a register, a style that is profoundly ironic, like T. S. Eliot or indeed the late and deeply lamented Geoffrey Hill. Complex, teasing, both comic and tragic in its way, relativising what the poet is saying; think of the late Geoffrey Hill's poems, those works of such brutal complexity and roughness, as much a deliberate undermining of the conventional poetic voice as Eliot saying, "that was a way of putting it".

But not all poetry has to be that. It is just as serious a question: how the world is to be re-enchanted? And if I am allowed another (fairly) local example, I would go down the valley to Swansea and pick on Vernon Watkins, that great celebrator in a Vaughan-like way of the transparency of vision and the need to recover a luminosity in the world around: both serious poetic challenges. Most poets, I suspect, would recognise in their work elements of both, though they would veer to one or the other, and doubtless other styles, other idioms, as well.

But in offering 'a poet's view' of Henry Vaughan, that is one of the things I would want to reflect on: that Vaughan, as we put him alongside his great hero and mentor, Herbert, shows us another voice, another perspective, as valid, as searching, and as beautiful, as Herbert, but decisively different.

So before drawing to a conclusion, let me offer you just one or two more contrasting and related poems to think about. First, Vaughan's poem, *Easter Day*.

Thou, whose sad heart, and weeping head lies low,
Whose Cloudy breast cold damps invade,
Who never feel'st the Sun, nor smooth'st thy brow,
But sitt'st oppressed in the shade,
Awake, awake,
And in his Resurrection partake,
Who on this day (that thou might'st rise as he,)
Rose up, and cancelled two deaths due to thee.
Awake, awake; and, like the Sun, disperse
All mists that would usurp this day;
Where are thy Palms, thy branches, and thy verse?
Hosanna, hark; why doest thou stay?
Arise, arise,
And with his healing blood anoint thine eyes,
Thy inward eyes; his blood will cure thy mind,
Whose spittle only could restore the blind.

Typically, Vaughan gives us a landscape; the sun, the mists, the shade, a landscape which is, and is not, that of the soul; a landscape, which is also that of the shared soul, the shared imagination (Fig. 7). Herbert in his great Easter poems will, of course, have the echoes we have already discussed, but be saying something different.

Here is Herbert's *Easter*.

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise:
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.
Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name,
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.
Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long;
Or, since all musick is but three parts vied
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers to straw thy way:
 I got me boughs off many a tree:
 But thou wast up by break of day,
 And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,
 Though he give light, and th' East perfume;
 If they should offer to contest
 With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
 Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?
 We count three hundred, but we misse:
 There is but one, and that one ever.

One of Herbert's most extraordinarily beautiful and finished poems; but here we have, again, typically of Herbert, a cultural rather than a landscape reference. Easter is about music: the stretched-out Christ on the cross like the string on an instrument, that "key" of Christ stretched out, teaching us how to celebrate. We have to 'stretch out' the music of our minds and hearts. Too easy to say that Herbert is urban where Vaughan is rural; but you may see again how some of the contrasts I have been trying to draw out show the different priorities, emphases in a poetic voice.

To celebrate Vaughan and to acknowledge his remarkable stature as a poet is to celebrate somebody who stands at the beginning of the Romantic sensibility in English language poetry, who has discovered landscape and childhood, loss and nostalgia, whose sense of the world around is characterised by a deep awareness of both grace and beauty but also of what upsets or interrupts our vision of that beauty, individually, but also culturally. Poetry is an attempt to reconnect us with the pure vision and the pure desire of childhood.

The last poem I would like to draw your attention to, I include mostly because of its wonderful last line. But, at the same time, it seems to me to express something very central to Vaughan's awareness that what the poet is



Figure 7. The grave of Henry Vaughan at Llansantffraed Church. Mike Williams

doing is trying to bring to a point, as he says in *The Star* poem, that “magnetism” in the heart, which will draw down the touch of the holy, and so transform perception and awareness.

The poem is *Quickness*.

False life, a foil and no more, when
Wilt thou be gone?
Thou foul deception of all men
That would not have the true come on.

Thou art a Moon-like toil; a blind
Self-posing state;
A dark contest of waves and wind
A mere tempestuous debate.

Life is a fixed, discerning light
A knowing Joy;
No chance, or fit: but ever bright,
And calm and full, yet doth not cloy.

‘Tis such a blissful thing, that still
Doth vivify,
And shine and smile, and hath the skill
To please without Eternity.

Thou art a toilsome Mole, or less,
A moving mist;
But life is, what none can express,
A quickness, which my God hath kissed.

Rowan Williams PC FBA FRSL FLSW is a Welsh Anglican bishop, theologian, and poet. He was Archbishop of Canterbury, from December 2002 to December 2012. Dr Williams spent much of his earlier career as an academic at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford successively. After stepping down as Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Williams took up the position of Master of Magdalene College at Cambridge University and was later appointed Chancellor of the University of South Wales. In December 2012, Downing St announced Dr Williams’ elevation to the peerage as a Life Baron, and he was introduced to the temporal benches of the House of Lords as Baron Williams of Oystermouth, sitting as a crossbencher. He has a special interest in the poetry of Henry Vaughan.

CRICKHOWELL MANOR IN THE LATE THIRTEENTH CENTURY: THE MEDIEVAL CUSTOMS OF THE MANOR, AND ITS LORD SIR HUGH TURBERVILLE

PAMELA AND MARTIN REDWOOD

Introduction

In the early-thirteenth century, part of the lordship of Brecon was detached to become a new lordship of Blaenllynfi, granted to Peter fitz Herbert.¹ Blaenllynfi included part of Talgarth and the sub-lordships or manors of Crickhowell (Ystrad Yw Isaf) and Tretower (Ystrad Yw Uchaf), allocated to the Turberville and Picard families respectively (Fig. 1).

Crickhowell manor was small, lacking any special features or important events, and mentioned only in passing in the literature of the Marches.² In the thirteenth century its most notable characteristic was that its lords, like the Turbervilles of Glamorgan and Hereford, were known as loyal supporters of the English king.

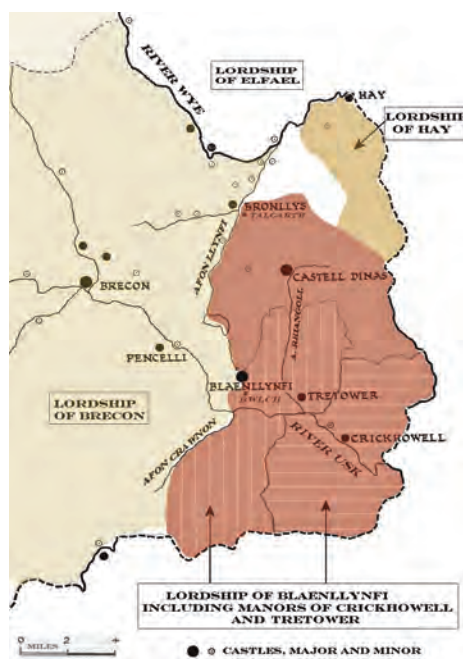


Figure 1. The Lordship of Blaenllynfi.

Lewis and Williams 1960: 32

The manor

The manorial system of government was introduced into England and parts of Wales by the Normans, as a means of consolidating their hold on the conquered territories. They established areas of land for crops, pasture, woods, parks, forests, and recruited the local population as agricultural labours and servants. The government of a manor rested with the lord and, below him, a range of officials (steward, bailiff, reeve etc.), charged with carrying out his behests, and responsible for certain functions of government contributing to the economy of the manor. Surveillance and controls, with punishment for non-cooperation, were exercised through courts representing the lord and the more important tenants. The administrative centre of the manor was the castle.

Crickhowell manor comprised Crickhowell borough, first recorded in 1281³ (but an earlier charter is presumed), surrounded by the parishes of Llanbedr,

Partrishow, Llangenny, Llanelly, and Llangatock. These had churches of Celtic foundation whose ecclesiastical boundaries were kept for administrative purposes by the Norman system of government. Llangatock parish lost its territory north of the river Usk when St. Edmund's Church was built in the town in about 1300, and the parish of Crickhowell was created to serve it. Crickhowell's stone castle is said to date from 1242,⁴ replacing an earlier motte.

Politically and administratively, Crickhowell town was a borough by prescription, i.e. the property of the manorial lord. Some tenants were burgesses of the borough, but, elsewhere in the manor, tenants were freeholders or Welsh/customary tenants who held their land by the custom of service to the lord.

The customs of the manor

Our research began with the discovery of an old document relating to Crickhowell manor in the National Library of Wales (Fig. 2). The document (Badminton Manorial 379), is described in the library schedule⁵ as the translation into English of an old custumal in Latin, no longer in existence, but thought to date from the beginning of the fourteenth century or earlier. The translation itself, made in the sixteenth century, is in poor condition in parts and initially disconcerting. Fortunately, the schedule lists three other contemporary versions, Badminton Manorial 380, 382, and 389, which help to fill damaged parts, and summary transcriptions of the text give some idea of what the custumal was about. A closer look suggested that there was much we could learn about Crickhowell in medieval times from this document.

A custumal is a written document embodying the customs, i.e. the laws, of a medieval manor, setting out duties owed by the tenants to the lord of the manor, in return for residence on his property. The best-known customs concern agricultural work, but many other aspects of medieval life could be covered as well. Manorial customs were introduced by the Normans after the conquest of England; in Wales they would have become part of life in Marcher lordships on the English border and elsewhere in south Wales. There appear to be few, if any records of other custumals in Wales before the sixteenth century.⁶

Our first task was to establish the date of the Latin document. Close examination of the sixteenth-century translation enabled us to do this from the names of persons and the references to events that we know took place in the late-thirteenth century. The most significant evidence for the date of the custumal is shown in references to "the wars between the king and the Prince of Wales". Llywelyn ap Gruffudd used the title for a time in 1258 and 1262, but it did not appear in English documents until 1267 in the Treaty of Montgomery.⁷ Sir Hugh Turberville, a loyal adherent of the king, was lord of Crickhowell manor at that time; his tenure ended in 1281. The first name on the document is Roger de Pedwardyn (Bredwardine, Herefordshire), who is

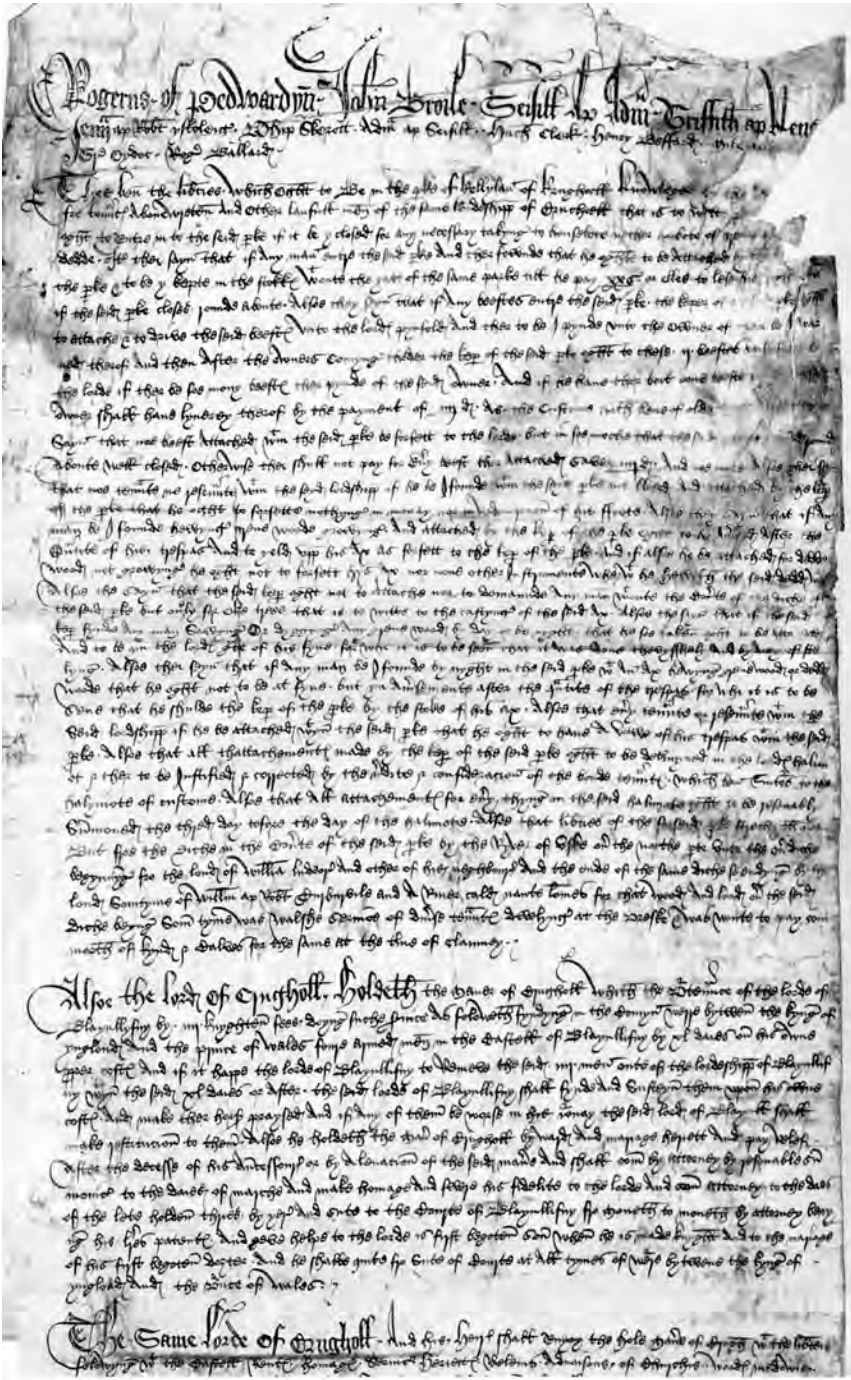


Figure 2. The Crickhowell Custumal. First part of a translation made in the sixteenth century. Badminton Manorial 376. By permission of the National Library of Wales

recorded (382) as receiving a grant of Gwernvale manor in Crickhowell from Hugh Turberville; a grant which must have been made before the end of Hugh's tenure as lord of the manor in 1281. Therefore, the custumal would have been drawn up between the years 1267 and 1281. It is also worth noting that such a document would not usually refer to specific events, as this one does. It suggests special circumstances at the time.

Of the other versions of the custumal, the last, 389, is described as "an inquisition into the customs of the manor" and is dated 1563. It was probably a response by the manorial lord to the Acts of Union of England and Wales (1535-43), when significant powers of sovereignty were taken from Marcher lords. In consulting old documents, the lord of the manor may have tried to ascertain what powers remained to him under English rule. A later survey with maps of 1587,⁸ contains no reference to the custumal.

A full transcription has been made of 389 (Appendix 1) because it is the easiest for the purpose and usefully divided into twenty-five separate customs. But it leaves out, or mentions only briefly, three important items from 379 relating specifically to the thirteenth century that were evidently considered no longer appropriate: military service, homage, and aid. These have been transcribed separately (Appendix 2).

The manor and the world of the medieval tenant

The Crickhowell custumal covers almost every aspect of life on the manor. It appears to be of a standard format and presentation, but the explanatory detail of what was required of manorial tenants reveals much about their life on the manor. The terms and conditions of what tenants are required to do, or not do, indicate the degree and type of power the lord could exercise.

The Welsh lands and communities, called the Welshry

This is a subject of particular interest in a lordship on the English border. As already mentioned, the custumal is addressed primarily to Welsh tenants, the word 'Welsh' apparently being the equivalent of 'customary'. The English equivalent was the peasant, defined as 'serf, bonded labourer or servant'.

When the Normans invaded Wales, they encountered an indigenous population with its own ancient laws, customs, and language.⁹ In the Crickhowell area, part or all of this population was displaced to geographically more harsh but familiar hillside on the manor. A number of Welsh 'communities' became established on the hills above the borough, probably initially as family units. The custumal records the place names of 12 such communities, indicating that they were well established by the late-thirteenth century. Remarkably, their locations can be identified certainly or probably from modern maps. The custumal identifies them in connection with service required of Welsh tenants in the maintenance of the lord's three corn mills (Fig. 3):

Clydach Mill (Fig. 3. C on map, XXII in transcript) was serviced by four communities: Llanelly (1 on map),¹⁰ Prysg (2 on map),¹¹ Maesgwortha (3 on map)¹² and Abbarthar (4 on map).¹³

Usk Mill (U on map, XXIV in transcript) was in Crickhowell parish and therefore most likely to be the town mill of later times, mapped in 1760¹⁴ and commemorated in the present Mill Street.

Kemera Mill (K on map, XXV in transcript) is more difficult to identify. The eight communities servicing Kemera Mill were Llanbedr (5 on map),¹⁵ Henbant (6 on map),¹⁶ Llangene (7 on map),¹⁷ Bellfontain (8 on map),¹⁸ Banfrood (9 on map),¹⁹ Killyhulagh (10 on map),²⁰ Toregayr (11 on map)²¹ and Kemer (12 on map).²² It was most probably on the Cwmbeth brook; perhaps a forerunner of the later Pregel Mill.

No names of individual tenants can be connected with the communities, but there is a little information about three of them:

Prysg (Prisk) community is referred to in the section on the lord's parks, below.

Henbant Fach (Llanbedr parish) is described as 'an early medieval hall-house' by RCAHMW, and as an "early sixteenth century house", Grade II listed for "special interest in its late medieval origins" by Cadw. This house, or an earlier building on the site, *may* have been the dwelling of an unknown Welsh community leader.

Bellfontain is the only community which does not have a Welsh name, but a French-sounding, perhaps Norman name. It was also the name of one of the lord's parks, mapped in 1587.²³ The buildings depicted outside and across the edge of the park may have been occupied by survivors of a Welsh community. They are not recorded on later maps and, today, there is no evidence of buildings.

The customs of the mills

These are set out in Appendix I: XXII–XXV. With a few minor alterations the customs listed in the sixteenth-century text 389 are a direct copy of the customs listed in 379 (the translation of the thirteenth-century custumal). We can

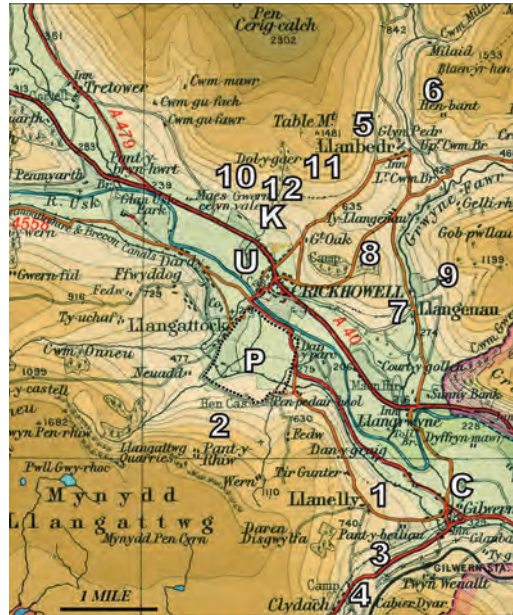


Figure 3. Crickhowell Manor Welshries and Mills. See text for key.

Based on Bartholomew half-inch contoured map 1951.
Heights in feet

therefore assume that these customs date back to the thirteenth century. The task of building and maintaining the lord's mills was one of the most important and labour-intensive of a medieval manor. Crickhowell manor had very little arable land, yet the task of servicing is laid out in considerable detail, separately for each mill, with the work allocated to specific communities. Penalties for work not done, or badly done, bring to mind tales from later centuries of millers who overcharged and of farmers who illicitly ground their own corn on their own farms, which no doubt happened in the thirteenth century also. Crickhowell manor had a wealth of mountain streams to power its mills, but as the climate was wet and harsh in the hills, the corn crops were probably poor and sparse in bad years.

Markets and fairs

Medieval markets were a focus of trade and the hub of business for an area and could be very profitable. Markets were well established in Crickhowell by 1281, the year the lordship of the manor was given by Sir Hugh Turberville to his son-in-law Sir Grimbald Pauncefote (see below).²⁴ This was an important family event, and the gift included charters confirming the weekly market on Thursday and two fairs in the manor, at Easter and in September. By custom, the lord had liberty to hold a weekly market on Thursdays and one fair a year, at Christmas (Appendix 1: XVIII, XIX) but these charters, ratified by the king, gave Crickhowell a second fair. There was almost certainly also a Monday market; this was recorded in the fourteenth century.²⁵ Later in the same year, (1281), another charter, addressed to "the bailiffs, burgesses and other men of Crickhowell", gave the right to impose tolls on certain goods brought to the town for sale.²⁶ Forty-seven items are listed, including farm animals, animal hides and skins, fish, wine, honey, and miscellaneous items such as roof nails and a brewing cauldron (Fig. 4). The purpose of this grant was to raise money towards the cost of building town walls (murage). The walls were never built.

It is difficult to assess Crickhowell's trading status with regard to other markets and fairs. William Rees' fourteenth-century map of the area shows a wide range of sites.²⁷ Early dates for some places are recorded in a *Gazetteer*.²⁸ Brecon had a market and two fairs before 1308, and appears typical of many towns in having the fairs on the feast of a saint, in this town, St. John the Baptist, when they were held for eight days before and eight days after the feast day. Two fairs a year was unusual for a smaller town. Abergavenny markets and fairs (unspecified) are recorded for 1255, but greatly reduced by 1368. Tretower had one market and one fair in 1298; Talgarth may have had a market and a fair in 1309. 'Market circuits' probably existed, in which traders moved between Crickhowell, Abergavenny, and Tretower as the week progressed, possibly also including Monmouth and Ross.²⁹

Crickhowell markets were held at the port—an open space near the town gate, at the top of High Street—in the charge of an official called the portreeve, one of whose tasks was to ensure that goods sold were measured “by the lord’s standard” (Appendix 1: XXI). The custumal specifies which measures of goods had to be used and ‘proved’. There were no national standards of weights and measures in the thirteenth century, so each lord imposed his own, on his own territory. These varied from place to place, causing many difficulties and angry disputes. Elizabeth I was to institute a universal system in 1588, but in the thirteenth century it is not surprising that a lord should make and insist on his own standard. Compliance was enforceable, as the portreeve had the power to proclaim a Court of Piepowder in case of quarrels on contracts of goods, or other disturbances or slanders at market. The name is derived from the French, *pieds poudres* (‘dusty feet’, implying an itinerant trader or vagabond) and the court was of summary jurisdiction so that it could complete its business in a day, before the culprits could escape to another place.

The lord’s parks

Medieval parks have been thought of as the province of kings and great lords to indulge in energetic recreations such as hunting on their lands, mainly for deer, (as suggested by the name ‘deer park’). Unlike forests, which were open and often subject to forest law, parks were enclosed as part of a person’s private property. Some were very large, but many were small and unsuitable for hunting gallops, but they still managed to supply venison and other meats for the lord’s table. Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust identified 58 parks in east Wales, of which seven were in Breconshire.³⁰ They found that, here, the ‘deer

Nov. 26.	Grant to the bailiffs, burgesses, and other men of Crickhowel of murage,		
Westminster.	for forty years, on goods brought to the town for sale, viz. :—		
1281.	On every horse-load (<i>summa</i>) of corn	-	1d.
	On every horse, mare, ox, and cow sold (<i>vendi</i>)	-	1d.
	On every hide of horse, mare, ox, and cow, fresh, salt, or tanned	-	1d.
	On every cart laden with salt meat	-	1d.
	On every five bacon hogs sold	-	1d.
	On every ten small hogs sold	-	1d.
	On every fresh salmon sold	-	1d.
	On every dozen shad sold	-	1d.
	On every lamprey before Easter	-	1d.
	On every ten sheep, goats, or swine	-	1d.
	On every hundred (<i>centena</i>) of wolfells, skins of goats, stags, hinds, bucks, and does	-	1d.
	On every hundred of skins of lambs, kids, hares, rabbits, foxes, cats and squirrels	-	1d.
	On every cart-load of salt	-	1d.
	On every horse-load (<i>summa</i>) of salt sold, per week	-	1d.
	On every horse-load of cloth sold	-	1d.
	On every entire cloth sold	-	1d.
	On every hundred of linen web, canvas, and Irish cloth	-	1d.
	On every cloth of silk with gold, samite, “diarpe” and <i>bandakyn</i>	-	1d.
	<i>De qualibet panno de serico sine auro et chef de scandallo affore</i>	-	1d.
	On every tun of wine and ashes (<i>cinerum</i>)	-	1d.
	On every horse-load of ashes	-	1d.
	On every horse-load of honey	-	1d.
	On every tun of honey	-	3d.
	On every sack of wool	-	4d.
	On every truss of cloth brought by cart	-	3d.
	On every horse-load of cloth or divers other small articles	-	1d.
	On every cart-load of iron	-	1d.
	On every cart-load of lead	-	2d.
	On every horse-load of tan, per week	-	1d.
	On goods sold by weight (<i>de averio de pondere</i>), that is, on every hundred (<i>centena</i>)	-	1d.
	On every wey (<i>peisa</i>) of tallow (<i>cepra</i>) and grass	-	1d.
	On every quarter of wood	-	2d.
	On every hundred of alms and copperas	-	1d.
	On every two thousand of onions	-	1d.
	On every horse-load of garlic	-	1d.
	On every thousand of herrings	-	1d.
	On every hundred of boards	-	1d.
	On every millstone	-	1d.
	On every hundred of faggots	-	1d.
	On every quarter of salt	-	1d.
	On every wey of cheese and butter	-	1d.
	On every thousand of roof-nails (<i>clavorum ad cumulum domus</i>)	-	1d.
	On every hundred of horse-shoes and cart-clouts (<i>clutorum ad carectam</i>)	-	1d.
	On every quarter of tan	-	1d.
	On every two thousand of all kinds of nails, except cart-clouts and roof-nails	-	1d.
	On every truss of all kinds of merchandise exceeding the value of two shillings	-	1d.
	On every brewing caldron	-	1d.

Figure 4. Tolls at Crickhowell, 1281.

Patent Rolls 1281–1292: 2-3

park' was primarily a medieval landscape creation, but some were created at a much later date. Little is known about them.

Crickhowell manor had three parks in medieval times, none of them suitable for hunting. Two were north of the river Usk and not far from the castle: Bellfountain, 30 acres, in Llangenny and Philip Montaigne (5 or 10 acres) in Llanbedr (Appendix 1: XIV). They were almost certainly there to supply fresh meat for the lord, and their French-sounding names suggest a Norman connection.

The medieval park of Killelan

The name (sometimes spelled Kellylan) was probably an Anglicised version of the Welsh *cilau-lan*, meaning perhaps a sheltered bank or slope. It was situated on the south side of the river Usk, in a more isolated position than the other parks, reached by a ford, and later, by a bridge (Fig. 3. P on map). The slope rises from 70 metres near the bridge to 180 metres near Hen Castell and is watered with streams flowing down from the limestone heights of Llangattock mountain. In 1587, it was surveyed and mapped³¹ and its size was measured as 372 acres. The location appears typical of smaller English parks,³² with woodland areas, in particular on higher or more sloping ground near the boundaries of manors, and about 200 acres in size. In the thirteenth century, and earlier, this part of Crickhowell manor was heavily wooded, probably penetrated bit by bit, though a rough track could already have been hacked out, straight up the mountain, for a supply of limestone.

The custumal describes two ditch boundaries, necessary to establish the area of authority for the park's customary tenants (Appendix 1: I). Along the lower edge, along the river, the ditch is easy to follow, but the 'overditch' along the top of the park is more difficult to trace, as identification of rural boundaries had to rely on features such as streams, ditches, woodland, or bushes. The land over (i.e. above) the overditch, which rises more steeply at this point, used to be part of the Welshry. The word Preske refers to the whole area of the Welshry, not just where Prisk farm is today. Thus, this ditch, later a lane, which was the upper boundary of the Park, was also the boundary between the Englishry and the Welshry of the Manor in medieval times.

The purpose of the park

What tenants and others could, or could not do, in the Park is set out in considerable detail (Appendix 1). It reads as though the custom of the park had not been obeyed and was causing concern. The manorial court should have been able to deal with problems on a small scale, but perhaps the stealing had got out of control, and needed reinforcement or redefinition in the custumal? Wood, especially oak, was a valuable and profitable resource for the lord; but underwood and grazing rights in woods and common ground were very important for his tenants' subsistence, if not for their survival.

The role of the parker

The parker was an important manorial official. In the thirteenth century, part of his job seems to have been to police the park. He would have to catch intruders in isolated areas, confiscate axes, ensure those arrested appeared in court at the right day and time, and collect fines the culprits had to pay. A few medieval deer parks in England are recorded as having a parker's lodge, sometimes moated, for the use of the parker or huntsmen. In Killelan Park there was a small, substantially built, ancient stone structure with a moat at the top of the park, with a clear view over the park down to the river Usk: Hen Castell. Was it a parker's lodge?

The history of Hen Castell

Hen Castell, situated just within the park near Ty Mawr, is generally agreed to be old (*hen*) but not a castle. In the early-twentieth century, archaeologists and other interested persons sought to define this curious structure, described as a square or rectangular flat-topped mound surrounded by a moat or ditch fed by a stream.³³ In 1981, the site was "so overgrown as to be inaccessible", and has become a Scheduled Ancient Monument; a medieval moat and earthwork, with a mass of fallen masonry and "no recorded history".³⁴

These twentieth-century investigators appear unaware of the existence of the medieval park of Killelan³⁵ or the comments of two earlier writers. Ironically, in the early-nineteenth century, people in Llangattock knew more about Hen Castell. Henry Thomas Payne referred in his Parochial Notices of 1806³⁶ to the park of Cil-lan, in which, "the ruins of an old lodge, surrounded by a moat, are still perceptible...the country people call it *caru yr hen gastell*. i.e. the heap or ruins of the old castle". Samuel Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (1840) states that, "in the upper part of the park are some small remains of a moated building, indicating the site of the lodge occupied by the park-keeper".³⁷ It would seem an excellent site for the purpose. Badminton records, containing many references to a parker, were then housed at Badminton House, where only certain visitors had the privilege of examining them, of whom Henry Thomas Payne was one, and it is almost certainly he who informed Samuel Lewis.

A recital of the customs of Killelan Park in the custumal is, of course, no proof that the parker had a lodge from which to discharge his duties, but it provides a very good reason for having a lodge there in the thirteenth century. In that isolated area, a lodge could be a place of personal safety for a parker watching over the park. Below, stretched the wooded mountain slope with boundaries to be observed; immediately above and outside the park, was the Prisk Welshry, a higher and harsher place to inhabit, whose occupants would no doubt try to retrieve what they could from the park. Kay's research³⁸ led him to suggest an early rather than late medieval date for the building. The

difficulty of preventing theft of wood was a major concern and it could be that a parker's lodge was a response to that problem.

Military service, homage and aids

These three customs are specifically relevant to the thirteenth century. They were omitted, or mentioned only briefly, in the final version of the custumal, dated 1563. They are important because they reveal the date of the custumal, and suggest at least part of its purpose: to set out customs referring to the wars between the English king and the Welsh that were taking place at that time. This finding led to research concerning the role of Crickhowell's lords and tenants in that conflict.

Military service

Customs of military service were linked in a chain of obligations and responsibility from the humblest manorial tenant to the sovereign. The Welsh tenants of Crickhowell manor owed military service to their lord, who in turn owed military service to his superior, the lord of Blaenllynfi. The lord of Blaenllynfi owed military service to the king. The obligations of the lord of Crickhowell to the lord of Blaenllynfi are set out in the second paragraph of the custumal (Appendix 2). At that time the lord of Crickhowell manor was Sir Hugh de Turberville, who, as we shall see, is the probable author of the custumal.

The oath of homage

The second paragraph of the custumal also shows that Hugh Turberville exercised powers over his tenants in the manor of Crickhowell, very similar to those Blaenllynfi's lord exercised over him. The custom of homage is set out in detail in Appendix 2. As a medieval ceremony, the gesture of hands within hands could be understood by the most unsophisticated tenant, making the lord an all-powerful object of veneration, if not fear. Such an oath could carry a military obligation.

Aid

This was a feudal obligation to give sums of money to the lord for occasions such as ransom of his person, when his eldest son was knighted, when his eldest daughter was married, or for going on a crusade. In the Crickhowell custumal, these customs devolved on the Welsh tenants. Also mentioned is a military obligation.

Crickhowell in time of war

Crickhowell's custumal states, "the Welsh tenants shall go with the lord to wars as many as shall be chosen by him", followed by a promise of restitution by the Lord

of Blaenllynfi for any harm (Appendix 2). The 'Welsh' tenants of Crickhowell, (and no doubt in practice, some of the freeholders of the Englishry, judging from the numbers required) were subject to a lord who expected them to fight their Welsh compatriots from the north. A determining factor in the loyalty of Crickhowell tenants would surely have been that their livelihood, even their existence, depended upon the piece of land on which they lived, and probably had lived, for generations, and on the lord they served. In reality, they had little choice but to fight for him.

As it happened, Crickhowell was never invaded by the Welsh forces, but was directly involved in other ways. Fig. 5 shows that 100 footmen were required from each of the three parts of Blaenllynfi. Crickhowell was probably the most heavily populated part of that lordship, but while some young men might well have been attracted by the opportunity for adventure in a world outside the constrictions of manorial life, spring was a busy season on the farms. If the 'best men' were creamed off for fighting (and some did not return) the same had also happened only five years previously for the war of 1276–7, and, before that, in earlier conflicts; the long-term result could only be a descent into poverty for the areas concerned, even though they were not physically invaded.

Men from Crickhowell would have been recruited into the infantry at a time when large numbers were wanted. In 1277, there was a bow-armed corps from Gwent and Crickhowell;³⁹ a picked body of 800 men, in which Crickhowell's tenants would have served.

1283.	To the bailiffs of Edmund, the king's brother, at Monemwe and of the Three Castles. Order to be in person before Hugh de Turbervill and Grimbold Pauncefort,—whom the king is sending to the bailiffs, parts and to other parts of the marches of Wales to choose footmen in those parts from the strongest men at arms, and to conduct them to the king at Montgomery, as the king has enjoined upon Hugh and Grimbold by word of mouth,—on Sunday the feast of St. Ambrose, or before one of them, at Hereford in order to provide certain days and places at which they will come to come before Hugh and Grimbold, or one of them, such and so many men of their bailiwicks out of whom 300 footmen may be chosen to be conducted to the king as aforesaid, and to bear and do those things that Hugh and Grimbold, or one of them, shall enjoin upon them on the king's behalf. The king also orders them to cause to come before Hugh and Grimbold, or either of them, at days and places to be provided by Hugh and Grimbold, or either of them, so many and such footmen strong and capable for arms, out of whom the said 300 may be chosen. This they are warned not to omit in any way as the king trusts in them and as they would wish to avoid grievous damage. [<i>Ibid.</i>]
March 21. Conway.	The like to the bailiffs of Glou for 300 footmen, Welsh and English. The like to the sheriff of Hereford for 400 footmen, to wit 200 from the county and 200 from Irelinesfeld.
Footmen	The like to the bailiffs of Robert de Mortuo Mari at Stepton for 120. The like to the bailiffs of Edmund de Mortuo Mari at Wyggemor' for 200. The like to the bailiffs of Maud de Mortuo Mari at Radnor', Thenezovek, Kinteton, Prestened, Norton, l'enebrigg', Kingestons, Erlesons and Koghteton. The like to the bailiffs of William de Everus at Lenhales for 40. The like to the bailiffs of the earl of Hereford at Keniton and Hantindon for 60.
Grimbold Pauncefort	The like to the keeper of the forest of Den' for 100. The like to the bailiffs of Roger de Clifford at Ardeleis for 60. The like to the bailiffs of Ralph de Tany at Elvel. The like to the bailiffs of the earl of Hereford at La Hove for 60.
Blaenllynfi	The like to the bailiffs of Reginald son of Feser at Talgarth for 100.
Crickhowell	The like to the bailiffs of Grimbold Pauncefort at Ergeod for 100.
Tretower	The like to the bailiffs of John Eychard at [blank] for 100. The like to the bailiffs of G. de Gyenvill at Ewvas for 60. The like to the bailiffs of Theobald de Verdun at Ewvas for 60. The like to the bailiffs of John Giffard for 40. The like to the prior and men of Lenniaste for 200. [<i>Ibid.</i>]
Tree-fellers	To the sheriffs, burgoesses, bailiffs, marchants and communitars of the counties of Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester to whom, etc. Order to assist Hugh de Turbervill and Grimbold Pauncefort or one of them, whom the king is sending to make provision in those counties of tree-fellers (<i>coupsioribus</i>), diggers and others, to be conducted in the king at Montgomery, as the king has more fully enjoined upon Hugh and Grimbold by word of mouth, or John Saayn or another to be deputed by Hugh and Grimbold for the execution of the premises, and to cause Hugh and Grimbold, or either of them, or John, or their deputy to have the said men by election or otherwise with all speed, as they shall enjoin upon them on the king's behalf, so that they or one of them shall have them with the king at Montgomery in the quinzaine of Easter next at the latest, ready to set out with the king against the Welsh robbers. The sheriffs, etc., are also ordered to make provision of corn and of carriage thereof, either by sumpter-horse (<i>sumptuosis</i>) or otherwise, to the king at Montgomery in the quinzaine aforesaid, in accordance with what Hugh and Grimbold shall enjoin upon them on his behalf. They are warned to conduct themselves so in the execution of this order that the premises shall not be retarded by their default or negligence, by reason whereof the king ought to punish (<i>ceperit ad</i>) their bodies and all their goods. The king gives the said sheriff a day (<i>adjournans</i>) before him at Montgomery in the eve of the quinzaine aforesaid, so that they shall be there then to certify the king concerning all the premises and to do further what he shall cause to be enjoined upon them.
sumpter-horse = pack-horse	

Figure 5. Recruitment for the War Against the Welsh, 21 March 1283.

Instructions from the King, *Calendar of Welsh Rolls*: 280-1, annotated here

Hugh Turberville (c. 1230–1292), Lord of Crickhowell Manor, and likely author of the custumal

Early years

The Turbervilles probably came from Thouberville in Normandy.⁴⁰ The Crickhowell Turbervilles can be traced from a roll of benefactions made to Brecon priory in 1121,⁴¹ which refers to the Picards, who were allotted Ystrad Yw Uchaf (Tretower), and to Robert Turberville of Crickhowell, who was allotted Ystrad Yw Isaf (Crickhowell), and is described as a principal tenant of Bernard de Neufmarché. Hugh Turberville, thought to have been born about 1230, grew up in an atmosphere of conflict, punctuated by wars between the Welsh and the English king, then Henry III. There were many opportunities for the son of a knight to become one himself and to take part. Documentary evidence of Hugh's activities begins in 1262, at a period of considerable disturbance when the king was facing uprisings in Wales.

On 24 December 1262, royal despatches to several recipients expressed the king's grave concern that his castles should be fortified and preserved, especially in the Marches, where he was informed there was great peril from the (Welsh) enemy. In a message to Sir Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, whose lands suffered heavily in the conflict with the Welsh, he commended, "our beloved and faithful Hugh de Turberville", who had been sent on a mission of enquiry to the area.⁴² This recommendation implies that Hugh had already distinguished himself as a soldier and loyal servant to the king, and was appreciated as such.

The barons' war (1264–1267)

Hugh Turberville appears frequently in the Calendar records, allowing some insight into the difficulties of his position. Imagine a loyal servant of the king caught up in a conflagration of allegiances, hostility between and within families, and private feuds among barons for their own ends, all of which characterized this ugly conflict. Hugh attached himself to the formidable Roger Mortimer, at first a supporter of the barons, but, after pardon by the king, an important royalist figure.⁴³

An example of the enmity and confusion aroused is the plight of Hereford. Hugh had twice been instructed by the king to fortify the castle, but there were too many fingers in that particular pie, and the situation resulted in an Inquisition⁴⁴ (1265), which produced an extensive report, in which a short paragraph near the end mentions Hugh, referring to an incident in the previous year.

When the citizens of Hereford were informed of the coming of Sir Roger Mortimer and other great men with him they burned certain houses in the suburb which hindered the defence, to the damage of the inhabitants there...also Robert de Turberville the elder, John his brother who was marshal of the army, Hugh de Turberville and their men...came into the city with a great army of banners displayed and grievously assaulted it...and they spent the night in the priory of

Hereford and the suburbs, to the great damage to the priory and convent because they wasted all the goods they found there.

It may have been at Hereford that Hugh met Grimbald Pauncefote, later his son-in-law, who was knighted as a reward for changing sides to join the king during the sieges of Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester.⁴⁵

Gascony, and after (1270–1274)

In 1270, Prince Edward went on crusade to the Holy Land.⁴⁶ He had been busy acting on behalf of his father since the Barons' War. The defeat and death of the king's main enemy, Simon de Montfort (Evesham, 1265), had been accomplished, but the Welsh, led by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (the last sovereign prince of Wales), were as provocative as ever. Hugh Turberville had been sent to Wales in 1268,⁴⁷ probably in connection with the treaty of Montgomery, the outcome of which favoured Llywelyn. (This was a mission of crucial importance: an attempt to settle the collision which was developing between Llywelyn and Gilbert de Clare which in spite of Hugh's efforts was destined to be a source of the breakdown of relations between Llywelyn and the royal government.⁴⁸) The king was in poor health, but in 1268 Edward 'took the cross' confirming his intention, and in August 1270 he set out. He was to stay away for four years but the crusade itself was not a success.

On 16 June 1271, King Henry had given Hugh Turberville, "protection for three years for going to Gascony on business for Edward the king's son".⁴⁹ Hugh went, and, when there, became seneschal (governor) of Gascony. In that huge, isolated area the seneschal had almost vice-regal powers, with custody of wide lands, demesne fortresses, the regional treasuries, and presidencies of the highest courts of regional custom. It could have been a big advance in Hugh's career, but it was not to be. Eleven months later (18 May 1272) Hugh, as seneschal, was notified that the king had committed the stewardship of Gascony to Luke de Tany, to whom were to be delivered its castles, cities, and all its land.⁵⁰ Luke de Tany, a Yorkshire knight, was then on crusade with prince Edward, serving as his admiral.

For Hugh, a man of action, reportedly a good fighter who had served the king as a soldier in the field, the post of seneschal was unlike anything he had yet attempted. It was politically and administratively difficult, in a distant, hostile environment. Gascony could have seemed to him like exile (and that could even have been the intention of some who bore him no good-will?). The hiatus in leadership after the death of Henry (16 November 1272), with the absence of Edward who was returning from crusade and was, as yet, uncrowned, would have been unnerving for any loyal servant of the crown. In the following year (1273) Memoranda issued from St. Martins, London, included one for Hugh Turberville, ordering him to come "before the king or his subjects

supplying his place in England” for trespass committed by sending his men to aid the siege of Brecon castle.⁵¹ This was yet another complicated situation in which Hugh was marginally involved.⁵²

The family and the manor (c.1270–1282)

Almost all the evidence we have about Hugh comes from his military career, mostly in the form of instructions from the king. The only records showing Hugh initiating something himself concern the continuation of his family and the manor in years to come.

We do not know the names of Hugh’s mother or his wife, (beyond her first name, Joan) but he acknowledged a daughter called Sybil. As already mentioned, Hugh probably knew or met Grimbald Pauncefote in Hereford. The marriage of Grimbald and Sybil is thought to have taken place in the 1270s, after Hugh’s return from Gascony.

The late 1270s were overshadowed by the Welsh wars. There was widespread discontent in the country after the treaty of Aberconwy in 1277, the year Edward’s castle was begun at Builth. At no great distance from Crickhowell, tree-felling was being carried out with little remission, to make roadways for Edward’s armies.⁵³ Hugh would have been aware of a great movement of men and supplies for castle building and for war. Events then moved inexorably towards the war of 1282–3. For Hugh, the situation must have presented a dilemma between his domestic duty towards the future of his family and manor, and the urgent military duty to fight for the king. In 1281, just before the outbreak of war, Hugh took the step of giving his manor outright to his daughter’s husband, Grimbald, in a document “ratified by the king”.⁵⁴ Having made these preparations Hugh, accompanied by Grimbald, went to war for the king.

In the absence of the lord, administration of the manor was presumably left to local officials. Hugh’s career required indefinite and perhaps protracted absences, which could jeopardise the good administration of the manor. In years of war, or other hardship, the manor could be plundered, from within or without. Animals could be taken from wherever they grazed; there could be disputes; or a lack of official control seriously detrimental to the manor’s economic and social stability. Effective government of the manor required laws for officials to implement.

There is little doubt that Crickhowell’s custumal was the work of Hugh Turberville at this time. In the course of military service, he would have become acquainted with other lordships and their centres of administration, the castles, and formed some idea of their domestic and feudal arrangements. He was used to the need for organisation in military life. We know the custumal was made between 1267 and 1281, during which there was one Welsh war and the growing threat of another (as always with the possibility of death for both Hugh and Grimbald). The custumal sets out exactly how the manor should be

governed, as if for the guidance of whoever would inherit it. If this was the intention, it shows Hugh doing his best for his family in difficult circumstances.

The comprehensiveness of the Crickhowell custumal is striking. A document of this length and complexity could not be produced in a vacuum, or as an intellectual exercise. Its maker knew the manor in detail. A further look at its provisions suggests it may have been based on an earlier custumal, or part of a survey no longer in existence. (A ‘survey’ at that period was a description of manorial lands, including properties, rents and boundaries⁵⁵).

Household knight of Edward I (1282–1287)

By 1282, Hugh had become a knight in the paid cavalry, with eight lances, and was one of the king’s bannerets, together with the knights bachelors and troopers of the king’s household.⁵⁶ The knight banneret was a military rank, given to soldiers who had distinguished themselves in battle. By holding the title, Hugh now enjoyed a reliable income, even though he appeared to have had no land after he gave Crickhowell manor to Grimbold. He may have been part of the king’s household for some time before 1281, though we have no dates. J.E. Morris has a number of references to Hugh, one of which states that Edward I had granted Hugh, and others, landed status on becoming bannerets, implying that they did not comply with this convention but deserved the title.⁵⁷ Morris describes Hugh as “the king’s favourite banneret”.⁵⁸

During and after the war of 1282-3, Hugh’s life became a series of short assignments to various places. He was often asked specifically to cover the absence of a senior official required elsewhere, or to go on a mission of special trust. In 1287, he organised the siege of Dryslwyn, Carmarthenshire,⁵⁹ and, in 1288, he was deputy Justiciar of North Wales for a few months.⁶⁰ His longest, and personally most significant, appointment was as constable of Bere castle from 1284.

At Bere Castle (1284–1292)

This was a Welsh castle: Castell y Bere (or Bêr). In 1221, Llywelyn ap Iorweth ‘began to build’ the castle for himself.⁶¹ Situated on a rock in the Dysynni valley of Merioneth, it was one of the most remote and the last of Welsh castles to be captured by Edward I, who made Hugh Turberville its constable in 1285, and, in 1290, gave him the castle for life “having special confidence in his fidelity”.⁶² The castle seems to have been his ‘home’, with his wife Joan,⁶³ in his last years, until his death in 1292.

Lady Sybil’s gift

Hugh’s daughter, Sybil, continued to live in Crickhowell for some time after the death of her husband Grimbold, in 1287. He died with debts amounting to the considerable sum of £800. Lady Sybil lost the manor temporarily while the

matter was dealt with, and, in 1301, the debt was undertaken by her son, also Grimbald, to pay off gradually.⁶⁴

While her father and husband pursued military careers, Lady Sybil had devoted herself to the religious welfare of the Crickhowell townspeople. She had a private chapel in the castle, but the parish church was in Llangattock across the river Usk, no doubt difficult to access in bad weather and probably served only by a ford. St. Mary's chapel, (Llanfair), though nearer, was small for the population of a thriving town. Lady Sybil was, therefore, instrumental in the building of St. Edmund's church in Crickhowell town.⁶⁵ The new building was spacious, and easily accessible for local people.

A parish church needs a parish, and in 1303, some 2,000 acres of Llangattock parish, north of the river Usk, became the parish of Crickhowell. Details of this arrangement were brought to light some 600 years later by the Rev. William Latham Bevan, son of William Hibbs Bevan of Glannant, Crickhowell. While canon residentiary at St. David's Cathedral (1879–93) he found an entry in its Statute Book for 1303, authorising the appointment of a Rector and a Vicar for the church of St. Edmund the Martyr (dedication chosen by the Bishop) in Crickhowell. The Rev. Bevan published an extract from this document, in Latin and in English, recording the annexation of St. Mary's chapel and part of Llangattock parish for the new parish.⁶⁶ Among other provisions, Lady Sybil, as patroness, with the consent of her sons Grimbald and Emmeric (the latter Rector of Llangattock) agreed to the transfer of a third part of monies (listed) and tithes (specified) from Llangattock church and St. Mary's chapel to St. Edmund's church, which monies and tithes the Rector of Llangattock agreed he could not retain, "without grave peril to his soul". The document ends, "this ordinance was given on the Sunday next after the Feast of the Blessed Laurence, Martyr, in the year of our Lord 1303, and in the eighth year of our consecration" (of the bishop, 1296), from which it is inferred that St. Edmund's church was consecrated in about 1303.

The creation of a parish for Crickhowell was no doubt made on the instructions, or, at least, with the agreement, of Lady Sybil. It shows strength of character and family pride in the daughter of a Turberville, determined to ensure the future spiritual needs of the Crickhowell population and a suitable resting place, with monuments, for her husband and herself. Lady Sybil remarried—as widows often did—but not before ensuring her plans for Crickhowell's church and parish had been carried out.

We know nothing more about Lady Sybil, but her name has continued to haunt the imaginations of Crickhowell people. Best known is the story of her monument in the church with missing hands (Fig. 6), said to have been cut off to release her husband Grimbald from captivity.⁶⁷

Today, the only buildings in Crickhowell manor known to have existed in the late-thirteenth century are the castle ruin and the churches: St. Edmunds



Figure 6. Effigy of Lady Sybil from St Edmund's Church.

Hywel Bevan

in Crickhowell, and the older churches of Celtic foundation in Llanbedr, Llangenny, Partrishow, Llanelly, and Llangattock.

Conclusion: the survival of the custumal

The custumal document itself probably remained at Crickhowell throughout the fourteenth century, a time during which the manor changed hands repeatedly, and the lord of the moment probably never visited. But the document—treated as a version of house deeds perhaps—was kept to show the manor legally existed, or as guidance to those in charge. The document was not in Crickhowell Castle when Owain Glyndŵr passed through; it might have gone to Raglan before Raglan was destroyed; more likely it remained somewhere in Crickhowell, eventually to be taken, unnoticed, among papers of later date, to Badminton. In the time of Henry VIII, or thereabouts, it was translated and made into the document we now have (the original now lost). In the nineteenth century, local gentry were allowed to see it. In the early-twentieth century, it was transferred, together with a huge number of other documents concerning the Badminton estates, to the National Library of Wales, where it has remained until today, a national as well as a local treasure.

Acknowledgements

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A much longer version of this article was prepared for Crickhowell and District Archive Centre. Mike Williams enthusiastically accepted the difficult task of pruning it to fit *Brycheiniog*.

Appendix 1: Transcription of the 1563 Inquisition Concerning the Royalties and Customs of Crickhowell Manor (NLW Badminton 389) (Transcription by Pamela Redwood)

Introductory Note

It is inevitably difficult to use 16th century translations as a source for portraying life in the 13th century. As already mentioned, the four Badminton versions of the customal (nos. 379, 380, 382 and 389) are in poor condition in parts. They supplement each other to some extent but are difficult to combine as a whole. The Inquisition (389) does this best, is dated 1563, and divides the text into 25 customs. It has therefore been chosen for transcription as Appendix 1. However, 389 is not just a reassertion of old customs; it is an enquiry by a 16th century jury, and it omits two of the three customs referring specifically to the 13th century: Military service, Homage, and Aids, discussed previously. (Homage is retained, perhaps out of respect for the then lord, the 3rd Earl of Worcester). The text of these out-of-date customs has been transcribed as Appendix 2, using the translation, 379.

The text

379 begins with the names of the 12 jurors in the 13th century, starting with Roger de Pedwardyn. 389 replaces these names with their 16th century counterparts, below.

This Inquisition indented and presented at Crickhowell the 13th day of November in the fifth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc. *Concerning* the Royalty and Custom which ought to be kept and used in the Manor and late Lordship of Crickhowell by the oaths of Lewis Vaughan, gent., Richard Herbert the Younger, gent., William Watkin, Kynvyn Watkin, Philip Thomas, Watkin Harry, William Walter, David ap Evan ap Watkin, Watkin Howell Morgan, John Watkin, William Lewis Gunter, Watkin Thomas ap Morgan, Thomas John Llewelyn, Thomas ap Thomas ap Jevan ap Kynvyn, David Lawrence ap David ap Yoroth, Thomas ap James, Philip Rees ap David, John Thomas ap John, Rees Thomas ap Jevan, and Watkin Jenkin ap Thomas ap Llewelyn. And confessed by divers others of the free tenants of the aforesaid Manor and Lordship. BEFORE Sir Roger Vaughan of Talgarth, knight, Thomas Hillary and Edward Herbert esquires, and Meredith ap Meredith, gent. By virtue of a commission to them directed and signed and sealed by the Right Honourable William, Earl of Worcester, and Lord of the said Manor and lordship. AND also by the consent and agreement of the said William, Earl of Worcester, at the special suit and labour of the said tenants to the said Earl, HATH confirmed all such customs as they found upon their oaths to be due upon them as hereafter ensueth and all other Customs to be void and for further assurance thereof the said tenants made their humble suit to the said Earl to put to his hand and seal to the one part of the said Inquisition, and the said tenants joined to both parts of the said Inquisition.

I. THE LIBERTIES AND CUSTOMS OF THE PARK OF KILLELAN

These be the Liberties which ought to be in the Park of Killelan of Crickhowell knowledged by the verdict of the free tenants above written and other lawful men of the same lordship of Crickhowell. That is to wit, that no tenant ought to enter into the said park if it be closed for any necessary taking to housebote neither haybote, of green timber nor dead. Item, they say that if any man enter the said park and there be found that he ought to be attached by the keeper of the park and to be kept in the stocks without the gate of the said park until he pay 20s. or else loose his eight foot if the park be closed round about.⁶⁸ Also they say that if any beasts enter the said park, the keeper of the said park ought to attach and drive the said beasts unto the lord's pinfold and there to be pinned until the owner of them be warned thereof, and then after the owner of them his coming thither, the keeper of the park ought to choose two beasts as forfeit to the lord, if there be so many beasts pinned of the said owner. And if he have there but one beast pinned, the said owner shall have livery thereof by payment of 4d. as the Custom hath been of old time. Also they say that no beast attached within the said park be forfeit to the lord but in so much that the said park be inclosed round bout well closed, otherwise he shall not pay for any beast there attached save 4d. and no more.

Also they say that no tenant within the said lordship if he be found within the said park not inclosed, and attached by the keeper that he ought to forfeit nothing in money, nor redemption of his foote. Also they say that if any man be found hewing green wood growing, and attached by the keeper of the park, he ought to be amerced after the quantity of his trespass, and to yield up his axe as forfeit to the keeper of the park. And if also he be attached for dead wood not growing, he ought not to forfeit his axe, nor no other instrument wherewith he heweth the said dead wood. Also they say that the keeper ought not to attach nor demand any man without the Covertie of the ditch of the said park but only for oak trees, that is to wit to the casting of his said axe. Also they say that if the keeper find any man sawing or digging any green wood by day or by night, that he so taken ought to be attached and to be in the lord's grace of his fine, for which it is to be said that it was done thieflly and by way of stealing. Also they say that if any man be found by night in the said park with an axe hewing green wood or dead wood, that he ought not to be in any fine, but in amercement after the quantity of the trespass, for why it is to be fine that he showed the keeper of the park by the stroke of his axe. Also that every tenant resident within the lordship, if he be attached within the park that he ought to have a view of his trespass within the park.

Also that the Liberties of the said park stretcheth not but from the ditch in the coverty of the said park by the river of Usk over the north part unto the overditch beginning from the land of William Lendeor and other lands of his neighbours and the end of the said ditch ending by the land of sometime of William ap Robert Turberville, and a river called nant Lomes, for that wood and lands beyond the said ditch being sometimes Welshry of divers tenants dwelling at Priske, and was wont to pay comorth of kine and calves for the same at Clamay, viz. at May day. Also that all attachments made by the keeper of the said park ought to be determined by the lord's Almote and there to be justified and corrected by the verdict and consideration of the bond tenants and Welsh suitors to the Almote of custom. Also that all men attached for anything in the said Almote ought to be reasonably summoned the third day before the day of the almote.

II. LIBERTIES AND CUSTOMS OF THE MANOR OF CRICKHOWELL

Item, the same lord of Crickhowell and his heirs shall enjoy the whole manor of Crickhowell, with these Liberties following: with the Castle, Rents, Homages, services, heriots, reliefs, advowsons of churches, woods, meadows, leasowes, pastures, , mills, ponds, weirs, water fishings, parks, forests, closes, fairs, markets and all other appurtenances, that is to wit all manner of measures, trugges, demi trugges, pecks, yards, ells, gallons, half gallons and quarters proved and to be ?proved and to be amended by the standard of the said lord of Crickhowell in the lord's castle, and his seal to be put upon the said measures which be found lawful and able.

III. CUSTOM FOR PAYMENT OF RENTS

Item, the same lord and his heirs have of old custom, that all the tenants of the borough and village, and all manner other tenants both Welsh and foreign, shall come and pay the Rents to the lord's

bailiffs certain days in which the said rents be payable upon reasonable summons, that is to wit, the third day before the said days, and if any of them come not with their Rents or rent to pay them or delling (delaying?) unto to the said bailiff they ought to be called by the lord or his servant in the castle gate and to record the defaults and to p? until the same defaults and to attach the tenants being absent for the slow payment of the said rents, and to arraign them before the steward at the lord's bar, and each of them to be amerced, if he be a Welsh tenant, in 10s. a foreign tenant in 7s. and a burgess 12d.

IV. THE OATH OF THE HOMAGERS

Item, all the tenants that hold their lands by the said service ought to acknowledge the lord by the words following, that is to say, first, he ought to come before the lord kneeling and acknowledge to hold of the lord of Crickhowell such rent and lands by service of homage and ought to close his hands within the lord's deposing in his faith by God and the holy evangelist that he with his whole heart and soul above all things he shall love his lord, and in all places of any dread shall stand by his lord him to defend and his body well and truly and without fraud and quick against his enemy's keeper. And this done the lord shall command to stand up from his kneeling and shall kiss him and that after that all the tenants forsworn they shall give the lord or his officer or agent by him appointed the sum of £5 of lawful money of England immediately after their oaths and homage made.

V. PLOUGHING OF THE LORD'S DEMESNE

Item, all the Welsh tenants within the lordship of Crickhowell ought by the custom of their landsto come with their oxen to eare the demaine lands by certain days at the winter seed.

Item: the said tenants ought to do the like by certain days of the Lent seed.

VI. OFFICERS

Item, the tenants are to pay sergeantry at the term of August and shall occupy the office of beadle and forester when he shall be elected, paying for the farm of beadle 13s.4d. yearly at the feast of Michaelmas and for the farm of every office of the forestership 5s. (see 380)

HOGS

And paying for his hogs if he have above three, that is to wit, of the said hogs that be fed upon the Welsh lands, from the feast of St. Michael to the feast of St. Andrew. And if the said hogs be not fed upon the said Welsh lands they shall pay no pannage, though they be adherent to the lord's wood.

VII. AIDS

Item, that the said Welsh tenants shall give to the lord at his making knight, ... that is to wit, 100 s. to buy him a horse. Item, the said tenants shall give unto the lord at his first coming to his lordship 100s. and to the marrying of his first begotten daughter 100s. and to the son of the said lord when he is made knight five pounds.

VIII. WARS

Item, the Welsh tenants shall go with the lord to war such and as many as he will choose with him and do owe suit to the lord's court holden within the fee of Crickhowell. And if some will essoin a day before the court but before going to warrant his essoin.

ESSOINS

If any will essoin twice they ought to come at the third court to warrant his essoins, and if he come not he ought to be called for the same and be amerced and taxed after the custom. Item, all foreign tenants ought to essoin them in the day of the court, the first of the tenants of the same.

IX. ALIENATIONS

Item, the said jury do present that all the tenants of the manor and lordship of Crickhowell, as well English as Welsh, at all time and times hereafter, shall pay to the lord of the lordship of Crickhowell upon any alienation of their lands and tenements one sheep for a heriot and that any of the said tenants shall set three sheep in or upon the said lands or tenements that shall be alienated or sold, and ... the lord's bailiff to... to the said lands or tenements to ... one of the said three sheep for the lord's heriot

And if the said bailiff be not contented with any of the said three sheep that then the said lord's bailiff for the time being shall repair to the flock of sheep of the buyer and take the best in the flock for the heriot. And the lord to have one of the best beasts for heriot upon the decease of any tenant as well English as Welsh. And if the said tenant have no beast at the time of his decease, then the heir to pay 5s. for the lord's heriot as it was used in the time of the Right Honourable late Henry Earl of Worcester and lord of the manor and lordship of Crickhowell.

X.

Item, if any enter into the tenement or manvell of Welsh tenure of the dead body without licence of the lord's bailiff, they ought to be amerced, for that such lands and tenements of the dead owners thereof do fall into the lord's possession.

XI. THE BAILIFF TO BE MADE ACQUAINTED WITH ALL ALIENATIONS

Item, if any Welsh tenant make alienation of one Welsh service or sell Welsh lands to any other Welsh tenant, but the buyer and seller come to the lord's bailiffs and acknowledge them to make such a lease or alienation of such Welsh lands, both the parties ought to be amerced for concealing of the lord's heriot.

XII. RELIEFS

Item, tenants which hold such lands by relief yielding to the lord at the time of any such death, it is to be enquired, the wife, the heir or executor of such a tenant ought to come before the lord's steward to show his charters in the lord's court in the way? Such a relief is c? and how much is there specified and ought to be enrolled in the lord's rolls.

XIII. ADVOWSONS

Item, the lord of Crickhowell and his heirs shall enjoy the advowsons of churches and abide to his presentation of forty days, that is to wit the parsonage of Crickhowell and compersionary(?) of the said churches; item the parsonage of Llangattock, item the parsonage of the church of Llanbedr. Item it is to be remembered that the vicarage of the church of Crickhowell abideth to the presentation of the parsonage of the said church.

XIV. THE LORD'S WOODS IN THE LORDSHIP OF CRICKHOWELL AND THE CUSTOMS

First, the Park of Killelan containing in wood of years growth in the (blank) acres worth only are to be sold. And the said wood is the lord's several wood by the liberties above contained in the end of the first declaration touching the said parcel and the bounds thereof. Item the hay of Penalte, Clydach, Waladecroud cometh with the park of Llanbedr which wood is common of all the tenants' and residents' beasts of the lordship of Crickhowell except hogs and goats. Item, both the hay of Penalte ben fallowed as the forest during from the feast of St. Michael to St. Andrews but no further. Item, Abbaydon and Killymyth fallowed and a quarter of the forest under the same liberty are accounted with the hay of Penalte in HENS PAID. Item, every tenant or resident by the said forest for to have liberty for his beasts in the said forest and shall pay a hen at the feast of St. Andrew. Item, if any be summoned at the said feast for bringing of the said hen and come not, such ought to be amerced, if he be a Welsh tenant at 10s., a foreign tenant 7s., a burgess at 12d.

XV. PASTURES

Item, the lord of Crickhowell and his heirs have pastures and leasures, that is to wit in the fields of Llanvayr Crickhowell and Enys y coed, and in the hills by Rodewth, Clydach, Rywbuch and Breanog, and for in the meadows of broadmead, old orchard, Redkist, Adam Iskyfyld, Symond Ashhove, froggy mead Abwellan, Enysgereyne?

COMMON OF FALLOWS

Item, in these meadows it ought to be forbidden and prohibited to all the tenants and to their beasts save the meadows and herbage which be within the demesne field of Llanvyre while void and fallow. Item all the demesne lands to be common to all the tenants and their beasts that time, that it is fallow and idle.

XVI. STUBBLE

Item, if the beasts of any man be found within the stubble in the said demesne lands, they ought to be impounded and driven to the lord's pinfold and amerced in the Almote except he be such a tenant or resident as will agist his beast within the demesne lands during the stubble time, that is to wit from the first day of August unto All Hallows in the wheat stubble and unto Michaelmas in the oat stubble.

XVII. WEIRS

Item, the said lord and his heirs shall have the weirs for to fish and for to take fish and have liberty to make and repair as many weirs as they will upon their own demesne lands in the lordship of Crickhowell aforesaid and remember that in the time of Hugh Turberville the Welsh tenants of the lordship of Crickhowell ought of custom to repair weirs which is called Welsh weirs save the hatches and filling of stones between the hatches.

XVIII. FAIRS

The same lord and his heirs have liberty to hold fairs once in the year, that is to wit on the feast of the Nativity of our Lord.

XIX. MARKETS

Item, the same lord and his heirs have liberties to hold markets every Thursday in the year within the town and borough of Crickhowell, making proclamation of courts or pleas of pypowders by the portreeve or catchpole of the town, and the said quarrels or pleas examined and determined in the hundredths of piepowders the same day of the fair and market.

XX. COURTS

The same lord hath his court to be holden from month to month after the course of the year and his hundreds from fortnight to fortnight to examine accuse and determine all causes and all pleas both real and personal, both of trespass and all manner of felony done and committed within the lordship of Crickhowell but and saving all such trespasses or felonies which be made in the day of the Leet of the chief lord, for which all casualties and commodities falling within the day of the Leet pertain to the chief lord.

XXI. MEASURES

The same lord hath his measure there, that is to wit, trugg, half trugg, peck, gallon, half gallon, quarter yard and ell which measures ought to be proved by the standard of the lord remaining in the castle of Crickhowell, and if any be found false they ought to be burned and the owners of them to be punished.

XXII. CLYDACH MILL

Item, all the tenants of Llanelly, Maeswarthe, Abberthaw and Prisk shall sustain and repair the mill of Clydach with the appurtenances of the said mill upon their own costs and expenses, that is to wit with all carpentry, mill ponds and all manner of other works necessary to the said mill appertaining, and they shall find sufficient water at all times of winter and summer, or any other time to the course of the said mill. And if there be any default in the turning of water to the said mill turned by the tenants of the Welsh tenure, they ought to be amerced ? 10s. every each of them.

Item, if it rains in the said mill for default of covering, all the tenants ought to be amerced in 10s. apiece. Item, if any tenant or stranger of any other lordship come to the said mill with their grain to be ground and there is let of his grinding therein, go away to another mill and lordship for the same cause the Welsh tenants, the said tenant or stranger to have his multure in the said mill, ought to be amerced for every each of them in 10s. and for to satisfy the lord or his farmer of the said mill of the toll so borne away. Item, if any Welsh tenant deny to come with his grain to the said mill to have grinding and to go to another mill out of the lordship, ought to be amerced in 10s. and to satisfy the lord of his toll so borne away, nevertheless the lord shall find them timber sufficient for the reparation of the said mill. Item, the lord or his farmer shall ordain the keeper, that is to wit, the miller of the said mill.

XXIII. WELSH WEIR

Item, the Welsh tenants ought to make the repair (?) Called the Welsh weir ?and the hatches and filling with stones between the hedges of the said weir, as pay as accustomed as it was in the time of Hugh Turberville.

XXIV. USK MILL

Item, all the Welsh tenants of the lordship of Crickhowell shall carry timber of all manner of reparation to the mill of Usk with their bodies save the timber which the lord ought to carry for reparation, being above the pynned Usk and the hoppings stretching from above the ground unto the bottom, and shall find millstones competent for the mill.

Item, if any Welsh tenant be summoned by the reeve or beadle and charged by them to enquire for more and better convenient stones and renew the old and feeble stones, if they be ?slow and negligent they ought to be amerced every one in 10s. and to satisfy the lord or his farmer of the toll so borne nonetheless, the lord shall find them timber sufficient to the said mill, and to make the weir called the Welsh weir upon their own ? costs, save the hedges and filling with stones between the hedges of the said weir and pay due toll as it was used in the time of Hugh Turberville and his predecessors.

XXV. KEMERA MILL

Item, all the commodities of Kemer, Llanbedr, Banfrood, Kangease (Llangenny) Bellfountain, Topgayre, Henbant and Killyhulagh, of the custom of their lands and tenements shall carry timber for all manner of works and reparation of the mill of Kemer with their bodies, and find millstones apt and competent to the said mill. Item, the said tenants being summoned by the lord's bailiff to provide for new and better millstones and to remove the old stones, if the said tenants be slow and negligent, then they ought to be amerced every one of the in 10s. If in default of the said tenants the said mill stand void and idle. Item, all the tenants ought to raise gutters to lead the course of the water to the said mill and they also ought to cover the said mill upon their own proper costs. If any rain enter into the said mill in default of covering, all the tenants ought to be amerced in 10s.

Item, if there be any communication made by the lord or by his bailiff, for any reparation to be made by the custom of the said Welsh tenants in the said mill if any of them be absent and not be there at the reparation making they ought to be amerced every of them in 10s. and pay the toll accustomed and used in the time of Hugh Turberville and his ancestors, and make a weir called Welsh weir.

In witness whereof we, the said Lewis Vaughan and others to each part of this presentment have set to our several seals, the day and year above specified.

Appendix 2: Military Service, Homage and Aids: Full Transcription and Explanation (NLW Badminton 379, second paragraph)

MILITARY SERVICE

Also, the lord of Crickhowell holdeth the manor of Crickhowell with its appurtenances of the lord of Blaynlyfny by four knights' fees, doing such service as followeth:

Finding in the common war between the king of England and the prince of Wales four armed men in the castle of Blaynlyfny by forty days on his own proper costs. And if it happen the lord of Blaynlyfny to remove the said four men out of the lordship of Blaynlyfny within the said forty days or after, the said lord of Blaynlyfny shall find and sustain them upon his own costs and make their horses to be praysed (sic. appraised? = examined?). And if any of them be worse in his journey the said lord of Blaenlyfni shall make restitution to them.

This defines the lord of Crickhowell's military obligations to his superior lord of Blaenlyfni. Fee, or fief means land granted by a lord in return for service; a knight's fee was the amount of land that was supposed to support a knight. It was a feudal tenure obliging the holder to provide military assistance to the king, usually requiring a fully-armed knight and his servants for 40 days a year. The custumal (written after 1267 but before 1281) required the lord of Blaenlyfni to take responsibility for Crickhowell's four armed men and their horses if he took them out of Blaenlyfni (i.e. to war) and

‘make restitution’ to them all for any hurt or damage. At that time, the lord of Crickhowell manor was Sir Hugh de Turberville.

RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

Also he holdeth the manor of Crickhowell by ward and marriage heriot and pay relief after the decease of his ancestors or by alienation of the said manor. And shall come by attorney by reasonable summons to the days of March(es) And make homage and swear his fidelity to the lord. And come attorney to the days of the leet holden three by year and unto the court of Blaynlyfny from month to month by attorney bearing his letters patent. And give help to the lord his first begotten son when he is made knight. And to the marriage of his first begotten daughter. And he shall be quit of suit of court at all times of war between the king of England and the prince of Wales.

This concerns his right to Crickhowell Manor and the personal ‘help’ to be given to the lord of Blaenllyfni, and releases him from court attendance during the war between the king (Henry III, Edward I after 1272) and the Prince of Wales (Llewelyn ap Gruffudd, died 1282).

THE OATH OF HOMAGE

All tenants which holdeth their lands by service of homage ought to knowledge to the lord by the words following: first he ought to come before the lord kneeling and knowledge to hold of the lord of Crickhowell such tenements or lands by service homage and ought to close his hands within his lord’s hands truly in the faith by God and the holy Evangelist that with his whole heart and soul and in all places of any dread shall stand by his lord him to defend with his body well and truly without fraud or guile against his enemy’s keeper. This done the lord shall command him to stand up from the kneeling and shall kiss him. And after that the said tenant so forsworn shall give to the lord’s chamberlain 6s.8d. for their fees.

AID

The Welsh tenants shall give to the lord at his making knight reasonable aid and help, that is to wit. 10s. to buy him a horse. The said tenants shall give to the lord at his first coming to the lordship 10s. and the son of the lord made knight 10s., and to the marriage of the first begotten daughter 10s. The Welsh tenants shall pay leirwite for their daughters when they doth fornication, and as often as they do fornication they shall pay 4s. of leirwite to the lord, and if they be of bond condition 2s. which leirwite the bedell ought to distrain the father of the said daughter and if the said father be dead ...? [illegible].

Also mentioned is a military obligation, “*The Welsh tenants shall go with the lord to wars as many as be chosen by him...*”.

Glossary

Advowson. The right to present a clergyman with a benefice.

Alienation. Transfer of property.

Almote, hallmoot. The lord’s court.

Amerce(ment). A fine paid to a manorial court.

Attach. Arrest

Bailiff. Official below the steward, an estate manager

Beadle, Bedell. A parish officer with various duties.

Catchpole. A tax gatherer, or a sheriff’s officer who arrests for debt

Close. Enclosure

Comorth. Custom of a tribute of cattle payable to the lord of the manor by the Welsh community.

Courts. Court Leet, held before a steward, periodically, with jurisdiction over petty offences and civil affairs. Court Baron, to enforce the customs of the manor. Hundred Court, originally folk courts, their influence reduced under the Normans.

Court Rolls. Transfers or grants of land were recorded in the Court Baron. Appointment of manor officers and punishment of minor offences were recorded in the Court Leet.

Covert(y). A thicket

Custom. An established usage which by long continuance has acquired the force of law or right.

Customary tenant. Tenant who holds land according to the custom of the manor.

- Demesne.** The term was applied to all the land and resources which the lord regarded as peculiarly his own or leased to others for his profit.
- Distraint.** Seizure of possessions, livestock etc. in compensation for breach of feudal obligations.
- Essoin.** Excuse for non-attendance at court.
- Extent.** A valuation of a property.
- Farm.** Rent or service for a landholding, *farmer*, the man who rents it.
- Falty.** An oath of fidelity sworn by a new tenant to the lord in recognition of obligations.
- Fines.** I. Moneys or other benefits accruing to the court. II. Money paid to the crown to obtain a grant
- Foreign tenant.** One who does not live in the manor.
- Hay.** Enclosure
- Haybote.** The right to take wood for fencing
- Heriot.** Payment to the lord on the death of a tenant, usually of the 'best beast'.
- Homage.** Ceremony pledging loyalty and obligation made by a tenant to his lord. The lord, accepting homage, assures protection to the tenant.
- Hopper.** A receptacle for feeding corn into a mill.
- Housebote.** The right to take timber for making or repairing buildings.
- Leirwite** (various spellings). Payment to the lord when an unmarried daughter becomes pregnant.
- Leasures.** Pasture.
- Measures.** Trugg, peck, ell, perch etc.
- Multure.** Payment for grinding
- Pannage.** Payment to the lord for the privilege of feeding pigs in his woods.
- Pinfold.** An enclosure to confine stray animals.
- Redemption.** The act of freeing, restoring or reclaiming something.
- Reeve.** The local official responsible for the day-to-day managements of the manor.
- Relief.** Payment from a new tenant as heir or purchaser of a holding.
- Sergeantry.** Tenure of land by a special duty or service.
- Steward.** An estate administrator, often of gentry status.
- Suit of Court.** The right and obligation to attend the lord's court.
- Suit of Mill.** Obligation to maintain mill and for customary tenants to grind their corn there.
- Toll.** The right to levy dues.
- Trespass.** A wrong committed against a person or his property.

Notes

NLW	National Library of Wales.
Badminton	Badminton Estate Records, National Library of Wales.
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.
Welsh Rolls	Calendar of various chancery rolls: supplementary close rolls, Welsh rolls, scutage rolls. A.D. 1277–1326.
Charter Rolls	Catalogue of charter rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, Vol. 2, Henry III – Edward I, 1257–1300.
Close Rolls	Close rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry III, 13 volumes. Close rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, Edward I, 5 volumes.
Patent Rolls	Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry III, 1258–66, 1266–72, Edward I, 1272–81, 1281–1292.
Inquisitions	Calendar of inquisitions, post mortem, and other analogous documents preserved in the Public Record Office, Vol. 1, Henry III, 1236–1272.

All the above catalogues of rolls are accessible on the internet, <http://www.medievalgenealogy.org.uk/sources/rolls.shtml> (Accessed 5 February 2018).

¹ For the history of Blaenllynfi, Lewis and Williams 1960; Rees 1968; Silvester, Courtney, and Rees 2004; Stephenson 2013.

² Crickhowell is barely mentioned in the authoritative work on the March of Wales in the 13th and 14th centuries: Davies 1978.

³ Charter Rolls 1281: 248.

⁴ The date 1242 is often cited, but without reference to its origin. We have been unable to find this. 1272 is also often cited, again without reference.

⁵ Wretts-Smith 1941. Her introduction to the schedule is invaluable.

⁶ Watt 2000: chapter 2. A notable exception is an extent of the Lordship of Hay, 1340, Morgan 1995-6.

⁷ David Stephenson: personal communication.

⁸ Johnson 1587.

⁹ Rees 1924: 1-41.

¹⁰ Llanelly, about $\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of Gilwern.

¹¹ Prysgr [Prisk, Priske] is most probably the area 2 miles north-west, beyond Llanelly.

¹² Maesgwortha [Mayswarthe, Maeswarthyd] is the modern Maesygwartha about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-west of Gilwern.

¹³ Abbarthar [Abbarthoen, Abbarthave, Abbarthaw], is much more difficult to locate. Of the streams in the area the Dyar seems nearest in name but far from certain, and Aberdyar is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-west of Gilwern. Aberbaiden or Aberclydach seem unlikely.

¹⁴ Jones 1760.

¹⁵ Llanbedr, about 2 miles north-east of Crickhowell.

¹⁶ Henbant [Henbent, Henbot, Henboote], about 2 miles north-east of Crickhowell.

¹⁷ Llangene [Llangease, Langeare, Kangease], Llangenni about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Crickhowell.

¹⁸ Bellfountain [Bellefontayne], about 1 mile east of Crickhowell.

¹⁹ Banfrood [Banfroode], Banffrwd is a little east of Llangenni; Llanbanffrwd still exists as a house name.

²⁰ Killyhulagh [Kellyhulagh], is possibly Twyn, about 1 mile north of Crickhowell. In the 1760 maps, it was called Twynkillvalley.

²¹ Toregayr [Torgayr, Topgayre], if interpreted as Tor-y-gaer, it might be close to the gaer of Table Mountain [Crug Hywel]; a farm there was Dol-y-gaer.

²² Kemer. Kemer community and Kemer mill are the most difficult to identify. There is no similar name today. Its origin might be cymer (confluence of streams).

²³ Johnson 1587.

²⁴ Charter Rolls 1281: 248.

²⁵ Soulsby 1983: 119; Letters 2013: (under Crickhowell).

²⁶ Patent Rolls 1281-1292: 2-3.

²⁷ Rees 1932.

²⁸ Letters 2013 (under Crickhowell).

²⁹ Weeks 2008: 148.

³⁰ Silvester and Hankinson 2014.

³¹ Johnson 1587: folios 43 and 44.

³² Mileson 2009.

³³ Kay 1950; Cathcart King 1968.

³⁴ Cadw records at RCAHMW: C53630, C56825.

³⁵ Redwood 1996.

³⁶ Payne 1806.

³⁷ Lewis 1840: see Llangattock.

³⁸ Kay 1950.

³⁹ Morris 1901: 95.

⁴⁰ Dictionary of Welsh Biography <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-TURB-CRU-1100.html> (Accessed 5 February 2018).

- ⁴¹ Lloyd 1912, Vol. II: 437.
- ⁴² Close Rolls 1262: 270-1. The entry (in Latin) records the name Hugh de Troye, but the index, pp.484-5, identifies Hugh de Troye as Hugh de Turberville.
- ⁴³ Morris 1901: 25.
- ⁴⁴ Inquisitions 1265: 291.
- ⁴⁵ Prestwich 1997: 49.
- ⁴⁶ Prestwich 1997: chapter 3.
- ⁴⁷ Patent Rolls 1268: 205.
- ⁴⁸ David Stephenson: personal communication.
- ⁴⁹ Patent Rolls 1271: 542.
- ⁵⁰ Patent Rolls 1272: 652.
- ⁵¹ Close Rolls 1273: 56.
- ⁵² Stephenson 2013: 35.
- ⁵³ Linnard 1979: 66.
- ⁵⁴ Charter Rolls 1281: 248.
- ⁵⁵ Bailey 2002: chapter 2.
- ⁵⁶ Morris 1901: 71-2, 85, 159.
- ⁵⁷ Morris 1901: 71-2.
- ⁵⁸ Morris 1901: 326.
- ⁵⁹ Morris 1901: 210.
- ⁶⁰ Welsh Rolls 1288: 318.
- ⁶¹ Taylor 1974: 367-9; Soulsby 1983: 104-5.
- ⁶² Welsh Rolls 1285: 302; 1290: 326.
- ⁶³ The only mentions of Hugh's wife Joan are found in Patent Rolls 1291:443 and Welsh Rolls 1292:352.
- ⁶⁴ Close Rolls 1301: 467-8.
- ⁶⁵ James 1995.
- ⁶⁶ Bevan 1893
- ⁶⁷ Siberry 2015.
- ⁶⁸ There is a small but ominous misreading—given differently in various texts and beyond—of a few words very near the beginning of the document, referring to Killelan park: Badminton 379, states that if a man is found in the park when closed he ought to be kept in the stocks until he pay 20s or *else lose the right of Park Closes*. (Wretts-Smith transcript). 382 states, *lose his Right* (then the word '*hand*' crossed out) *foote*. 389 states, *lose his 8 foote* (Wretts-Smith); or *lose his right foote* (NLW, on-line catalogue). In 1854, an article by Hugh Powell Price states *lose his right foote if the Park be closed*. This is quoted in the Glanusk edition of Theophilus Jones's *History of Brecknock*.

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PENDERYN PARISH THROUGH THE LIVES OF THREE OF ITS RECTORS, 1830–1930

ANN SELWOOD

Introduction

The hundred years between 1830 and 1930 was a tumultuous period for the Anglican Church in Wales. Already, by the early-nineteenth century, the Methodist revival of the eighteenth-century, coupled with a rise in Congregationalists, Baptists, and Wesleyans, left Wales as a majority Nonconformist nation. This situation occurred partly as a result of the weaknesses of the Established Church: an unwieldy parish structure, over-politicised (and mostly English) bishops, and clergymen lacking in zeal. Moving into the nineteenth century, there were efforts to correct these issues. In particular, the Established Church created a network of elementary schools, which taught Anglican doctrines. Many dilapidated parish churches were rebuilt, and Anglican worship was brought to the growing industrial areas, often, because of the Oxford Movement—that accentuated Catholic aspects of Anglicanism—with High Church aesthetics.

By the dawn of the twentieth century, the Anglican Church had revived to an extent, but, under the dominance of non-conformity, the entire concept of establishment was questioned. Although implementation was delayed for World War I, the Welsh Church Act 1914 came into force in 1920, with the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales. A Welsh province of the Anglican Communion, with its own archbishop, was put in its place and the old endowments to the Church were secularised.

But how did these events play out in small communities, particularly those that sat on the border between the industrialised south and the rural north, such as Penderyn and Ystradfellte? This paper provides a viewpoint through an account of the life and ministry of three Penderyn Rectors during 1830–1930: Rev. Charles Maybery, Rev. William Winston, and Rev. Llewelyn Jenkins. Each had to cope with the challenges of their era and, despite the size and location of their parish, were not immune to the difficulties faced by the wider Anglican Church during the period.¹

Penderyn parish and church

Penderyn is an upland parish, situated on the southern slopes of the Brecon Beacons. During the whole of this period, it was in Breconshire—bordering the County of Glamorgan—the boundary running through the middle of the neighbouring village, Hirwaun. Until Disestablishment, it was part of the Diocese of St. Davids, but, thereafter, became part of the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon. The adjacent parish of Ystradfellte was a curacy, attached to the

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Vicarage of Defynnog, but, because of its proximity to Penderyn, responsibility seems to have been shared with the Rectors of Penderyn.

Much of Penderyn parish is rural, but it has always had a significant amount of industry, with limestone and silica quarries, some of which are centuries old, and the ironworks at Hirwaun, established in the mid-eighteenth century. The population was Welsh speaking and, in 1799, a report to the Bishop stated that Church services were held in Welsh and both the bible and common prayer book were in the Welsh language.² Moreover, in response to an enquiry as to whether the Bishop should send out religious tracts, the then Curate, Lewis Price, pointedly asked that they be provided in the Welsh language, so that the parishioners would better understand them.³ In 1845, the books used for singing were Welsh psalms and hymns,⁴ and, in 1880, the rector reported that “persons who habitually use the English language are very few”.⁵ Indeed, the parish remained strongly Welsh speaking until after the Second World War.

The Parish Church of St Cynog is situated on a hill overlooking the village. Local tradition would place a wooden church here in the sixth century, possibly established by St Cynog himself, but the oldest part now remaining is the thirteenth-century tower. The rest of the Church, as we shall see, was largely rebuilt in 1894–1895 (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Penderyn Church.

Penderyn Historical Society

Rev. Charles Maybery

Charles Maybery was a member of the wealthy Maybery family of Brecon, a brother of, and Chaplain to, Walter Maybery Esq, a magistrate and Alderman of the town of Brecon, and Sheriff of Breconshire in 1843.⁶ When Maybery was appointed Rector of Penderyn, in September of 1831, he was only 23 years old. The parish had just gone through troubled times. Throughout May of that year, ironworkers in Merthyr Tydfil (employees of William Crawshay) had taken part in protest marches against their working conditions. In June, a demonstration in Merthyr turned into riots (the Merthyr Rising). Ironworkers in Hirwaun, whose works were also owned by the Crawshay family, supported the protesters, and, in the ensuing trials of the ringleaders in June and July, the parish saw one of their own, Lewis Lewis (Lewsyn yr Helwr), sentenced to transportation for life. The ironworks, quarries, and, later, the coal industry on the Glamorganshire side of the border, drew in large numbers of people from other parts of Wales. Transport changed significantly, with the Vale of Neath Railway opening a line from Neath to Aberdare, (through Hirwaun), in 1851.

In the early years of Maybery's ministry, there were only two Nonconformist chapels in the parish, both Baptist, but the number of Nonconformists was growing. In 1851, there were three chapels in the parish, and five on the Glamorganshire side of Hirwaun.⁷ By 1877, there were four chapels in the parish. Maybery was said to have learned Welsh and spoke the language reasonably well, albeit with an English accent. Certainly, by 1842, he was delivering sermons in Welsh.⁸ In addition to his duties as Rector, by 1834, he had been appointed as a magistrate for the County of Brecon and, three years later, for Glamorganshire. In the 1850s, he and Morgan Morgan, the squire of Bodwigiad, began holding Petty Sessions in Penderyn, which, apparently, had not been done before. He also regularly presided at the Quarter Sessions in Brecon and, occasionally, in Cardiff. These appointments would have naturally enhanced his prestige and authority.

When he became Rector, Maybery was unmarried, and, for the first ten years, lived in the old rectory (close to the Church and Red Lion Inn) alone. Around 1843, he built a new rectory on a portion of the Glebe land called Clôs Mawr (Fig 2). The new house

contained two floors with attics, and a cellar. The ground floor comprised a lobby hall, drawing room, study, kitchen, small pantry, glass pantry, and scullery. The first floor contained four bedrooms, a store room, and a W.C. There were two staircases, one of which was apparently for the servants. Outside, besides the garden, there were outbuildings, comprising a wood house, stable, coach house with hayloft above, a privy, and pigsty.⁹ After the new Rectory was built, Maybery's



Figure 2. Sketch of the rectory, built c. 1843.

Lisa Thorne

sister, and, later, his brother Edward and his wife, also lived there.¹⁰ But, it was not until 1866, that Maybery himself was married¹¹ to Helen Forbes Scobie, a widow, living at her brother's house in Hereford, with her two young sons, aged 14 and 12.¹² The children may have accompanied their mother to Penderyn, but it is more likely they stayed with their uncle in Hereford to continue their education. Upon his marriage, Maybery drew up a new will, in which he made generous arrangements to provide for his wife in the event of his death, as well as his unmarried sisters, the daughters of his married sister Mary, and brother Henry.¹³ He made no provision for his stepsons, but it is likely that their late-father, and uncle (who was unmarried), would have already done so. Moreover, Helen Forbes Scobie probably already had money of her own.¹⁴ She outlived her husband by over thirty years, eventually dying at her younger son's house in Folkestone, Kent, at the age of 83.

Maybery was concerned with the education of his parishioners, and, throughout his incumbency, did his best to establish a day school in Penderyn, with varying success. There were already charitable foundations in the Parish, notably, the Edward Price Foundation—which provided for the education of five poor children, and the apprenticing of one child. A Sunday school was held in Penderyn church. But, in 1837, Maybery and two churchwardens persuaded the local squire, Morgan Morgan, to agree to grant a deed of gift to the church of a former blacksmiths shop on Bodwigiad land at Pontbrenllwyd. The shop was to be converted into a schoolroom “for the purpose of promoting the education of poor children in the parish of Penderyn in the principle of true religion and useful knowledge”. Despite the good intentions, nothing came of this venture and, when the Education Commissioners visited the parish in 1847, they reported that, while the parish had two Sunday schools—the Church Sunday School and Siloam Baptist Sunday School—it had no day school.¹⁵ It was not until 1857, that the church claimed both a Sunday school and a day school, (the latter run by the Clerk), despite there being no actual schoolroom. The school closed for a short period around 1863, but re-opened and was still running in 1869.¹⁶ Shortly after this, the Elementary Education Act of 1870 was passed and Maybery campaigned for the establishment of a Church or “National” school in Penderyn, even promising £300 of his own money towards the building of it.¹⁷ He again failed, largely owing to the strength of the opposition. By this time, the population of Penderyn was overwhelmingly Nonconformist, and was not prepared to accept a Church school. Bitterly disappointed, in December 1870, Maybery left the parish to visit his wife’s family in Hereford.¹⁸ He died there on 4 January 1871.¹⁹ Three years later, in 1874, the first state school, a “Board” school, opened in Penderyn.²⁰

When Maybery first came to Penderyn, the church itself was in need of repairs, and he paid towards the cost of the renovations, extending the church and raising the roof.²¹ These renovations must have been substantial, as in 1848, the churchwardens considered the church “rebuilt”.²² The church continued in good condition throughout his time there. In 1860, when the new Archdeacon of Brecon²³ visited the parish he stated that the church was “decent and in good repair, but sadly out of all Ecclesiastical taste” and the churchyard “large and decently kept” (Fig. 3). Taste, especially under the Oxford Movement, had evidently moved on. There was also a Sunday school and a day school, still kept by the Clerk.²⁴ There seems to have been little trouble collecting the church rates,²⁵ which was somewhat surprising given the large numbers of Nonconformists in the parish. One reason for this is likely to have been the positions Maybery held in addition to his post as Rector: magistrate and member of the Merthyr Board of Poor Law guardians. His character was also a major factor. He was said to have been a genial and kindly man, wise and

careful in judgement, well regarded and respected by the community. He not only used the Welsh language in his Church services but also on the Bench, on one occasion telling two women who had come before him because of a bad quarrel over some poultry, “O dyna geiriau câs. Pidwch ffraeo eto”.²⁶ He was also generous, providing coal for poor workers during hard winters. He often gave presents to children who attended church, and even paid for their schooling.²⁷ A poem, written in his praise, supports this view of him as a generous, respected and godly man:

<i>Ei enw haelionus sy'n uchel i'r lan</i>	He is well known for his generosity
<i>Am noddi'r amddifad, a meithrin y gwan,</i>	For providing shelter for the destitute and sustaining the weak,
<i>Dilladu'r cardotyn, rhoi ymborth i'r tlawd;</i>	Providing clothes for the beggar and feeding the poor;
<i>Mae'n gyfaill rhagorach na brawd.</i> ²⁸	He is a friend better than a brother.

He also had talent as a preacher, and, in September 1846, when the Merthyr Ivorites Lodge celebrated its anniversary at the Lamb Inn, Penderyn, they noted that they also “attended divine service at Penderyn Church, where the Rev. C. Maybery, the highly esteemed Rector of the parish, delivered a most excellent discourse on the occasion”.²⁹ Again, in 1853, he was said to have preached “a most excellent sermon” at St Mary’s Church, Brecon.³⁰



Figure 3. Penderyn Church showing part of the large churchyard.

Ystradfellte Parish Under Maybery

As the main church in the Rectory, especially with the Rector living nearby, Penderyn did rather well. Ystradfellte was not so fortunate. Although the church was only three and a half miles from Penderyn, the way to it was over mountainous terrain, which made it difficult to reach in bad weather. Dedicated to St Mary, much of the Church dates to the sixteenth century, although parts may be earlier (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. Ystradfellte Church, 1936.

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During Maybery's incumbency, he was also appointed Curate of Ystradfellte, and evidence indicates that he took his responsibility seriously.³¹ Services were held in the morning or afternoon, alternately with Penderyn, and local people recalled that Maybery would ride to Ystradfellte on a Sunday morning by 11:00am, returning to Penderyn to hold the afternoon service at 2:00pm.³² In 1847, the Education Commissioners reported that they found only two Sunday schools in Ystradfellte, both of which were run by Nonconformists. By 1854, a church day school had been established, which continued to operate for the next fifteen years.³³ Even so, there were signs during the later years of his curacy, that Maybery was unable to give Ystradfellte the attention that Penderyn enjoyed. In 1860, it was reported that, while the church was kept in a tolerably decent order, the floors were "very bad indeed, nothing but bare earth", the window casements were broken, and the roof was in bad order. In 1863, the churchyard was reported to be untidy and roughly kept, a church bell was broken, and the church registers were "ill-preserved...the Burial Book having its vellum binding totally destroyed".³⁴ In 1866, Maybery gave up the curacy of Ystradfellte, and the situation got worse. When the church was revisited in 1868, its condition was reported to be so bad that "restoration of church [was] contemplated immediately, plans and designs preparing".³⁵ When the renovated church was re-opened in October 1870, Maybery was not present³⁶ and, as we have seen, it was only a few months later that he died.

Rev. William Winston

It seems that Maybery influenced the appointment of the new Rector of Penderyn. He had purchased the advowson and right of patronage and presentation to the Rectory of Penderyn, valued at £858. In 1866, his will stipulated that his executor "shall present to the said church such fit person not being under the age of sixty years at the time of such presentation" and that "after such person shall be so presented and inducted...sell the same

advowson".³⁷ Whether he already had Rev. William Winston in mind when he made this stipulation, or whether he had other reasons, is not known. His executor carried out his wishes. Winston was 66 years old when he was presented to the living of Penderyn, and the advowson was subsequently advertised for sale by auction in 1877.³⁸

Whatever the circumstances of the appointment of Winston, when he and his wife came to Penderyn, he found that Charles Maybery was a hard act to follow. Maybery had arrived in Penderyn as a young, talented, energetic man, able to use his family influence, private income, and the authority he gained through his work as a magistrate, for the benefit of his church and community. In contrast, Winston, at 66 years old, was at the end of his career, and does not appear to have had any of the advantages of his predecessor. In addition, he had to deal with the shortfall in church income caused by the repeal of Church Rates in 1868.³⁹ Ystradfellte too, continued to be a problem. After Maybery had given up the curacy, the parish had once again to rely on curates sent by the Vicar of Defynnog, a situation that caused a great deal of resentment from parishioners. Within months of Maybery's death, a letter of complaint appeared in both Welsh and English in the newspapers. The English version reads as follows:

THE PARISHIONERS OF YSTRADFELLTE AND THEIR PARISH CHURCH. SIR, In these days when there is so much stir throughout the country about the disestablishment and disendowment of the English Church, it may not be inconvenient for you to allow me a small space in your widely-circulating paper to make a few remarks respecting the state of the Church in my own parish. The parishioners are called upon to pay several hundreds of pounds of tithe rent charge every year. Yet those to whom the tithe rent charge is apportioned cannot afford to keep a permanent curate to serve the parish church. They only give about £1 per week to a temporary curate who is serving one or two other churches besides, and therefore we have only one service a week, and that is on Sunday morning. That is only a part of a service too, for the curate omits to read the Ten Commandments, as well as other portions of the service, every Sunday. Perhaps he thinks that the good people of Ystradfellte know the Ten Commandments well enough without putting himself to the trouble of repeating them Sunday after Sunday. But I don't think that it would be any harm for him to remind us of them occasionally. It is true that the majority of my fellow Parishioners are Nonconformists, yet they have great respect for Mother Church, as was shown last year by their liberal contributions toward the restoration of the Church, and as we are paying heavy rent charges, as well as keeping the church in excellent repair, it is indeed a great hardship that we should not have a clergyman to reside amongst us. Could not those who receive the tithe rent charge of our parish, year after year, afford to pay, say £150 a year, towards the maintenance of a respectable clergyman, who would read the services all through, and who would reside among his flock in the parish, instead of giving half pay to a temporary curate for doing half duty? Indeed, if there are many

parishes neglected like Ystradfellte, it can be no matter of surprise that so many churchmen are in favour of disestablishment. – Yours truly, A LIBERAL CHURCHMAN. Ystradfellte, June 13th, 1871.⁴⁰

A year later, the Vicar of Defynnog himself complained to the Archdeacon of Brecon that the:

Parish of Ystradfellte is at least 10 miles distant by a rough, mountainous and almost inaccessible road from Devynock, Vicar is obliged to employ a Curate, who owing to his officiating in an adjoining parish is non-resident and as such...the Vicar would be glad to separate the Parish from Devynock so that it might be served by a resident incumbent.⁴¹

The Church responded by appointing Rev. David Davies, Curate of St Mary's Church, Aberdare, as Vicar of Ystradfellte, and he moved to the parish in 1877.⁴² Unfortunately, although he had been successful and widely known as curate of Aberdare, by now he was 70 years old, and in 1883, he was forced to retire to his son-in-law's house in Carmarthen.⁴³ Later that year, Winston reported that he now had a curate, J. L. Morgan, who served Ystradfellte, and was paid £120 a year.⁴⁴ By now, Winston was himself an old man and Morgan, in addition to serving Ystradfellte, was carrying out many of Winston's other duties. Something had to give and, in 1886, Rev. David Jones was appointed Vicar of Ystradfellte, freeing up Morgan.⁴⁵ Jones served the parish for fifteen years. His replacement was Rev. William Jones.⁴⁶

Back in Penderyn, church finances continued to be a problem. In 1880, Winston reported that no churchwardens had been appointed since the repeal of the church rates, and, as there "were no funds to collect for the service of the church, I have not nominated any one since I came into residence".⁴⁷ He was forced to look for other ways of increasing the church income, such as doubling the cost of graves in Penderyn churchyard (from 10s during Maybery's time to 20s), causing ill-feeling to fester among the parishioners. While Dewi Cynon complained about the Rev. Winston, claiming he cared only about church finances, he was a great admirer of Mrs Winston, describing her as having far more energy than her husband, and that, among her many virtues, she was a talented musician, even paying singers to improve the singing during church services.⁴⁸ Despite his alleged faults, Winston does provide us with some interesting comments on the state of the Welsh language in the parish at that time. He reported that sermons were invariably preached in Welsh and, in 1880, he wrote, "Persons who habitually use the English language are very few, there may possibly be a score or so in Hirwaun who understand very little Welsh".⁴⁹

In 1889, Winston retired, and he and his wife left to live in Swansea. On his retirement, a surveyor's report was commissioned on the state of the Benefice

of Penderyn, or at least the buildings that the Rector was deemed responsible for, namely the chancel and vestry of Penderyn church, and the parsonage. Very little work was deemed necessary for the first two, but repairs to the Rectory were deemed necessary at a cost of £43 11s 3d.⁵⁰ During his incumbency, Winston clearly kept church better than house.

Rev. Llewelyn Jenkins

When Llewelyn Jenkins arrived in Penderyn with his family, he was welcomed as one of their own (Figs. 5 and 6). He was a local man, born and raised on the farm of Blaentaf in the Taf Valley, in a neighbouring parish to Penderyn, and was a native Welsh speaker.⁵¹ He was held in great respect by the community since he was widely considered to have attained his position by virtue of his own talent and efforts. He also began the popular tradition of making the annual Church thanksgiving services open to all denominations.⁵² By 1894, he had been elected as a Councillor for the Vaynor and Penderyn Urban District Council, and served on the Merthyr Board of Guardians and the board of Penderyn primary school. Less helpfully, he was known to be forthright in his opinions, a trait which sometimes got him into trouble.⁵³

By this time, Penderyn church was again in need of renovation, and soon after his appointment, Jenkins began collecting towards the costs of repairs. By

1895, £700 had been collected and plans were drawn up for substantial renovations, including completely rebuilding and relocating the vestry. The total cost was estimated to be £800.⁵⁴ Part of the work included the



Figure 5. A portrait of Llewelyn Jenkins contained in a confirmation certificate of Charlotte Ann Harris, May 1929.

Penderyn Historical Society



Figure 6. The Confirmation group of May 1929, taken in the Rectory grounds, with Llewelyn Jenkins seated centre, and Charlotte Ann Harris, second row from back, 3rd from end of row (proper left). Penderyn Historical Society

removal of a number of graves from the church and their reburial in the churchyard. Something that caused anxiety in some circles. In October that year, a letter appeared in the newspaper alleging the desecration of the remains:

As they have been unearthed they have been piled in an indiscriminate heap, until a mound of grinning skulls, thigh bones, ribs, and smaller bones mark all that is left of what “once were women and men. ...the irreverent youth of the neighbourhood used skulls for footballs”.⁵⁵

In response, the Rector wrote a furious letter of protest against these “cruel and base aspersions”,⁵⁶ declaring them to be “scandalous falsehoods”, further detailing the reasons and evidence why this was the case. The rebuttal and testimony of the builder, and others in his support, proved the Rector was right: the allegations were undoubtedly malicious or, at best, mischievous.

Penderyn Church was re-opened in February 1896. The final cost of restoration was approximately £1,200.⁵⁷ By 1895, £700 had been collected, meaning there was still a considerable debt to be paid. In addition, shortly after the reopening of the church, the stables and coach house belonging to the Rectory were extended and converted into a church hall. In 1903, the outstanding debt still stood at £400.⁵⁸

Jenkin’s forthright opinions continued to make the issues faced by Penderyn Church worse. As we have already seen under the incumbency of Rev. Winston, the cost of burials and maintaining the churchyard was a problem, and caused some dissent between Rector and parishioners. It was a sore point with Jenkins too, and he was particularly annoyed with some Nonconformists. Despite not attending or supporting the church, according to him, they still expected to be married and buried there. In April 1910, writing in the *Parish Magazine*, Jenkins lamented that “the good old custom of cleaning and doing-up the graves for Palm Sunday is fast dying out.” In the same year, he engaged in a dispute with J. O. George, Councillor of Hirwaun, over the cost of burial fees at Penderyn Church compared with those at the Aberdare Cemetery.⁵⁹ Then, on 20 August 1913, he altogether made things worse by losing his temper during a funeral at Penderyn Church.

Jenkins had a habit of being late for services.⁶⁰ Local people knew this, but the mourners at the funeral, who came from Aberaman and further afield, did not. Custom for funerals dictated that the Rector would stand at the churchyard gate, or church door, and lead the mourners into the church. When the funeral cortege arrived, and there was no sign of the Rector, they decided to go into the church and wait for him there. When Jenkins arrived, he saw this as a sign of disrespect, and treated the congregation to a tirade, in which it was alleged he castigated Nonconformists who he said, “do not seem to have any reverence for God’s house”. Clearly, a funeral was not the place to air such grievances and

the mourners were naturally very upset. Complaints were made to the Bishop, and local newspapers published details of the incident under the headline “Rector in a Rage.” A contributor to the Welsh language newspaper, *Y Llan a'r Dywysogaeth* noted:

Mae helbul enbyd yn Penderyn. Rhyw ymrafael rhwng y Rheithor a phregethwyr ynghylch rhyw angladd. Wyddoch chwi, Mr Gol, mae y Bil Dadgysylltiad yma yn creu llawer o deimlad câs cydrhwng dynion a dynion.⁶¹

On this occasion, Jenkins had clearly overstepped the mark, and, although he initially wrote to the newspaper giving his own version of events, he was eventually obliged to write a letter of apology, which appeared in the *Brecon County Times* on 12 September 1913.⁶²

This incident and the previous disputes regarding the graves in Penderyn churchyard, could be seen as purely local affairs, but, as detailed in the introduction to this paper, the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century saw an increasing momentum for the disestablishment of the Welsh church, finally culminating in the Disestablishment Bill of 1909. Jenkins was strongly anti-disestablishment and, in 1893, he wrote an eloquent and persuasive letter to the *Western Mail* defending the church, “There is a consensus of opinion that the Church is gaining ground everywhere. In this parish within the last three years, about twenty of the most respectable Nonconformists have joined the Church”⁶³ To an extent, he was right; the Church in Wales was undergoing a revival in the late-nineteenth century.⁶⁴ More locally, Jenkins was credited with single-handedly collecting most of the funds for the renovation of his church. *Y Llan a'r Dywysogaeth* reported “Y mae y Ficer gweithgar yn awr yn myned i adeiladu parish hall eang ar unwaith.”⁶⁵ The hall (known as St Cynog’s Hall) was used for concerts and lectures and “miscellaneous entertainment”. Notwithstanding the success of Jenkins, and others like him, The Welsh Church Act was passed in 1914, but, because of the outbreak of the First World War, was only enacted in 1920.

Mary Helena and William Edwin Jenkins

By 1891, Jenkins was living at the Rectory with his wife Elizabeth and his two children, a daughter, Mary Helena, and son, William Edwin.⁶⁶ But, tragically, in 1894, his wife died,⁶⁷ leaving him with the two young children to bring up. While their father spoke both English and Welsh, he described his children as speaking only English.⁶⁸ This is unlikely to have been strictly true as the children would have required a degree of Welsh to live in Penderyn at this time. However, Jenkins was keen for his children to learn good English. In Helena’s case, the census of 1901 lists Blanche Inse, aged 25, as a boarder and “lady companion” and she was followed by other lady companions, all with English names.

Edwin did not take his father's profession, training as an electrical engineer, and, after several brushes with the courts, one involving a paternity suit, he emigrated to the U.S.A. He died in Detroit, Michigan, in 1952.⁶⁹

Back in Wales, his sister Mary was proving to be of great assistance to her father. There are several references to her work for the church. For example, at Christmas, 1903 the church was “very prettily and tastefully decorated for the occasion by Miss Beaton-Trask [another lady companion to Mary] and Miss Jenkins, The Rectory”, while at Harvest Thanksgiving, 1904, “Miss Jenkins, The Rectory, presided at the organ”.⁷⁰ In September 1909, Jenkins and Mary attended a wedding in Freshford, near Bath, in the company of Rev. Bridgeman Ward-Boughton-Leigh.⁷¹ Jenkins may have already made the acquaintance of young Ward-Boughton-Leigh, when he was Curate of Newbold-on-Avon from 1885 to 1889, where Ward-Boughton-Leigh's father had been Vicar.⁷² In October, Ward-Boughton-Leigh attended harvest thanksgiving at Penderyn Church, where he preached in English.⁷³ Perhaps inevitably, given this chain of meetings, Mary Helena and Ward-Boughton-Leigh married in May 1911.⁷⁴

After Mary married, Jenkins was left alone in the Rectory, apart from a couple of servants.⁷⁵ After War broke out, he continued to carry out his duties as Rector, and his reports to the parish magazine included occasional references to local contributions towards the war effort. In 1915, for example, he raised money towards the Princess Mary's Fund “with the object of giving the soldiers and sailors a Christmas Box”.⁷⁶ In 1917, perhaps unexpectedly, he remarried (Fig. 7). His bride was Louisa Florence Turner of Salisbury, the widow of Captain Ion Turner and the wedding took place in Salisbury Cathedral. Jenkins was accompanied by his daughter and her husband. According to *The Brecon County Times Neath Gazette and General Advertiser*, the bride wore:

A gown of heliotrope taffeta, trimmed with gold embroidery. Her hat was composed of black and gold lace, with heliotrope aigrette. She carried a sheaf of daffodils (the national flower of Wales), trimmed with heliotrope satin streamers.⁷⁷



Figure 7. Llewelyn Jenkins (seated centre) with a group c. 1917, taken at the rectory. The lady on his (proper) left is probably his second wife, Louisa Florence Turner. Next to her is his daughter, Mary Helena, with her husband Rev. Ward-Boughton-Leigh directly behind her. Penderyn Historical Society

Jenkins brought his new wife home to Penderyn where, on 19 July, 200 people attended a wedding party and tea on the Rectory grounds, and, afterwards, a

concert at St Cynog's Hall. Whilst there, Jenkins received a roll-top desk as a wedding present and Mrs Jenkins "played a piano solo very effectively". Towards the end of August, a "sumptuous" dinner was given by Mrs Jenkins at the Lamb Hotel, where the Rector was presented with a silver salver.⁷⁸

After the wedding celebrations were over, we hear nothing more of Louisa, neither in the parish magazine, to which the Rector continued to send reports until the end of 1918, nor in the local newspapers. She did not even appear in the account of the Soldiers Tea Party, an important event to welcome the returning soldiers after the war, held at St Cynog's Hall in September 1919.⁷⁹ Later evidence suggests that she had returned to Salisbury, although it is not known when that occurred.⁸⁰ When her husband died in December 1930, she was not named among the mourners at his funeral,⁸¹ and it was his daughter who was granted administration of his effects.⁸² Jenkins died at 78 years-old, having served Penderyn for 40 years. He is buried in the churchyard.⁸³

Conclusion

Penderyn Church, and the lives of its three Rectors between 1830 and 1930, reflect the very real struggle Anglican churches underwent during this period. The major issues may have been played out on a national stage, but Penderyn shows that the same applied in microcosm in even the smallest parish and church. But, regrettably, despite surviving riots, underfunding, rows, and even disestablishment, and despite the dedication of people like Maybery, Winston, and Jenkins, Penderyn Church, like so many others, is now permanently closed, and the rectory, having lain derelict for many years, was sold by the Church and has now been renovated as a private dwelling.⁸⁴

Notes

NLW	National Library of Wales.
Episcopal Visitations	Church of England. Diocese of St Davids. Episcopal Visitations. Queries and Answers. Archdeaconry of Brecon. NLW.
Ecclesiastical Dilapidations	Church of England. Ecclesiastical Dilapidations. NLW

¹ Among the sources of information, we are fortunate to have the writings of the local historian and musician, David Davies (Dewi Cynon), who was born in Penderyn in 1854, during the ministry of Charles Maybery, and died in 1938, outliving all three Rectors. However, he was not an unbiased observer. As a Nonconformist, he would not have been a supporter of the Church, and, although highly talented, he was said to be a difficult man who fell out with several people, probably including Rev. Llewelyn Jenkins, judging by the tone of an entry by the latter in the Parochial Magazine for the Archdeaconry of Brecon (1906), after Davies published his "*Hanes Plwyf Penderyn*" in 1905.

² Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/182.

³ *Ibid*, SD/QA/187.

⁴ *Ibid*, SD/QA/204.

⁵ *Ibid*, SD/QA/231.

⁶ *Glamorgan Monmouth and Brecon Gazette and Merthyr Guardian*, 5 August 1843.

⁷ Religious Census of 1851: A calendar of returns relating to Wales. Vol.1. South Wales.

- ⁸ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/201.
- ⁹ Ecclesiastical Dilapidations, SD/D/974. Penderyn, 1889.
- ¹⁰ Wales Census 1851; 1861.
- ¹¹ England and Wales Birth Marriage and Death Indexes, 1866.
- ¹² England Census, 1861.
- ¹³ HM Courts and Tribunals Service. Will of Rev. Charles Maybery, January 1866.
- ¹⁴ In 1881, although still living in her brother's house, she is described as "living on her own means". England Census, 1881.
- ¹⁵ Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales. Part II, 1847.
- ¹⁶ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/212; 218; 222; 226.
- ¹⁷ Davies 1905. *Aberdare Leader*, 22 November 1913.
- ¹⁸ Maybery last signed the Penderyn Burial Register on 17 December 1870.
- ¹⁹ *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian Glamorgan Monmouth and Brecon Gazette*, 14 January 1871.
- ²⁰ School Boards: public bodies created under the Elementary Education Act 1870.
- ²¹ *Aberdare Leader*, 11 October 1913.
- ²² Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/205.
- ²³ Rev. Richard William Payne Davies, of Cwrt y Gollen, appointed Archdeacon of Brecon in 1859. *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian Glamorgan Monmouth and Brecon Gazette*, 11 June 1859.
- ²⁴ Parochial Survey of Archdeaconry of Brecon, 1866-1872. NLW.
- ²⁵ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/(1863).
- ²⁶ "Oh, what nasty words. Do not quarrel again."
- ²⁷ *Aberdare Leader*, 13 October 1913, (article by Dewi Cynon).
- ²⁸ Poem by Deio Bach y Cantwr (Dafydd Williams, a native of Morryston, and furnace worker at Merthyr).
- ²⁹ *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 5 September 1846.
- ³⁰ *Aberdare Leader*, 13 October 1913, (article by Dewi Cynon).
- ³¹ Powys Record Office. Parish Registers. Burial Registers for Ystradfellte.
- ³² *Aberdare Leader*, 11 October 1913 (part of an account of Penderyn Church, by Dewi Cynon).
- ³³ Probably until the Ystradfellte Elementary Board School opened in 1875.
- ³⁴ Parochial Survey of Archdeaconry of Brecon. Ystradfellte, visited 6 June 1860, and 28 October 1863. NLW.
- ³⁵ *Ibid*, visited 12 August 1868. NLW.
- ³⁶ *Western Mail*, 10 October 1870.
- ³⁷ HM Courts and Tribunals Service. Will of Rev. Charles Maybery, January 1866.
- ³⁸ *Western Mail*, 31 January, 13 February 1877.
- ³⁹ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/233.
- ⁴⁰ *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser*, 20 October 1871.
- ⁴¹ Parochial Survey of Archdeaconry of Brecon. Ystradfellte, 1872. NLW.
- ⁴² Ecclesiastical Dilapidations, SD/D/1194.
- ⁴³ *South Wales Echo*, 28 October 1885.
- ⁴⁴ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA (1883, 1889)
- ⁴⁵ *Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly News*, 1 May 1886.
- ⁴⁶ *South Wales Daily News*, 26 June 1900.
- ⁴⁷ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA33.
- ⁴⁸ *Aberdare Leader*, 13 December 1913.
- ⁴⁹ Episcopal Visitations, SD/QA/231.
- ⁵⁰ Ecclesiastical Dilapidations, SD/D/974.
- ⁵¹ Davies 1905: 100.
- ⁵² *Aberdare Leader*, 13 December 1913, (account of Penderyn Church by Dewi Cynon).
- ⁵³ Recollection of Evan Williams, Penderyn (related to his daughter Mrs A. R. Selwood).
- ⁵⁴ Church of England. Diocese of St Davids. Faculties. NLW SD/F/555 (1895 Restoration of Church, Plans and letters).

- ⁵⁵ *South Wales Echo*, 23 October 1895.
- ⁵⁶ *Western Mail*, 26 October 1895.
- ⁵⁷ *South Wales Daily News*, 12 February 1896.
- ⁵⁸ *Parochial Magazine for the Archdeaconry of Brecon*, 1903.
- ⁵⁹ *Merthyr Express*, 1910; *Aberdare Leader*, 1910.
- ⁶⁰ Recollection of Evan Williams, Penderyn (related to his daughter Mrs A. R. Selwood).
- ⁶¹ “There is awful trouble in Penderyn. Some quarrel between the Rector and preachers about a funeral. You know Mr Editor, this Disestablishment Bill is creating a great deal of bad feeling between people.”, *Y Llan a'r Dywysogaeth*, 29 August 1913.
- ⁶² *Brecon County Times*, 18 September 1913.
- ⁶³ *Western Mail*, 21 June 1893.
- ⁶⁴ Brown 1998–99.
- ⁶⁵ “The hardworking Vicar will immediately build an extensive parish hall.” 21 February 1896.
- ⁶⁶ Wales Census, 1891.
- ⁶⁷ *South Wales Daily News*, 28 September 1894.
- ⁶⁸ Wales Census, 1901.
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- ⁷⁰ *Parochial Magazine for the Archdeaconry of Brecon*, 1903; 1904.
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Ann Selwood was brought up on Pencae Farm, Penderyn, and has a particular interest in the history of the parish. Having spent most of her career at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ann has now retired and is living in Llanrhystud, Ceredigion.

TOLKIEN IN BUCKLAND: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EVIDENCE

SEAMUS HAMILL-KEAYS

Prologue

*I fear that you might be right that the search for the sources of *The Lord of the Rings* is going to occupy academics for a generation or two. I wish that this need not be so. To my mind it is the particular use in a particular situation of any motive, whether invented, deliberately borrowed, or unconsciously remembered that is the most interesting thing to consider. J. R. R. Tolkien.¹*

It is now over 60 years since the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien and the success of this work, and that of its precursor, *The Hobbit*, published in 1937, has stimulated a great deal of research into the process the author described as *mythopoeia* (myth-making); drawing influences from philology, mythology, religion, and landscape to form his visionary world.²

Taking the last of these influences, landscape, there has been much recent research into the links between Tolkien's Middle Earth and the place names of South Wales.³ This idea has found various forms of expression and there is a local tradition that Tolkien stayed in Talybont-on-Usk while writing part of *The Lord of the Rings*. That would have to have been sometime between 1937 and 1949. There is no evidence to support the timing of this stay, but it is regularly repeated by tourist authorities, and others, with the view of attracting visitors. Somewhat more significantly, the tradition suggested the locale for a Tolkien Literary Walk for Literature Wales, led by Dimitra Fimi of Cardiff University in 2011, in which Welsh themes in his work were explored.⁴

A review of the tradition in this article concludes that Tolkien did visit Buckland in Breconshire, but when? I seek to advance the idea the visit took place long before he started to write his famous epic and provide an analysis of the evidence that supports such a claim. I suggest that the visit occurred in 1905, during a holiday when Tolkien was 13 years-old, and that a memory of this boyhood visit led to the inclusion of our Buckland as the eastern Hobbit settlement of The Shire in Middle Earth in *The Lord of the Rings*. Fimi (above) observes, "Really annoying and frustratingly, we don't know much about that trip", a remark that helped inspire this article.

Tolkien and Wales

Born in South Africa in 1892, John Ronald Reuel Tolkien moved to England at the age of four with his mother and brother after the death of his father. They lived in and around Birmingham. From 1896 until late 1900, his home was in the hamlet of Sarehole, (now in Hall Green), then a Worcestershire

village, but later annexed to the city.⁵ Many places are claimed by local enthusiasts to be the basis of Tolkien's Shire, but it was here, in Middle England, that saw its dawning. He wrote of The Shire, "It is in fact more or less a Warwickshire village of about the period of the Diamond Jubilee".⁶ In another letter he wrote, "The Shire is based on rural England and not on any other country in the world".⁷ It was the opportunities for adventures and for the exploration of nature that endeared the Warwickshire countryside to Ronald and his younger brother Hilary (Fig. 1). The rural location made a deep and permanent impression on Ronald, "when his imagination was opening out".⁸ Elements of his experiences, of local features, and of local characters were to appear in *Lord of the Rings*: the mill and the millers at Hobbiton, Farmer Maggot, mushrooms, Sam Gamgee, and his own fascination with trees.⁹



Figure 1. The Tolkien brothers, 1905.

Tolkien once wrote, "I love Wales...and especially the Welsh language".¹⁰ "I heard it coming out of the west", he said, in his 1955 lecture, *English and Welsh*.¹¹ Judging by the many events that are held in Wales to commemorate Tolkien, the impression is that he was also familiar with the mountains, valleys, forests, rivers, and lakes of our beautiful country, the stage on which its myths and legends were acted out. Yet, (despite two documented visits to Wales, considered below) his 'Celtic Library' held at the English Faculty Library, Oxford, is evidence of an interest in the language of Welsh mythology much more than in its landscape.¹² In fact, Tolkien had derived much of his knowledge of modern and medieval Welsh from manuscripts and books.¹³ Welsh was revealed to him at a distance, the landscape remaining largely unseen. An exception, the evidence for which this paper explores, is Tolkien's knowledge of Buckland in Breconshire. Gathered, perhaps, when he visited at 13 years-old and that, decades later, provided a Welsh topography he quietly slipped into his quintessentially English Shire in *The Lord of the Rings*; Tolkien's representation of all that he loved best about England with, "his sense of a regional identity as a West Midlander".¹⁴

The Buckland of Middle-Earth and the Buckland of Breconshire

The Shire was the homeland of the hobbits in Middle Earth. It was in Tolkien's Third Age, (Year One of The Shire) that a host of hobbits came from the east, crossed a river, and took possession of the land that lay between it and the Far Downs. Prominent among the hobbit families were the Brandybucks. As

Tolkien unfolded the topography of The Shire, Buckland appeared as a region on the far side of the Brandywine River.¹⁵ This colony was settled by a member of the Oldbuck family who later changed the family name to Brandybuck, and founded a succession of Masters of Buckland living at Brandy Hall.

Bucklebury is the chief village of this tract of land, which is about 20 miles long from north to south.¹⁶ Maps played an important part in the coherence of Tolkien's epic by establishing the topography of the action in the mind of the reader. Tolkien wrote, "It would of course be impossible to make a map of an 'invented' tale, or rather to write a mappable tale, unless one started with a Map from the beginning".¹⁷ He could be fastidious with a publisher about a map matching the narrative. For example, an incorrect location of the Bucklebury Ferry and a missing wood once vexed him greatly.¹⁸ Christopher Tolkien (Tolkien's third son and posthumous editor) tells us that six maps of The Shire evolved. He describes each of them, identifying Map VI as his own final version, drawn about 1953, and appearing in *The Fellowship of the Ring*.¹⁹ Figure 2 is an extract from Map VI. What is remarkable about this extract are the correspondences of Tolkien's Buckland to the real Buckland demesne.

A main feature of Figure 2 is the Brandywine River, flowing from north to south, with Buckland on its eastern bank.²⁰ The territory narrows to a point at the northern end, at the Brandywine Bridge, also known as the Bridge of Stonebows. It is here that the North Gate, also referred to in the narrative as the Buckland Gate and the Hay Gate, is situated. The territory expands eastward then narrows to a point at its southern end somewhat less than 20 miles downstream at Haysend. The High Hay is thick tall impenetrable hedge that bounds the length of Buckland to the east. Tolkien describes the Hay as the hobbits' defence against the whispering, attacking trees of the Old Forest. There was a way through the Hedge used by Frodo and his companions when they left Buckland:



Figure 2. Extract from Tolkien's map of Middle Earth showing Buckland.

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A cutting had been made, some distance from the Hedge, and sloped gently down into the ground. It had walls of brick at the sides, which rose steadily, until they arched over and formed a tunnel that dived deep under the Hedge.²¹

Bucklebury is described as “clustering in the banks and slopes behind Brandy Hall” but is not marked on the map. The Hall, a greatly ramified *smial*, (the hobbit-holes tunnelled into earth mounds and hills) with about 100 windows, was set into Buck Hill. Crickhollow, to the northeast is the place where Frodo bought a house.²² Newbury is a village beyond Crickhollow and Standelf, another village, is in the south. The self-operated Bucklebury Ferry is situated below Brandy Hall down a steep bank with the boat kept on the eastern bank.

Merry led the pony over a gangway on to the ferry, and the others followed. Merry then pushed slowly off with a long pole. The Brandywine flowed slow and broad before them. On the other side the bank was steep, and up it a winding path climbed from the further landing. Lamps were twinkling there. Behind loomed up the Buck Hill; and out of it, through stray shrouds of mist, shone many round windows, yellow and red. They were the windows of Brandy Hall, the ancient home of the Brandybucks.²³

The hobbits of Buckland were considered, in many ways, to be peculiar. “Their very odd names”, wrote Tolkien, “...had a style we should perhaps feel vaguely to be Celtic elements in England”.²⁴

Figure 3 is an extract from the 1905 OS map showing Buckland in Brecknockshire.²⁵ The Usk River flows from north to south along the western edge of the parkland of Buckland, designated by grey infill. The territory narrows to a point at the northern end at a bridge over the Usk, which in 1905, was wooden. It is here that the North Lodge and Buckland Gate were situated, at Llansantffread (now spelt Llansantffraed). The territory expands eastward then narrows to a point at its southern end, a little more than two miles downstream (Fig 4). This Buckland is very much smaller in area than that in *The Lord of the Rings*.



Figure 3. Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1905, Brecknockshire, Sheet XXXIV showing Buckland in Brecknockshire.



Figure 4. Buckland, Brecknockshire. The hill is in the centre of the photograph, with the River Usk sweeping past it. John Gibbs

It is not suggested that anything very like the Hay boundary hedge existed on the Buckland boundary, but strong stock-proof hedgerows would have been present, as elsewhere in the Usk Valley. Before the advent of pig-wire reinforcement, most local hedges were pleached by double-brushing: the interweaving of living and dead branches to create a very thick base. The height would normally be maintained at about six feet, but would be allowed to reach up to 20 feet just before the hedge was re-pleached.²⁶

After a fire destroyed the previous Georgian mansion, Buckland Hall was rebuilt in 1898 in ‘Tudorbethan’ style, with about 100 windows (Fig. 5). It is situated a few hundred yards from the river bank, backing on to the heavily-wooded Buckland Hill. Other buildings within Buckland include Buckland



Figure 5. Buckland Hall, south-western elevation, c.1900.

Farm at Gwern-y-Berllan, the walled Garden Farm, not far away, and a magnificent Georgian coach house and livery yard. The remains of a fernery are close by.²⁷ Behind the coach house, a walled portal built into the hillside leads into a brick-lined tunnel, burrowed deep into Buckland Hill to curve around to the sunken chamber of an ice-house several metres deep (Fig. 6).²⁸



Figure 6. The ice-house portal.

There was a ferry-boat landing stage, providing access across the river to the neighbouring parish of Llanddett, and, beyond the Buckland landing stage, a steep bank. A winding path, now heavily overgrown, led up from here to Buckland Hall. This is more clearly apparent from an extract from the 25-inch 1888 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 7). This shows a boat house on the eastern bank of the River Usk and the steeply winding path.

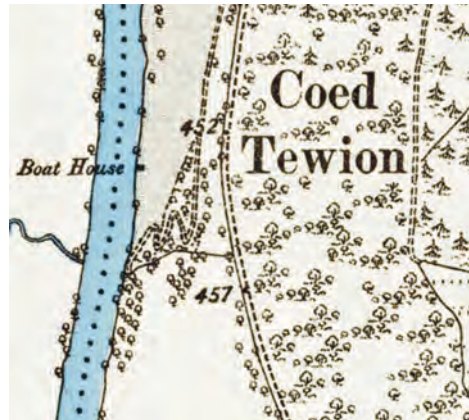


Figure 7. Extract from Ordnance Survey, 1888, Brecknockshire, showing the winding path leading up from the ferry.

When comparing the various maps, one cannot help but be struck by similarity of shape, the riparian nature of both landscapes, and other corresponding features: the residences Brandy Hall and Buckland Hall; Buck Hill and Buckland Hill; the two North Gates; the two river bridges; and the two steeply-winding paths leading up from the ferries. The ice-house portal is suggestive of the entrance to the tunnel under the Hedge in Tolkien's Buckland.²⁹ Mark Hooker, the accomplished Tolkien linguist, in *Tolkien and Welsh*, without actually placing Tolkien in our Buckland, tellingly suggests:

There are...so many Tolkienesque features in the Breconshire Buckland that it seems unlikely they could have occurred by chance, and that Tolkien used this area as one of his models for his "parody" of the toponomy "of rural England".³⁰

It is possible, of course, that once Tolkien had decided on the name Buckland, he could, by reference to a Gazetteer of England and Wales, or a local OS Map, find these correspondences.³¹ But if this was his technique, and

considering his deep affection for the English countryside, surely Tolkien would have picked a model closer to Middle England, such as the Buckland near Evesham? But there is evidence that Tolkien used actual events from Buckland in Breconshire within his description of Buckland in Middle Earth. There is a boat fatality, for example, found in each. First, we see the fictional event in *The Lord of the Rings*.

“After all his father was a Baggins. A decent respectable hobbit was Mr. Drogo Baggins; there was never much to tell of him, till he was drowned”.

“Drowned?”, said several voices. They had heard this and other darker rumours before, of course; but hobbits have a passion for family history, and they were ready to hear it again.

“Well, so they say,” said the Gaffer. “You see: Mr. Drogo, he married poor Miss Primula Brandybuck. She was our Mr. Bilbo’s first cousin on the mother’s side (her mother being the youngest of the Old Took’s daughters); and Mr. Drogo was his second cousin. So Mr. Frodo is his first and second cousin, once removed either way, as the saying is, if you follow me. And Mr. Drogo was staying at Brandy Hall with his father-in-law, old Master Gorbodoc, as he often did after his marriage (him being partial to his vittles, and old Gorbodoc keeping a mighty generous table); and he went out boating on the Brandywine River; and he and his wife were drowned, and poor Mr. Frodo only a child and all”.

“I’ve heard they went on the water after dinner in the moonlight,” said Old Noakes; “and it was Drogo’s weight as sunk the boat.”

“And I heard she pushed him in, and he pulled her in after him,” said Sandyman, the Hobbiton miller.³²

Secondly, we see an actual event, recorded in *The Monmouthshire Merlin* of 3 December 1864.

BUCKLAND. A MAN DROWNED. – On Friday evening, the birthday of Mr Gwynne Holford was celebrated at Buckland House. Amongst others entertained was a man named Edward Cross, gamekeeper, who, early on the following morning, and accompanied by his wife, daughter, and another gamekeeper, set out for their homes, situate on the side of the River Usk, opposite to Buckland House. To arrive, therefore, at their homes, it was necessary for them to cross the river mentioned. This the party were in the habit of doing by means of a ferry-boat, but on the day in question the river was flooded, and Cross’s wife, daughter and companion, refused to attempt to cross in that way. Cross, however, ventured, but by some means or other, was capsized. For some days afterwards a search was made for him but no success, and on Tuesday a reward of £2 was offered to anyone finding the body which on the following day (Wednesday) was discovered near Glenusk Bridge.³³

There are clear parallels in these two accounts of fatalities: a preceding social event, an event held in the seat of the local magnate, a drowning at

night-time, and the vagaries of a local boat. I suggest Tolkien heard first-hand knowledge of the real event to hatch the demise of Drogo and Primula Brandybuck. John Cross, the son of the unfortunate Edward Cross, was Head Gamekeeper at Buckland in 1905 with a son of his own Robert, aged 14.³⁴ Tolkien may have heard about it from either individual, the fatality having become almost legendary, even appearing in a local newspaper as late as 1909, on the death of John Cross.³⁵ One might wonder if there was some poignancy in his pen as Tolkien consigned Frodo's parents to a watery death since he too had also been orphaned. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, when Frodo reached the Bucklebury Ferry, he was unmindful of the tragic event than had occurred at that very spot 21 years before. Aged 12 at the time, he had afterwards been brought up at Brandy Hall, so we can assume that long familiarity with the landing-stage and the Ferry had reconciled him to his tragic loss, so he did not dwell upon it.

The Buckland Ferry, and its 1864 misfortune recorded in both Breconshire and Middle Earth, is intriguing and suggestive for placing Tolkien in the Breconshire Buckland. Later, in 1910, a ferry-boat was not necessary since a footway suspension bridge had been built across the river. If Tolkien had visited in 1905, he would have seen the old ferry. The footbridge appears on later maps but is now derelict (Fig. 8).³⁶



Figure 8. The suspension bridge that replaced the ferry.

Gareth James, Geograph-4128961

A fascination with Wales

We saw earlier how Tolkien used variations of Welsh sounds of places and names in *The Lord of the Rings*. He told his official biographer, Humphrey Carpenter, of how his imagination had become engaged by the strange names on the coal trucks he often saw passing on the nearby railway where he lived in at Small Heath in Birmingham: *Sengenydd*, *Nantyglo*, *Penrhiwoceiber* amongst others.³⁷ In an interview with William Foster of *The Scotsman* in 1972, when Tolkien was 80, he recalled, as a small child, seeing the name 'Ebbw' on a railway journey to Wales and, "never getting over the fascination of the name".³⁸ Such fascinations led this astonishing boy to become expert in linguistics, exploring Welsh, Gothic, Spanish, and Finnish, and inventing languages of his own by the age of 13.

But Daniel Grotta, who wrote the first, albeit unauthorised, biography of J. R. R. Tolkien, suggests that the boy's interest in Wales was further enhanced by a childhood holiday. Grotta states, "Shortly after Mabel Tolkien died, Father Morgan, Tolkien, and Hilary went by railway for a fortnight's holiday in Wales".³⁹ Frustratingly, Grotta does not provide details of his primary source

but, after Tolkien's death, he had met Charles Carr, Tolkien's scout, at his lodgings in 21 Merton, Oxford, and his Welsh-speaking wife, Mavis.⁴⁰ Grotta describes the amicable social relationship between Tolkien and these college servants and that, according to Mavis, Tolkien's Welsh was excellent. It may be through this couple that Grotta heard about the holiday in Wales.

"Shortly after Mabel Tolkien died", the phrase used by Grotta, is somewhat indeterminate but, since Mabel died on 14 November 1904, it is reasonable to assume any trip took place the year after, 1905. It would presumably have to have been during school holidays: the Easter or Summer vacations.

In 1958, in replying to a letter, Tolkien wrote, "I love Wales...but I have not in fact been in Wales for a long time (except crossing it on the way to Ireland)".⁴¹ Tolkien had, in fact, been "in Wales" in 1920; he and his family stayed in a cottage at Trwyn Llanbedrog in North Wales.⁴² He had also been an External Examiner for the University of Wales at Aberystwyth in 1944–1945.⁴³ But how might Tolkien have discovered Buckland and become so familiar with its locale to recreate it (scaled-up) as part of The Shire in Middle Earth? For a possible answer, we need to turn to Father Francis Xavier Morgan Osborne and his family.

Father Francis and a trip to Wales

The Morgan Family of Tredegar, near Newport, claimed descent from Cadifor Fawr, lord of Cil-sant, who died in 1089, although the name Morgan was married into the family at a later date. In the late-nineteenth century, the most recently renowned member of the family was Godfrey Morgan (1830–1913), hero of the Charge of the Light Brigade, Tory MP for Breconshire 1858–1875, 2nd Baron Tredegar 1875, and, later, raised to a Viscount in December 1905. His main residence was Tredegar House. His Brecon seat was the now-vanished Mansion House in St Mary Street.⁴⁴ Lord Tredegar was arguably the most famous Welshman after Lloyd George. His philanthropy and his patronage of many causes made him greatly admired, indeed, apparently loved by all classes and political parties. Although an Anglican, his fair-mindedness is exemplified by a report in *The Catholic Fireside* in 1899 that named him as "the most popular man in South Wales".

Much less well-known, but very important for us, is Aaron Morgan, born in 1742, and who claimed to be related to the Tredegar Morgans. Charles Sellers quotes from an unnamed document when he says, "Aaron Morgan was born at Sea Mills, near Bristol;⁴⁵ his father was a ship owner and builder, and was related to Sir Charles Morgan,⁴⁶ bart., of Tredegar, Monmouthshire".⁴⁷ Sellers also describes a meeting between Aaron Morgan and Sir Thomas Mannock, "A.M. made out his genealogy and emblazoned it most beautifully, which delighted Sir Thomas".⁴⁸

Aaron Morgan was employed as a clerk by a port and sherry shipping company near the Tower of London.⁴⁹ In 1810, he became a partner in the

wine merchant, Dixon, Brett and Morgan. After Aaron's death in 1818, his son Thomas played a leading part in managing the business. Thomas was also active in his local church, St Olave's (still extant in Hart Street), for which he was a churchwarden.⁵⁰ The churchwarden window commemorates important members of the congregation of the mid-nineteenth century and Thomas' pane is described in the annals of the church as, "Argent, a griffin segreant sable, impaling argent, on a bend azure, three fleurs-de-lis. Crest, a stag's head coupéd".⁵¹ A black griffin segreant is a device commonly found in the coats-of-arms of individuals of the Tredegar Morgan family, as is the stag's head crest.⁵² It often appears in the assumed arms of those not entitled (generally people with just the surname Morgan). The impaling is from the arms of Thomas' wife, Elizabeth Bonney.

While Thomas Morgan managed the London end of the business, Francis, one of his sons, moved to El Puerto de Santa Maria in Andalusia in the 1840s. He established the company's own network of production and exporting. He married Maria Manuela Osborne, a Roman Catholic, daughter of one of the largest brandy and sherry *bodegas* in Spain.⁵³ They had three sons and a daughter. The third son was Francis Xavier Morgan Osborne, born in 1857 and brought up as a Roman Catholic (Fig. 9).⁵⁴ In time, the company became known as Morgan Bros.⁵⁵



Figure 9. Father Francis, 1905.

After his father's death in 1868, Xavier moved with his widowed mother to England. He enrolled as a student at the Birmingham Oratory, was ordained as a priest in 1883, and became an acolyte of the famous Cardinal Newman. After Mabel Tolkien converted to Catholicism in 1900, and later became a worshipper at the Oratory, Fr. Francis became a close and trusted friend of the family. Before the seriously-ill Mabel lapsed into a diabetic coma and died in November 1904, she appointed Fr. Morgan as guardian of Ronald Tolkien, who was 12, and his younger brother Hilary, who was ten. As will become evident, Fr. Francis carried out this duty generous of his time and of his money.⁵⁶

If we can assume Tolkien's "long time" (referring to his time in Wales in the quote reproduced above) was the 53 years since his train journey to Wales (and not the more recent visits), we can ponder where he went. We know from Foster that Tolkien remembered being fascinated by the name 'Ebbw'. He saw 'Ebbw', the name of a river, that as 'Ebbw Vale', appeared on coal trucks descending the valley of the Ebbw to Newport and the wider world. But where

was his intended destination? Tolkien had no doubt conveyed his curiosity about the Welsh language to Fr. Morgan, who may have been gratified because of his own (esteemed) Welsh ancestry, and set out to visit his homeland with the orphans. For someone who, as we will see, was a proud man, a likely first port of call would have been Tredegar House; naturally, after due contact had been made with his Lordship (Fig. 10).⁵⁷

Fr. Morgan was not inclined to lead an austere existence. In 1987, he was remembered in an address given by Fr. Phillip Lynch at the Birmingham Oratory, “Father Morgan also liked to visit the more opulent houses in the Parish...and he liked to say that although not wealthy himself, he had rich friends!”⁵⁸ In 1965, Tolkien commented to his son Michael on his guardian’s patrician leanings describing him as an, “upper-class Welsh-Spaniard Tory...and seemed to some...a snob”.⁵⁹

It is not difficult to suppose that Fr. Morgan used the fortnight’s holiday in Wales to provide his charge with an opportunity to explore the source of the mysterious language that had so fascinated him. More speculative is that it may also have given him an opportunity to call upon his ‘relative’, Godfrey Charles Morgan, Lord Tredegar, and show his illustrious roots to the boys.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the Buckland Estate owned most of the land in the Middle Usk Valley, and included holdings as far as Cefn Coed y Cymmer and Aberdare. The seat of the Squire of Buckland was the eponymous Hall, which, as we have seen, is close to the left bank of the River Usk, seven miles downstream from Brecon, in the parish of Llansantffraed-juxta-Usk. The rolling parkland of Buckland, along two miles of the river, was meticulously cared for by numerous gardeners (one hopes in vain for a Gamgee among them!).⁶⁰ It was noted, for example, for its exotic plants and rare trees, some of which are now Welsh Champion Trees.⁶¹ A maze was based on that of Hampton Court, but smaller. There was the ‘Wild Dingle’ through which a tributary stream gurgled down to the Fish Pond and on to the Usk. The coach house housed staff, horses, cobs, and carriages. All of this was overshadowed by extensive woodlands on the hills to the north-east and south-east.⁶²



Figure 10. Lord Tredegar, 1910.

The Squire of Buckland was James Price Williams Gwynne-Holford, aged 72 in 1905 (Fig. 11). Like those of Fr. Francis, his forbears had been engaged as wine shippers. *Old Wales*, published in Talybont, not far from Buckland, records that they, “had been for a considerable period merchant princes in London, being extensively engaged in the wine business, in the Lisbon trade.”⁶³ The Squire and Lord Tredegar were two of a kind. They had been at Eton at the same time, had both obtained commissions in Lancer regiments, were JPs on the same Bench, had been contemporaneous Tory MPs for the two local constituencies, Brecon Borough and Breconshire, and were active together in County and other activities at the time of the Tolkien’s suggested holiday, particularly the Welsh Pony and Cob Society. They had even been founder President and Vice-President of the Society in 1901.⁶⁴



Figure 11. James Price William Gwynne-Holford, c.1906.

If Fr. Morgan and the orphans were received by Lord Tredegar at Tredegar House, near Newport, they could well have enjoyed the beauty of the deer park, but, perhaps, only to a limited extent. In the early years of the twentieth century this beautiful landscape, alongside the River Ebbw, was overshadowed by extensive heavy industry: tin-plate works, coal processing works, gas works, and a concentration of railways serving the burgeoning port, all contributing to pollution of various sorts.⁶⁵ But there was an escape beckoning from the industrialisation and pollution around Newport: the Brecon Beacons and Buckland. If they did indeed visit, Fr. Morgan and the Tolkien boys cannot have stumbled upon this private parkland by accident; somebody must have told them about it and invited them to visit. The close acquaintanceship of Lord Tredegar with J. P. W. Gwynne-Holford, may provide the necessary connection. It is noteworthy that the aristocratic hobbit, Fredegar Bolger, has a name that may be derived directly from the personal name ‘Tredegar’ rather than the more general name of the town.

Travel from Newport to Buckland would have been on the Brecon and Merthyr Junction Railway, a direct route to Talybont.⁶⁶ The Welsh names that might have, “flickered past on station signs, a flash of strange spelling and a hint of a language old and yet alive”⁶⁷ would have included Maesycwmmwr, Cwmsyflog, Fochriw, Pontsticill, Torpantau, and Pentir Rhiw. This route would have taken the visitors through mining valleys and, at Merthyr Tydfil,

past the striking sight of the Iron Works with its numerous belching blast furnaces, smoking rolling mills, and a landscape destroyed by coal tips.⁶⁸ For Tolkien, who famously disliked the industrialisation of the countryside, it would have been with considerable relief that the train ascended the unspoilt Cwm Taf Fechan, to the tunnel at Torpantau, and then descended the northern flank of the Brecon Beacons through Glyn Collyn to Talybont. A short walk would have taken them across the Usk Bridge at Llansantffraed, to enter Buckland by the North Gate, just before the gate-lodge, (that was demolished in 1972⁶⁹). Buckland Hall lay a mile further downstream, along a tarmacadam drive, mostly along the left bank of the Usk but then through a dingle to the main approach to the Hall (Fig. 12).



Figure 12. Buckland, Brecknockshire. Buckland Hall can be seen to the left of the photograph.

John Gibbs

Grotta records that “Mabel Tolkien had managed to instil in her older son an almost idolatrous love of trees, flowers and nature”.⁷⁰ The magic of the Buckland demesne, the surrounding mountains, the maze, the exotic foliage in the Fernery, the arboretum with its strange trees, the woods, the Wild Dingle, the ice-house tunnelled into Buckland Hill, boating on the Fish Pond or the river, even the recently-built, 1898, ‘Tudorbethan’ Hall itself, with its heraldic carvings of strange beasts in the Great Hall, may have manifested themselves in *The Lord of the Rings*. Trees in the woods on Buckland Hill, planted in military formation by the Squire’s father, a Peninsular War veteran, to represent the fighting battalions at Waterloo,⁷¹ may have excited the young Tolkien’s imagination. He would also have observed the important part that ponies played in Buckland life. We can speculate that, if Tolkien were truly there, the parkland made a deep and lasting impression on him, not least because, among the several-hundred names he constructed from real and invented languages

that appear in *The Lord of the Rings*, an English language place-name shines through from his childhood unchanged: Buckland.⁷² If it was so, it may have been affection for this Buckland that led Tolkien's memory to extract it from Breconshire, give its occupant hobbits "vaguely Celtic" names, and implant in Middle Earth on the border of an essentially English rurality, his beloved Shire.

Epilogue

Further research is needed to corroborate my thesis that a visit to Buckland in Breconshire in 1905 provided Tolkien with the inspiration for Buckland in Middle Earth. There are many primary sources that are not yet in the public domain, which may provide the conclusive evidence we seek. But why is there no convincing mention of the source of the Buckland topography in *The Lord of the Rings* in the extensive Tolkienography that is available? Maybe, Tolkien was so proud of the Englishness of The Shire that he was reluctant to confess that he had planted a little part of Wales into it.

Notes

¹ From a letter to 'Mr Wrigley' 25 May 1972, the year before Tolkien's death. Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: Letter 337.

² Tolkien wrote a poem, *Mythopoeia*, to describe this process. The poem was written in 1931, but was only published in 1988, into an edition of *Tree and Leaf* (Tolkien 1988).

³ Phepstead 2011; Hooker 2012.

⁴ Fimi 2011.

⁵ For a full biography: Carpenter 1977.

⁶ Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: Letter 178. Queen Victoria's Jubilee Year was 1897; Tolkien was five years-old.

⁷ Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: Letter 190.

⁸ *Ibid*: Letter 27.

⁹ *Ibid*: 144, 187, 303.

¹⁰ *Ibid*: Letter 213.

¹¹ Tolkien 1983.

¹² Phepstead 2011: Appendix.

¹³ *Ibid*: 9.

¹⁴ *Ibid*: 108.

¹⁵ Tolkien & Tolkien 2015: 35 n5.

¹⁶ *Ibid*: 304 n4.

¹⁷ Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: Letter 187.

¹⁸ *Ibid*: 174.

¹⁹ Tolkien & Tolkien 2015: 107.

²⁰ According to Tolkien, Brandywine is derived from the Elvish *Baraduin*, meaning 'golden-brown'. The Usk is quite clear except after heavy rain when it becomes a reddish-brown colour because of run-off from the Old Red Sandstone soils.

²¹ *Fellowship of the Ring*: Chapter 6: The Old Forest. Many editions available.

²² The name Crickhollow is often associated with the Breconshire village of Crickhowell situated about five miles downstream from Buckland. Ponder also Buckle: Bwlch; Brocken: Brecon. See Hooker 2012: 17-22, for the etymology of 'Buckland'.

²³ *Fellowship of the Ring*: Chapter 5. A Conspiracy Unmasked.

²⁴ *Lord of the Rings*: Appendix F. Many editions available.

²⁵ Ordnance Survey, 1905, Breconshire 6-inch Edition: Sheet XXXIV, S.E.

²⁶ ‘Double-brushing’, giving a much thicker hedge, was common in Wales but not in the Midlands where ‘single-brushing’ was normal, Sykes 1980.

²⁷ From the mid- to late-nineteenth century, Britain was gripped by *pteridomania*, or fern fever. Ferneries were built at major houses, within which, native and exotic foreign ferns were cultivated, and could be made available for indoor display.

²⁸ By the mid-nineteenth century most country houses would have an ice-house built near a lake that would freeze in winter from which ice could be harvested. Meat, fish and game could then be stored, without the need for drying, smoking, pickling or salting. Wine and summer sherbets could also be cooled. Buxbaum: 3.

²⁹ “...an imaginative researcher could view the Ice House as a re-purposed *smial* (hobbit hole)”. Hooker 2012: 20.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ The Breconshire Buckland was a private estate. For that reason, important though it was, it was not listed in any gazetteer and Tolkien would have needed to consult a local map. *The National Gazetteer, A Topographical Dictionary of the British Islands*, Vol. I, published in 1868, lists twenty-three other parishes or communities with Buckland as the main part of the name. It also lists a Bucklebury. The topography of none of these bears any resemblance to the Buckland of Middle Earth, the absence of a notable river being most evident dissimilarity (research using *Google Earth*).

³² *Fellowship of the Ring*: Chapter 1: A Long-expected Party.

³³ Buckland: A Man Drowned. *The Monmouthshire Merlin*. 3 December 1864.

³⁴ John Cross lived next to a peasantry at one of the Penparc Cottages just outside Bwlch. He had two sons. In 1905 one was aged 18, a blacksmith, the other, Robert, was 14. Census. 1901; 1911. *Wales, Breconshire, Llansantffraid, District 7*. London: HMSO.

³⁵ A Breconshire Sportsman. *The Weekly Mail*, 22 May 1909.

³⁶ This suspension bridge was built by David Rowell & Co. of London, a company prolific in the building of smaller suspension bridges from 1903 onwards. A photograph in Buckland papers shows its inauguration in 1910. It provided a more convenient access than the ferry boat to St Tetti’s Church in Llanddetty from Buckland Hall, probably the reason for constructing it.

³⁷ Carpenter 1977: 33.

³⁸ Foster 1972.

³⁹ Grotta 1992: 27.

⁴⁰ Grotta 1992: 151.

⁴¹ Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: 213. Tolkien was an external examiner for Colleges of the National University of Ireland for many years; Hammond, Scull and Tolkien 2006: 124 n32.

⁴² Hammond, Scull and Tolkien 2006: 113.

⁴³ Phelpstead 2011: 90.

⁴⁴ Powell 2016 describes the Mansion House as it was.

⁴⁵ There is a record of a James Morgan, merchant of Bristol, with son Moses, in the early-seventeenth century, Morgan 1902: 181.

⁴⁶ Presumably Sir Charles Morgan, bart. (1760 - 1846), Lord of the Manor of Brecknock, Lloyd 1904: 184. He was Member of Parliament for the borough of Brecon, 1787-96, and for Monmouthshire, 1796-1831. His father, born Charles Gould, assumed the surname of his wife, Morgan, the male line having become extinct. MORGAN family, of Tredegar Park, etc., Mon. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-MORG-TRE-1384.html?query=charles+morgan&field=content> (Accessed 5 February 2018).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Sellers 1899: 224.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Ferrández 2013.

⁵¹ Povah 1894: 108.

⁵² Debrett's *Baronetage of England 1824 (5th Edition)*: 397.

⁵³ Fr. Francis' family firm in Spain is still a major producer of brandy. Their huge advertising signs seen on many Spanish hilltops; the black Osborne bulls. <http://www.osborne.es/es/index.cfm?idioma=en> (Accessed 5 February 2018).

⁵⁴ His full name in the Spanish style was Francisco Javier Morgan Osborne, his mother's surname also appearing.

⁵⁵ Sellers 1899: 202.

⁵⁶ "Even today the [Tolkien brothers'] descendants acknowledge with gratitude that they could study thanks to 'the Spanish money from the sherry'". García-Málquez E. Cadiz. *La Gaceta* 23 Jan 2011; translated by the Author.

⁵⁷ Searching the extensive Tredegar Estate papers held in the National Library of Wales has so far not found any correspondence between Fr. Morgan and Lord Tredegar, or a Visitors' book for 1905 although earlier Visitors' Books exist.

⁵⁸ Lynch 1987.

⁵⁹ Carpenter and Tolkien 1981: Letter 267.

⁶⁰ Dimitra Fimi (Note 4) asks, "Did Tolkien have the chance to hear the Welsh spoken at the time?". If Tolkien stayed at Buckland, it is unlikely he would have heard much Welsh. The Squire's family and their various workers living within, or close to, the parkland, numbered 37. Only five of these were born in Wales and only two were Welsh-speakers. Of the persons enumerated in Llansantffraed parish, 65% were not born in Wales. Of the remainder, 30% spoke Welsh, Census 1901: Wales, Breconshire, Llansantffraed, District 7; Thomas 1930.

⁶¹ Welsh Champion Trees at Buckland are Purple Sycamore, Weeping Mulberry, Black Oak, Silver Lime; Powys Champion Trees are Monkey Puzzle, Common Beech, Oriental Spruce, Irish Yew, Western Hemlock. With thanks to Martin Fleming, Buckland Hall.

⁶² Catalogue of Sale, Buckland Estate. 1935. Accessed at Powys County Council Archives, Llandrindod Wells, Powys.

⁶³ Williams 1907: 365.

⁶⁴ Welsh Pony and Cob Society. *Evening Express*. 28 June 1901.

⁶⁵ *The Cardiff Times*, 25 January 1902, reported on a meeting of the Board of Conservators in Newport at which the condition of the River Ebbw was described as 'deplorable'. Furthermore, all the tributaries of the River Usk were being polluted by sewage, colliery and industrial works. (A serious sewage problem at Brecon was also remarked upon).

⁶⁶ Murray 1870: Route 9.

⁶⁷ Tolkien 1963.

⁶⁸ Some locals contend that the industrial dereliction seen near Merthyr, with the glow above the mountains at night from the blast furnaces (and visible from the Usk Valley) gave Tolkien the idea for the Black Land of Mordor. There are other candidates for this dubious honour, but none so phonetically connected.

⁶⁹ The North Gate, its supporting pillars and accompanying railings, were saved by moving them to a property on the opposite side of the A40.

⁷⁰ Grotta 1992: 23.

⁷¹ (Evans; 163)

⁷² In his *Nomenclature* Tolkien describes Buckland as "an English place-name", that may refer to a male deer or he-goat. It may also be derived from 'book-land', inferring land held under a charter. For other sources of the name, Hooker 2012: 17-22.

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WOMEN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN THE CRICKHOWELL DISTRICT¹

RYLAND WALLACE

Introduction

In March 1919, a few months after the end of hostilities of the First World War, Lord and Lady Glanusk were the principal guests at a ceremony in Brecon to recognise publicly the work of the Women's Land Army in the county and to present commemorative badges to a large number of its members. The former, who, along with his wife, had been central figures in leading the local war effort. His address that day was recorded in the *Brecon County Times*:

There was not the slightest doubt that had it not been for the ladies of the country, who in such vast numbers volunteered to do not only women's work but also that of men, the country would have been in a very tight corner indeed. (Applause). It seemed only a very few years ago—it seemed only yesterday—that excitable and misguided ladies were breaking windows with hammers and sticking hatpins into unoffending policemen, and making themselves very objectionable just because they wanted the vote. (Laughter). That was a thing of the past and it was all forgotten and forgiven. (Hear, hear). All they felt now was profound admiration for the ladies of England who sprang into the breach at the moment when it was necessary and who undoubtedly saved the situation. (Applause) Their admiration was the greatest for the ladies of the Land Army... (loud applause)²

If, rather patronisingly, amusing himself and the audience with his remarks on pre-war suffragette militancy, Lord Glanusk was clearly right to emphasise the profound effect of the war on women's priorities and, indeed, on their entire lives. It was, of course, men in the armed forces who overwhelmingly made the supreme sacrifice, but women died too in a variety of non-combatant roles and also suffered both physically and psychologically. This article discusses the activities and experiences of women in one particular area—in the parishes of south-east Breconshire—during this most devastating of conflicts.

Recruitment

"A Great War" / "England's Forces Mobilised" / "A Time of Crisis" ran the headlines in the *Brecon and Radnor Express* on Thursday 6 August 1914, two days after the British government's declaration of war on Germany, a direct result of the latter's invasion of Belgium. Its accompanying editorial captured both the sense of shock at such a dramatic development and the lack of comprehension of its reasons and its impending nature, which was surely felt by most men and women in the area: "The terrible calamity which has come on the people of Britain without any action on their part has been staggering;

Brycheiniog, 2018, Volume XLIX, pages 108–132.

and even now the seriousness of a European War is not realised by the great masses of the population".³

In early August 1914, Germany had an army of four and a half million; Austria-Hungary, three million; France, four million; and Russia, almost six million. With the only volunteer army of the major European countries involved in the conflict, Britain's numbered just 250,000. Initially rejecting military conscription (which was not introduced until 1916), the government launched a huge recruitment drive to obtain volunteers for the armed forces. As elsewhere in the country, the Lord Lieutenant of Breconshire (Lord Glanusk) urgently appealed to local patriotism, and recruitment meetings were organised throughout the towns and villages of the county, where prominent public figures enjoined young men to "do their duty to their country", to "defend King and Empire" in "a just war" and "leaving their conscience without stain".⁴

The government very swiftly recognised that women could play a significant role in encouraging men to enlist. Propaganda asserted that it was the duty of mothers, wives, and sweethearts to induce their menfolk to join the armed forces. Such sentiments were loudly displayed in posters plastered on walls, lamps-posts, and public transport, echoed in a bombardment of material in the local and national press, in music hall songs, and even by women seeking to publicly humiliate and shame young men not in khaki uniform by handing them a white feather, the traditional symbol of cowardice.

In an editorial headlined "Young Men, To Arms!", a few weeks after the start of the war, this was the advice being given by the *Abergavenny Chronicle* to its female readers:

Women are the best recruiting sergeants and they should do all they can to encourage young men to enlist. Let the young ladies lay down the dictum that there shall be no gladsome smiles or kisses for the young men who will not serve their country, and there will at once be a stampede to join the colours. It is "up to" the young ladies of Abergavenny to give an exhibition of self-sacrifice and to show how effective are their powers of persuasion.⁵

At the very forefront of the recruitment campaign was the suffragette leader, Emmeline Pankhurst. Within a week of the outbreak of war, the home secretary, Reginald McKenna, announced the unconditional release of all suffragette prisoners and, a few days later, Mrs Pankhurst responded by declaring the suspension of all 'votes-for-women' agitation by her organisation. With remarkable swiftness, she and other prominent militants were transformed from public enemies to fierce nationalists and impassioned war supporters.⁶ 'For King – For Country – For Freedom' now became their motto, with the title of their weekly newspaper changing from *The Suffragette* to *Britannia*. On a public speaking tour of south Wales in the autumn of 1915—headlined "How to Win the War"—Mrs Pankhurst's demonised the Germans as an evil and

barbaric people, conducting a war of savagery and murder. Unless Germany was defeated, audiences were told, there would be “no ‘land of my fathers’; the heritage of centuries would become a foreign province...under German despotism”.⁷ Men should enlist, and women would take over their jobs. She urged the introduction of military conscription and strongly condemned anyone undermining the war effort or advocating peace or compromise.

Mrs Pankhurst herself never spoke in the Crickhowell area—or indeed anywhere in Breconshire—but one of her foremost suffragette stalwarts, ‘General’ Flora Drummond, did, undertaking a public-speaking tour of the county in the summer of 1915 (Figs. 1 and 2).⁸ Addressing an open-air meeting in the Market Square, Crickhowell, Mrs Drummond appealed for recruits, arguing that the same “German atrocities” as perpetrated in Belgium “would be the fate of Englishwomen if the Hun overran our fair country”. Women, she insisted, “could do a great deal to release men for the colours... They did not want men to work and women to weep, but men to fight and women to work”.⁹



Figure 1. Arrest of Flora Drummond, April 1914.



Figure 2. Brecon and Radnor Express article, 29 July 1915.¹⁰

A few weeks earlier, on 17 July 1915, Mrs Pankhurst’s suffragette organisation—the Women’s Social and Political Union—had held its ‘Women’s Right to Serve’ demonstration in London, a procession of 30,000 women culminating in a deputation to David Lloyd George—the newly-created Minister of Munitions—to demand the right to undertake war work. Prominent in this march, and a member of Mrs Pankhurst’s deputation to Lloyd George, was Lady Editha Glanusk, who was the most vigorous woman in the promotion of the war effort in Breconshire (Fig. 3).¹¹ She used both the public platform and the press to express her forceful views. In an open letter to the “Women of Breconshire” in November 1914, she urged them to “let their nearest and

dearest go [to war]... I ask our stay-at-home young men how will they feel when the Germans attack our villages, as they have done in Belgium and France... we women should treat all such men with the scorn they deserve".¹² With her husband, three sons, and three brothers-in-law on active service from early in the war, she felt she had every right to be vociferous in this regard.¹³

Lady Glanusk's uncompromising exhortations on war recruitment were accompanied by a radical stance on "the alien enemy in our midst", on the threat she felt was posed by Germans living in Britain, views which brought her a measure of national press coverage. "I cannot but feel that the women want rousing", she told the *Lady's Pictorial* in May 1915, and went on to explain:

My husband is on active service, in Aden at present; I have one son in the Grenadier Guards in the trenches, another also in the Grenadier Guards, just about to go out, and a third who is fighting in the Dardanelles. Other women are doing the same, gladly giving their menfolk to fight for their country and freedom, and it is little wonder that some of us are stirred to bitterness at sight of the leniency with which the alien is treated here in our midst, enemies of military age released and allowed to dribble over to Germany to fight against us and kill our own true men; and, too, aliens liberated here in England and permitted to compete in our labour market and to do untold damage by cleverly conveying information and otherwise aiding the foe. It ought to make every woman patriot furious that such a state of things should be tolerated!¹⁴

By now, Lady Glanusk had taken steps to give organisational expression to her anti-German sentiments, placing herself at the forefront of a campaign to induce the government to pursue a stringent internment policy. Using her London home in Mayfair as its headquarters, she and other aristocratic ladies established the Women's Home Protection League—which she herself chaired—and set about petitioning and holding protest meetings to demand that "all alien-born enemies, whether German, Austrian or Turk, of military age, be forthwith interned...while other alien enemies above military age or under should be removed at least twenty miles from the coast and kept under surveillance".¹⁵

Amid such patriotic fervour, it is important to emphasise that many women utterly rejected the chauvinism of prominent public figures like Emmeline Pankhurst and Lady Glanusk. Indeed, some individuals campaigned passionately and tirelessly for peace throughout the conflict.¹⁶ The most



Figure 3. Lady Editha Glanusk.

Courtesy of the Hon. Dame Shan Legge-Bourke

significant activist in south-east Breconshire was undoubtedly Minnie Pallister, a young Brynmawr elementary school teacher and daughter of a Wesleyan minister, who was elected President of the Monmouthshire Federation of the Independent Labour Party on the eve of war (Fig. 4). She subsequently became national organiser in Wales for the No-Conscription Fellowship and frequently addressed peace and anti-conscription meetings in her own locality and elsewhere in south Wales. She also helped arrange and guide Helena Swanwick, first chair of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, on a speaking tour of the region in late 1916.¹⁷ In Brynmawr itself, she set up a Women's Peace Crusade group and also gave her support to the branch of Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Suffrage (later Socialist) Federation established in the town in May 1916; an organisation that called for adult suffrage and an end to the war and tried to alleviate local suffering, especially food shortages and the plight of young children.¹⁸ In attaching herself to what she later called "the comradeship of a (pacifist) despised minority", Minnie was condemning herself to fighting against great odds for the duration of the war, in her self-proclaimed mission to "tear down the narrow nationalism of man, and put in its place the grand and lofty idealism of internationalism".¹⁹



Figure 4. Minnie Pallister, 1918 (age 33).
Women's Archive of Wales²⁰

There is no evidence of Minnie Pallister publicly disseminating her anti-war arguments in the Crickhowell district, though such sentiments may have made an impression in the industrial communities near Brynmawr and Nantyglo. Indeed, Miss Pallister's most conspicuous contact with Crickhowell itself in these years was playing the piano, singing, and reciting at fund-raising concerts for the Red Cross.²¹ Clearly, she saw no contradiction between promoting soldiers' welfare on the one hand and supporting the principles of conscientious objectors on the other.

Voluntary work

Voluntary work by women was a very important aspect of the war effort. Most immediately, this often involved helping provide local accommodation for the 250,000 Belgian refugees who came to Britain following the German invasion of their country in August 1914 (Fig. 5). In Crickhowell, a local committee, comprising six women and just one man, was formed in October, tasked with housing refugees and then monitoring their well-being.²² The arrival of the first two families (numbering 12 people) quickly followed, collected from Abergavenny railway station and greeted enthusiastically by the inhabitants of the town:

A party of Belgian refugees arrived at Crickhowell on Monday evening, in motor-cars belonging to Gwilym C. James, High Sheriff of Monmouthshire; Mr. E. Pirie Gordon, secretary to the Breconshire War Fund, and Mr. W. T. Rees, Pendarren Park; and were cordially cheered by a large crowd. Glan-y-dwr, now known as the Belgian House, has been splendidly fitted up and prepared for these unfortunate people. Several of the party relate sad stories of the cruelty of the Germans, and there is no doubt that they have suffered great hardships.²³

Glan-y-dwr, at the bottom of Llanbedr Road, was provided, rent free, by James Isaac, a prominent grocer, who had recently purchased the property. Houses in Llangattock, Llangenny, and Bwlch were also generously loaned by their owners, backed by local donations of money and clothing. In time, some Belgian families found appropriate employment and moved away from the district; others stayed for the duration of the war.²⁴ One can only conclude that the district's response to this refugee crisis was a kind and generous one.

Ladies' committees to raise money, and produce clothes and 'comforts' for soldiers, were active all over the country from the beginning of the conflict, inspiring the popular tongue-twisting song 'Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers'. The Crickhowell War Hospital Supply Depot, centred on a shop in the High Street, ran very successfully for almost four years from July 1915, supplying the British Red Cross and St John Ambulance with thousands of items of clothing and other accessories.²⁵ On its termination in April 1919, Gwilym James of Llanwysg, President of the Depot, paid tribute to the ladies of the area: "Many thousands of articles have been sent to the various battle fronts and to military hospitals. Week in and week out, the ladies have carried out their labour of love and the record of the institution was one which reflected the highest credit upon the town and district. Subscriptions had been received from the inhabitants almost without exception".²⁶

Local concerts were a common fund-raising method of supporting Belgian refugees and various war-related organisations. Prominent among the women leading them were "the Misses Jones, of Llanbedr House, the talented daughters of the late Rev Thos Jones and Mrs Jones". This description referred to two of three highly accomplished sisters—Katherine, Auriol and Beatrice—each of whom had attended the Royal College of Music and went on to have professional



Figure 5. The Mad Dog of Europe: Terrified Belgian refugees flee their native country for England in the face of the German Kaiser's aggression.

Western Mail, 16 October 1914

careers as singers and instrumentalists (with piano, violin, and cello). They performed throughout Britain and in various countries abroad. By 1914, Katherine was married with young children, but Auriol and Beatrice not only participated in local events, but also travelled overseas as war entertainers in the Vera Lynne mould (Figs. 6 and 7). In September 1916, under the headline “Distinguished Llanbedr Artistes Entertaining the Wounded”, the *Brecon County Times* reported:

Under the auspices of the Red Cross Society, Miss Daisy Auriol Jones and her sister Miss Beatrice Eveline, have gone to the Mediterranean. They are now at Malta, with a select Concert party who are engaged in an endeavour to alleviate the sufferings of our sick and wounded troops, now on the island. Their engagement extends over two months, of which the first part is being spent at the fortress named. They will probably visit other parts, where their services will always be most welcome. The wonderful musical talent of the young ladies is well known, and as good music has such real charms—such a power to draw one out of one-self, so to speak—the value of their bravery and devotion in doing their bit in these terrible times must prove of great benefit to our suffering heroes.²⁷



Figure 6. Auriol Jones.

Official Programme of the National Eisteddfod
(Abergavenny, 1913)



Figure 7. Beatrice Jones.

The Stad (No. 400, Supplement, August 1923)

Employment

Prior to the outbreak of the First World War, many women had, of course, long been engaged in paid employment. Working-class women did so to contribute to family income during the period between school and marriage. In a district like Crickhowell, this was primarily domestic service or traditional female occupations such as dressmaking and shop work. Single middle-class women viewed employment as more of a career and tended to teach or take on clerical jobs. The prevailing male attitude to women in employment, however, was negative; their primary role being seen as homemaker and child carer.

Across Britain, the First World War years significantly changed women's employment situation. The recruitment of so many men into the armed forces and the unremitting demands of industry and agriculture creating considerably increased opportunities.²⁸ Indeed, many of these jobs were entirely new to women: in government and administration, in marketing and banking, and in transport; they drove buses and worked as conductresses, they delivered letters and became police officers, all formerly exclusively male jobs. It is difficult to find local examples of women employed in such work, but, in May 1915, the *Abergavenny Chronicle* did report that "two ladies are now engaged at the Crickhowell Post Office to deliver letters".²⁹ One of these was Miss Gwladys Walker, who continued in this role until she left the district in October 1919, the same newspaper recording that she had "carried out her duties with dispatch and courtesy".³⁰

Nursing, of course, was a long-established female profession. At the outbreak of war in August 1914, there were less than 300 military nurses, serving in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS). By 1918, this number had risen to well over 10,000, working at home and abroad, with almost 200 dying on active service. Professional nurses were supplemented by members of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD), a voluntary organisation providing nursing services in the United Kingdom and abroad. By 1918, some 70,000 women had worked as VADs in the war. For all nurses, whether professionals or volunteers, the war meant long shifts and exhausting labour, while dealing with the most horrific battle injuries.

Many other local women served as nurses during the First World War, but one had a particularly distinguished career.³¹ Her name was Gwennlian Elizabeth Roberts, who was born and brought up in Llangynidr, where her father was the local 'Collector of Poor Rates' (Fig. 8). Educated at a secondary school in Aberdare, where her aunt lived, she then did three years' nurse training in Croydon Infirmary in her early-twenties, before joining the QAIMNS in 1916, working for the next five years at a military hospital in Chatham, Kent. When she eventually left, the glowing reference from her former matron ran:

Of her skill and devotion to her patients I cannot speak too highly. She had charge most of the time of a large Medical division of 80 beds, mostly very acutely ill patients. She is a most excellent Sister—tidy, careful and painstaking—a good manager and disciplinarian and has an influence for great good with those under her... And above all the most perfect & devoted & skilled & and clever nurse I have ever met in all my 20 years nursing experience... By her untiring devotion and care she has been the means of saving numbers of her patients' lives especially during the influenza epidemic of 1918.³²

In 1919, Gwenllian became the only woman from the Crickhowell district to be awarded a military decoration for “exceptional services” to nursing during the First World War. “Congratulations to Stripe Sister Gwenllian Roberts on the distinction which His Majesty has conferred on her, viz. – First Class of the Royal Red Cross”, wrote the *Brecon County Times*. “Sister Roberts has by her devotion to our wounded heroes thoroughly earned the award, and the inhabitants of Llangynidr are very proud of the high honour conferred on one of them”.³³

As a consequence of the apparent death of her fiancé, six weeks before the armistice, Gwenllian decided to take advantage of the Overseas Settlement of Ex-Service Women scheme, which, in 1921, granted her free passage to Australia. Family links led to her being met off the boat in Brisbane by Thomas Watkins, a young man from Tretower who had emigrated to Queensland after qualifying as a pharmacist. They married the following year and remained in Australia.

Some women chose to enter medical work of a more adventurous and dangerous nature. The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANYs) drove ambulances and administered on-the-spot first aid near the battlefield, rather like modern paramedics. Two notable women active in this kind of work, both privileged ladies from south-east England, were Nina Hollings and Helena Gleichen. After serving as ambulance drivers, they trained as radiographers, raised enough money to buy their own mobile x-ray equipment and thereafter worked for the British Red Cross on the Italian Front. They moved from field-hospital to field-hospital, often under artillery fire, in order to take x-rays, which enabled surgeons to locate bullets and shrapnel in wounded soldiers and then perform swift and accurate operations, thereby helping to save many lives. Both were awarded various medals, including the Italian Medal for Valour, and were appointed OBE.³⁴ After the end of the war, these two extraordinary, rather eccentric, ladies came to live in the Crickhowell district, for most of the time at



Figure 8. Gwenllian Elizabeth Roberts, RRC.

the Neuadd, Llanbedr. They became conspicuous figures, entering into the life of the locality, Nina Hollings being elected to the Crickhowell Rural District Council in May 1925 and thereby becoming the body's first female councillor.³⁵

It was the munitions industry that offered the most striking evidence of wartime female employment with almost a million women engaged in some aspect of this work by 1918, entering an environment which hitherto had been exclusively male. Large numbers of women were employed in weapons' production in various parts of Wales, the biggest factories by far being the high explosive sites at Queensferry, on Deeside in Flintshire, employing over 5,000 women and Pembrey, near Llanelli, employing as many as 8,000.³⁶ In close proximity to the Crickhowell area, there were works at Ebbw Vale and Blaenafon, which would certainly have employed people living in the neighbouring Breconshire parishes (Fig. 9).



Figure 9. Munitions workers employed by the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company, October 1917.

Courtesy of Ebbw Vale Works Museum

'Munitionettes' (as women workers in the industry were frequently termed) laboured in extremely unhealthy and hazardous conditions, carrying potentially life-threatening risks: from poisoning, accidents, and explosions. Handling trinitrotoluene (TNT) caused discolouration of the skin as picric acid affected the liver, gaining the munition girls the nickname 'canaries'. In 1916, *The Lancet* listed the effects of contact with this material as "nasal discomfort, nose bleeds, smarting eyes, headaches, sore throat, tight chest, coughs, pains in the stomach, nausea, constipation alternating with diarrhoea and skin rashes...anorexia, giddiness, the swelling of hands and feet, drowsiness and finally death".³⁷

One unfortunate victim of fatal poisoning was 26-year-old May Prosser, who was born in Gilwern in 1891, the daughter of a farm labourer. Having followed in the footsteps of two of her elder sisters in her late teens and entered domestic service in Rochdale, she became a munitions worker in November 1916. Within two months she was in an infirmary with ‘toxic jaundice’, within five she was dead, from—in the coroner’s words—“the effects of trinitrotoluene poisoning contracted whilst working at Shell Filling Factory”.³⁸

There were other risks too; eye injuries, acid burns, industrial dermatitis, and accidents of all kinds, were commonplace.³⁹ Fatalities were inevitable, as in the tragic case of Clemima Coopey, a 33-year-old Blaenafon worker in February 1918. In a rush to catch her train home to Pontypool at the end of her shift, her dress was caught up in moving machinery and, in the words of one eye-witness, she was “rolled up in the machinery”; she died the following day from multiple fractures, leaving three young children and a husband serving abroad in the British army. Her military-style funeral was reported in the local newspaper:

At Pontypool, the scene was the most impressive witnessed for some considerable time. As the cortege passed through the town, headed by the Pontypool Town Temperance Silver Band and followed by about 60 munitions girls (in overalls) from the Blaenavon Works, hundreds of people stood watching with the deepest sympathy. The coffin, which was covered with the Union Jack, was borne by wounded soldiers and civilians.⁴⁰

Despite the dreadful working conditions, and risks to health and life itself, for many women, work in the munitions and explosives factories offered definite benefits. There was a measure of social and economic independence previously denied them. Arguably, compared to domestic service—the most common pre-war employment in Wales—munitions work offered an escape from unremitting drudgery and servility to far better-paid employment and an improved standard of living. By 1918, munitions women were earning three times the wages of domestic servants.⁴¹ At the same time, women also enjoyed the companionship and camaraderie that they found in the workplace. There were organised leisure activities; most munitions factories had women’s football teams, for example, a remarkable development given contemporary expectations of propriety and womanly conduct.

One local woman who played a significant role in this field was Ethel Clara Basil Jayne (1874–1940), who was appointed OBE for her war work when the honour was first created in 1917 (Fig. 10). The daughter of a local coal owner and magistrate residing at Pantybailea House, overlooking Gilwern (where she was born and brought up), Ethel went on to set up a chain of successful industrial laundries in north-west London in the early-twentieth century. In 1914, she directed her business expertise towards the war effort, gaining the

Victory and British medals the following year for her work with the French army in laundry management and in establishing canteens behind the front lines. The British government then employed her as an adviser and placed her in charge of the recruitment and control of women munitions workers across the whole country. Here, her background of managing large female workforces—a new area of responsibility for the government following legislation granting it the power to take over private munitions companies and set up its own—was very valuable. She also became Welfare Superintendent at Armstrong Whitworth's massive armaments factory near Newcastle, overseeing the work of thousands of women (where she also organised a women's football team).⁴²



Figure 10. Ethel Basil Jayne drives her pony and trap to the laundry she established in 1907. Walter 2005: 48

Most of the parishes of the Crickhowell district were essentially rural rather than industrial.⁴³ Female family members had always helped on the land, of course, feeding animals, milking cows, harvesting and carrying out many other menial tasks. War saw them undertake more skilled jobs, previously the preserve of men, while also introducing women to farm work who had no prior experience whatsoever.

Military recruitment naturally caused a shortage of agricultural labourers and this became acute from 1916 as conscription took effect. At the same time, the large-scale sinking of British ships by German U-boats created serious shortage of foodstuffs (about 60 per-cent of which was imported at the start of the war). Faced with mounting concerns about food supplies, in 1915, the government called for counties to establish War Agricultural Committees, tasked with improving productivity. Encouraging women to work on farms was one way of doing this. "A vast number of men have, thank God, seen where their duty called them", wrote Mary Eleanor Gwynne Holford of Buckland, Bwlch, in a public appeal in May 1915. "They have forsaken the fields for the trenches. The hand which held the plough now grasps the bayonet... There is a great opportunity for women... Offer your services for agricultural work and you will be doing your duty as fully as your menfolk in the trenches, and will be rendering a great service to your country."⁴⁴

County committees in turn set up district bodies, comprising those with local knowledge. A 'Women's Farm Labour Committee' was formed in Crickhowell, comprising ten female 'registrars' given responsibility for each of the surrounding villages, their role being to "receive the names of those who

are able and willing to give the whole or part of their time to farm work” and “to assist those farmers who desire to employ women’s labour in the present emergency”.⁴⁵

The responsibility for organising women’s work on the land fell largely upon voluntary bodies, such as the Women’s National Land Service Corps, but, by the end of 1916, the size of the task necessitated full government involvement. In March 1917, the Board of Agriculture established the Women’s Land Army (WLA) to recruit and train young women in farm work. The principal figure in this whole movement in Breconshire was Hilda Vaughan, the daughter of a Builth Wells solicitor, who later became a successful novelist, a career in which she was able to draw on her First World War experiences.⁴⁶ Her initial contribution to the war effort was as a cook in a Red Cross hospital, a time she recalled in *Pardon and Peace* through the words of Flora Treowain (as recounted to her lover, Mark Osbourne, a former soldier):

Train-loads of wounded pouring in, suffering. Sometimes horribly. Not enough beds for them all. Not enough nurses. *You* understand, don’t you, why I grew suddenly old – old in mind, anyhow? Not wise. Not mature. Just old. Doing things for sick people. Material things. No time to think of anything beautiful or sane. It looked as if the war would last forever. And I was always tired.⁴⁷

By 1916, Hilda was devoting her energies to urging women in her native mid Wales to take up farm work, going on to become organising secretary for the WLA in Breconshire and Radnorshire. Thoroughly committed to the cause, she addressed meetings in every part of the region and beyond, delivering stirring, uncompromising speeches. The authoress, Berta Ruck, who heard her speak at Newtown, was so impressed with her abilities that she produced a detailed description of Hilda recruiting land girls in her 1919 novel, *The Land-Girl’s Love Story* (largely set in Breconshire), including use of her words almost verbatim:

Above the heads of the thickening crowd I saw a banner. It was white, with the scarlet-lettered motto: ENGLAND MUST BE FED. Someone was speaking under the flag. In the sultry midday air I suddenly heard fresh and clear, a girlish voice, “I have put before you the disadvantages of this life. Long hours. Hard work. Poor pay. After you get your board and lodging a shilling a day, perhaps. Very poor pay. But, girls – our boys at the Front are offering their lives for just that. Won’t you offer your services for that – for them?” The voice attracted me... It held me that voice, while the speaker touched on the urgent need of workers to fill the places of men who had gone from farm, field, dairy and byre.

She wore the Land Girl’s uniform... Under her slouch-hat her face was vividly brown and rose-coloured, with dark eyes alight. Her fresh, light belted smock, with its green armet and scarlet crown, looked cool as well as trim... “You are offered some good things in this new life, girls. Good health. Good sleep – there’s no sleep

like that of the worker on the land!” declared the recruiting land girl. “Another thing you’re offered is a good conscience with which to meet those lads when they return from fighting for you.”⁴⁸

Farmers, however, often had to be persuaded that women were capable of specialised tasks. A meeting of the Breconshire War Agricultural Committee in May 1916, for example, focussed on this very problem; “good ploughing was not ladies’ work” and “women were best able to hoe turnips” were indicative of some of the reservations expressed. The proposed compromise was that farmers needed to be induced “to give the lady workers a trial”, which might in the future mean organising demonstrations of women’s ability to competently perform various farming skills.⁴⁹ Progress remained slow. Two years later, Hilda Vaughan was still bemoaning the “stupid prejudice” of the farmers of Breconshire against women, to the point where “first-rate workers” were being forced to go to English counties to ply their skills.⁵⁰

Among several Land Army training centres in Wales was one at Glanusk Park, set up by the Breconshire Women’s War Agricultural Committee in June 1918 (Fig. 11). Up to 40 recruits at any one time, could be accommodated in tents and huts where they would undertake six weeks’ daily training, either at the camp or on adjoining farms.⁵¹ Between March 1917 and May 1919, 23,000 women became members of the WLA, thereby forming a significant but small part of the overall total of 300,000 female agricultural workers by 1918.⁵²

The First World War also saw the appearance for the first time of women in military uniforms, with the formation of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps



Figure 11. Women’s Land Army Training camp, Glanusk Park.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

(WAAC) and their navy and air force equivalents. The aim was not for women themselves to fight, though they often found themselves in highly dangerous situations and witnessed death, mutilation, and suffering. Rather, their role was to release men from a wide variety of jobs at military bases and at the front so that they could take up arms. “Women Urgently Wanted”, exclaimed the posters, “Work at Home and Abroad with the Forces – Cooks, Clerks, Waitresses, Driver-Mechanics... and in Many Other Capacities”. There is evidence that some women in the Crickhowell district responded to the call.⁵³

Keeping the home fires burning

Despite the various new employment opportunities, the reality was that most women in Britain were not in paid work during the war and had little choice but to “Keep the Home Fires Burning (Till the Boys Come Home)”, to quote the words of the hugely popular song by Cardiff-born Ivor Novello and the American poet Lena Ford. For hundreds of thousands of women, war meant a day-to-day struggle to keep domestic life going, making ends meet, and caring for young children in the absence of their menfolk. Many had to do so almost entirely alone, their soldier-husbands being unable to obtain leave for several months or even years.

The most immediate effect on the families of men who enlisted was hardship. Married women had to rely on the newly-introduced separation allowances, but the administration of these was often slow and delayed, at a time when they were already struggling to cope with rapidly rising food prices and shortages. By 1917, Crickhowell, like communities all over the country, had its own food control committee, under the auspices of the Rural District Council. Its role was principally to fix the prices of basic items, such as milk, butter, and meat, for the area—seeking to be fair both to consumers and producers—and also to exert pressure on wholesale suppliers when local grocers were receiving insufficient foodstuffs.⁵⁴ Rationing was eventually introduced by the government in the early months of 1918.

All the while, of course, women had the continuous anxiety of loved ones fighting at the front, on tenterhooks for the next letter home, in constant fear of the War Office telegram or letter carrying the dreaded words “missing in action” or “killed in action”. The psychological pressures of war on women were often enormous, at worst leading to mental instability and even suicide.⁵⁵

The wartime experience of Rhoda Leonard (née Price) of Crickhowell is a local example of the immense strain placed on some women. The daughter of a local butcher, she married Charles Frederick Leonard, a painter and decorator, in 1907. Their first child, a son, died shortly after birth; another, Freddie, was born in 1910 (Figs. 12, 13, 14). As a member of the Crickhowell Territorials, Charlie joined the conflict at the very start. He survived, despite being hospitalised after a trench collapsed on him in 1917 and then being

officially reported as ‘missing in action’ the following year – for several weeks Rhoda must have feared the worst. In fact, he had been captured by the Germans and remained a prisoner of war in France until the armistice six months later.⁵⁶ Adding to Rhoda’s torment was the fact that two of her brothers and four of her brothers-in-law were also serving in the armed forces, one of each being killed. Her mother-in-law also died midway through the war.

Amidst all this worry and heartache, there was one further grievous blow inflicted upon Rhoda: the death of her five-year-old son, Freddie, in 1915. The funeral was reported as having been “very largely attended” but the graveside gathering did not, it seems, include Charlie, who was serving abroad at the time; the news of the little boy’s death presumably being conveyed to him by letter from his wife.⁵⁷



Figure 12.
Rhoda Leonard.

Courtesy of David Isaac



Figure 13.
Charlie Leonard.

Courtesy of David Isaac



Figure 14.
Freddie Leonard.

Courtesy of David Isaac

The scars of war

For Charlie Leonard, the official missing-in-action communication had a fortuitous outcome. Overwhelmingly, however, it proved fatal and a huge proportion of the dead were young men in their late-teens or early-twenties. The suffering of some mothers and families is unimaginable. Two Llangynidr women, Margaret Powell Jones and Ann Harris, each lost two of their three sons in the war. So too did Lord and Lady Glanusk, testimony that young men from all classes fell in the war.⁵⁸ Amidst the sheer magnitude of the slaughter of the Great War one needs to remember that each death was an individual loss to be borne by those close to them. Not unusually, Jane Charles, a widow from Cwmgwybedog, near Beaufort, on the southern edge of Llangattock mountain, had the following

words inscribed on her husband's gravestone: "Also of the youngest son, Pte Edgar Charles, who died of wounds, Nov. 15th, 1917, buried at Etaples Cemetery, France, aged 27 years". It concludes with the following couplet:

Far Away from His Home and His Loved Ones | Laid to Rest in that Foreign Field

'Laid to Rest in that Foreign Field' represents a significant aspect of the grief, denying families the finality of a funeral for their loved one or a local grave to visit. Many mothers, like Jane Charles, provided her own personal memorial. In Crickhowell cemetery, another widow, Mary Price, did likewise, recording the death of her 22-year-old son, John Harold Price, on her husband's, and what would be, her own, gravestone. Nearby, the deaths of Albert Leonard and Valentine Gratrex Davies were similarly engraved by their families, as is Walter Jones in Llanbedr churchyard.

For those who survived, there were often life-long physical and mental scars which had to be managed not only by the men themselves but also by their wives and families. Loss of limbs and deformities were commonplace. Some servicemen had their lives drastically shortened by the war. Norman Allbutt of Llangattock was one. While home on leave in September 1918, he married a local woman before returning to France for one last battle, during which he was badly gassed and hospitalised. He returned home to Llangattock but died in 1921, aged 32, his early death undoubtedly hastened by the gassing. His wife was thus effectively widowed by the war, leaving her with two young sons to bring up on her own, one aged two and the other just a few months old.⁵⁹

Less easily identifiable, of course—especially in an age long before the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder—were those suffering from serious psychological problems. Untold numbers must have been tormented by their war experiences and thereafter suffered hideous nightmares and varying degrees of depression.⁶⁰

Commemoration

War memorials in cities, towns, and villages everywhere record the local names of those who lost their lives in the Great War, lists that are generally entirely male, though sometimes women appear too. Almost 887,000 from Britain died in the conflict, 12 per cent of all those who fought; about 31,000 were Welshmen, including more than a hundred from Crickhowell and its surrounding parishes (none of whom were female).

The only national women's First World War memorial in Britain is in York Minster, in the form of a restored thirteenth-century stained-glass window and adjacent oak screens inscribed with the names of 1,465 women from the British Empire who lost their lives. Funded by public subscription, it was unveiled in June 1925 in the presence of 800 of the relatives of the dead women it

commemorates, including members of the armed forces, ship stewardesses, doctors, nurses and other medical staff, munition workers, and civilians.⁶¹ In Wales, women's names occasionally appear on cenotaphs and other local war memorials and on rolls of honour in churches, chapels, halls, and schools. In a recent project, Archifau Menywod Cymru / Women's Archive of Wales has sought to record and research the lives of as many of these women as possible and by the end of 2016 had discovered around 50.⁶² Among this number are nurses, stewardesses, women in the services, and munition workers, the last-mentioned comprising the largest listing of women appearing on a single war memorial in Wales: Swansea Cenotaph contains a specific panel recording the names of 12 females working at the National Explosives Factory at Pembrey.⁶³

During the First World War, hundreds of women, perhaps over a thousand, died because of munitions work. The names of the majority of these have gone unrecorded on local war memorials and rolls of honour. Just one woman from the Crickhowell area seems to have been commemorated: May Prosser, whose death caused by working in a munitions factory, has already been discussed. Her name is listed on the two war memorials in Govilon, the neighbouring (Monmouthshire) village to where the family had moved (Fig. 15).

While successive governments were reluctant to recognise the deaths of munition workers as war deaths, contemporary commentators often had no doubts. Impassioned by the case of an 18-year-old Ruthin girl who was blinded and badly burned in a factory explosion, one mother from the same town wrote to her local newspaper "Young girls...who risked their lives every day in munitions works, handling high explosives and other dangerous substances, were *real* soldiers".⁶⁵ Certainly May Prosser's



Figure 15. Memorial stone tablet, Christ Church, Govilon.⁶⁴

parents were always conscious that their daughter had lost her life directly as a result of the war. "She gave her life for her country", concluded the notice of death in the *Abergavenny Chronicle* in April 1917. A year later, an item in the 'In Memoriam' column in the same newspaper, read: "In Most Affectionate Remembrance of May, much-loved daughter of Francis and Margaret Prosser, Govilon, who died on April 3, 1917, from the effects of shell filling, aged 26".⁶⁶

Recognition of women's ordeals was rare in subsequent commemorations, though in some locations grieving mothers who had lost sons in the war did unveil monuments. In Brecon, for example, the inauguration of the memorial cross in front of St Mary's Church in October 1920 was performed by Julia

Best, three of whose sons, all lieutenants, had been killed within a few months of each other in 1917.⁶⁷

One occasion when the contribution and experiences of women were strikingly highlighted, was at the opening of the Merthyr Tydfil Borough War Memorial in November 1931. Unveiling the dedication “To the men and women of Merthyr Tydfil who died and suffered in the Great War”, Field Marshal Viscount Allenby’s tribute ran:

And not only the men, the daughters of your country came forward, at the call, as bravely as their husbands, brothers and sons. They crossed the seas, sharing perils from shot, shell, disease and poison gas; going up to the fighting front, with valiant courage in hospitals and ambulance, in retreat and advance. Others, at home, gave as great proof of endurance and patient bravery – in hospitals, munitions work and war work. The strain suffered by the woman who had to work and wait, in torturing suspense, apart from him she held most dear, while aware of the dire possibilities, without news, unable to share his danger or give active help, cannot be even faintly imagined by us. Such courage was of even a finer type than the heroism so splendid in the clamour and clash of battle. Your Memorial has rightly recognised the share of women, as well as men in the war; and of children too – for they also suffered.⁶⁸

Nowhere is this suffering—the individual pain and numbness of loss—more vividly portrayed than in the remarkable photograph of the unveiling of the Abertillery War Memorial in December 1926. Mrs May Fisher (née Williams)



Figure 16. Mrs May Fisher sits alone at the unveiling of the Abertillery War Memorial in December 1926.⁶⁹

of Blaina, wearing the nine medals posthumously awarded to her three brothers who were killed in the war, sits alone with her back to the monument, staring straight ahead as if in a trance, lost in her own thoughts, while the crowd around her gaze up at the monument (Fig. 16).

From the Crickhowell district, comes a poignant photograph marking the sad pilgrimage of the mother and sister of Tom Richards of Llangynidr to visit his grave in France after the war (Fig. 17).⁷⁰

For women in virtually every community in Britain, coming to terms with the loss of a family member, fiancé, or sweetheart—most of whom were buried overseas—was utterly heart-breaking. Accordingly, for the bereaved, joining in the impromptu armistice celebrations which broke out everywhere on the morning of 11 November 1918 must have been well-nigh impossible. The scenes in Crickhowell on that day were typical of those throughout the country and were recorded in the *Abergavenny Chronicle*:

In quick time flags and bunting were hung out by the inhabitants and rejoicing was general. The bells of St. Edmund's Church and St. Cattwgs Church, Llangattock, rang out merry peals, and at night there were bonfires on the surrounding hills, and fireworks. A torch-light procession...comprising some hundreds of juveniles, marched through the streets of the town and to the village of Llangattock, and en-route Boy Scouts blew their bugles and the Bugle Band played martial music.⁷¹

That same evening, in central London, 24 year-old Vera Brittain made her way through joyful crowds, totally unable to join in the jubilation. She was later to write the autobiographical *Testament of Youth*, a deeply-moving depiction of a woman's grief after suffering the loss of her fiancé, her only brother and her two closest male friends.⁷² "I ended the First World War", she later wrote, "with my deepest emotions paralysed if not dead". Her abiding sentiment on that first Armistice Day was fearful loneliness in "a blind, empty, soundless world".⁷³ She was surely articulating the feelings of many, many thousands of women everywhere.



Figure 17. Sarah Richards (right) and her daughter, Edith, c. 1920.

Courtesy of Chris Lewis

Notes

- BCT* Brecon County Times
B&R Brecon and Radnor Express
AC Abergavenny Chronicle
 CDAC Crickhowell District Archive Centre

¹ In 1914, the Crickhowell Rural District comprised eight parishes: Crickhowell, Cwmdru, Llanbedr Ystradwy, Llanelly, Llangattock, Llangenny, Llangynidr, and Patricio. For a discussion of the social and economic diversity of the area, especially the contrast between the largely rural villages surrounding the town of Crickhowell and the industrialised communities of the Clydach gorge, Williams and Wallace 2017: 9-14. I am grateful to CDAC for access to various written and visual material in the writing of this article.

² *BCT*, 3 April 1919; *B&R*, 3 April 1919. The word ‘England’ was commonly used by Lord Glanusk and other public figures in their speeches at this time, seeing it as essentially the same and therefore interchangeable with ‘Britain’. Gaffney 2000: 159-60. For Lord Glanusk and the First World War, Williams and Wallace 2017: 18-21.

³ *B&R*, 6 August 1914.

⁴ *BCT*, 22 October, 4 November, 26 November 1914; *AC*, 6, 27 November 1914.

⁵ *AC*, 28 August 1914.

⁶ As the Conservative Party leader, and three times prime minister, Stanley Baldwin, recalled years later when unveiling a statue to Mrs Pankhurst at Victoria Tower Gardens in the shadow of the Houses of Parliament, “The World War came. In the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of a trumpet, the revolutionary died, and the patriot was born, and the militant suffragettes laid aside their banners”. *The Times*, 7 March 1930.

⁷ *Free Press of Monmouthshire*, 1 October 1915; Wallace 2009: 219-29.

⁸ A few months before the outbreak of war, a local newspaper editorial, headlined “The Wild Women”, had highlighted Mrs Drummond as one of “the viragoes”, suffragette leaders perpetrating “the present intolerable series of crimes”. *BCT*, 11 June 1914. Now her “stirring, earnest and eloquent addresses” were pointing women in the right direction. *B&R*, 29 July 1915.

⁹ *AC*, 6 August 1915.

¹⁰ ‘Miss Philip Morgan’—a reference to her father and the name by which Gwenllian Morgan was most commonly called—was the first woman in Wales to serve on a borough council (1907) and the first to become a mayor (1910). As well as being a significant figure in local government, she was active in the temperance and women’s suffrage movements and an eminent antiquarian. Sandells 2012: 15-32; *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* <http://yba.llgc.org.uk> (Accessed 5 February 2018), ‘Morgan, Gwenllian Elizabeth Fanny (1852–1939)’.

¹¹ *BCT*, 15 July 1915; *The Suffragette*, 11 June; 23 July 1915. Born at Cuckfield, Sussex, in 1871, Editha Elma Sergison was the eldest daughter of Warden Sergison, an army colonel, and his wife, Emilia. She married Joseph Henry Russell Bailey (1864-1928), heir to Glanusk Park estate and mansion in the Usk valley above Crickhowell, in 1890; her husband succeeded to the family’s title, as 2nd Baron Glanusk, on the death of his father in 1906.

¹² *B&R*, 5 November 1914. Such uncompromising pro-war language was scarcely distinguishable from that of former suffragettes like Emmeline Pankhurst and Flora Drummond, a very far cry from a few months earlier, when Lady Glanusk had been an opponent of votes for women and undoubtedly appalled by suffragette militancy.

¹³ Two of the sons were killed in the war: Gerald Sergison Bailey (in August 1915, aged 22, in northern France) and Bernard Michael Bailey (in May 1916, aged 17, the naval Battle of Jutland). The surviving son, Wilfred Russell Bailey, succeeded to the title in 1928. One of the brothers-in-law, John Lancelot Bailey, aged 39, died of Spanish flu two weeks before the armistice, while serving in India.

¹⁴ *Lady’s Pictorial*, 20 May 1915. The report of the interview was accompanied by a signed, full-length regal-looking photograph of Lady Glanusk, sat on a throne-like chair and wearing a gown in the colours of the Union Jack. *Daily Express*, 10 February 1915.

¹⁵ Miller 2013: 129-31; Panayi 1991: 102, 154-58; *Weekly Despatch*, 9 May 1915; *BCT*, 15 February, 1 April, 20 May, and 29 July 1915. Lady Glanusk seems to have devoted almost all her

time and energies to the war effort, promoting every local endeavour and organisation, including being the driving force behind the Penoyre Red Cross Hospital in Brecon and President of the Breconshire 'Land Girl Scheme'. *Ladies' Who's Who* 1930: 264.

¹⁶ For anti-war sentiment among women in Wales, Beddoe 2000: 55-7.

¹⁷ Swanwick 1935: 293-9. Minnie Pallister and Helena Swanwick were two of five women listed in an intelligence report of 184 key persons connected with the labour and peace movements in south Wales in December 1916. Minnie was described as "a clever pacifist", though "not extreme", Eurig 2016.

¹⁸ *Llais Llafur*, 1 August 1914; *Pioneer*, 11 September 1915; Wallace 2009: 233-6; Adams 2015: 226-7. Minnie's radical views also embraced strong support for socialism through the Independent Labour Party, which included welcoming the overthrow of the Russian Tsar in 1917, in what initially appeared to be a democratic revolution, before the Communists seized power. In the 1920s, she stood unsuccessfully as a Labour parliamentary candidate on several occasions before embarking on a long career as a radio presenter. Obituaries in *Bexhill Observer*, 2 April 1960; *Socialist Leader*, 9 April 1960. Alun Burge is currently researching and writing a biography of the hitherto neglected Minnie Pallister.

¹⁹ *Pioneer*, 19 October 1918. The *Pioneer* was a socialist newspaper founded in Merthyr Tydfil by the local Labour MP, Keir Hardie, and vehemently opposed militarism. Under the headline "Hell on Earth", its editorial had condemned the declaration of war in the most strident language: "The European Armageddon, long prophesied and frequently postponed, is at last upon us. Devils of greed, nymphs of pride and satellites of HONOUR (sic!) are dancing the war-dance of Hell. Orgies of blood, organised by the Chancelleries of Europe, with the Kaiser as master of ceremonies, are the game of the hour. Whoever made this war, it is not the workers. There is no quarrel between the WORKERS of the various countries. Neither is there any real cause of war between the peoples of Europe". *Ibid.*, 8 August 1914.

²⁰ <http://www.womenandwar.wales/> (WaW0230) (Accessed 5 February 2018)

²¹ *AC*, 23 June 1916; *BCT*, 4 July 1918.

²² *AC*, 23 October 1914.

²³ *AC*, 30 October 1914.

²⁴ *AC*, 25 September, 20 November, 11 December 1914, 8 January 1915; *B&R*, 29 October 1914; *BCT*, 14 January, 11 February 1915; *Pioneer*, 24 October 1914.

²⁵ *AC*, 23 July 1915, 11 February 1916.

²⁶ *AC*, 4 April 1919.

²⁷ *BCT*, 28 September 1916. Also, *BCT*, 28 May, 12 August 1915; *AC*, 28 May 1916; Williams and Wallace 2017; Jones 2017.

²⁸ For a recent examination of women's wartime employment in teaching, medicine and higher education, Jenkins 2017.

²⁹ *AC*, 21 May 1915.

³⁰ *AC*, 24 October 1919. One contemporary postcard sought to highlight the novelty of women doing formerly exclusively-male jobs by means of an illustration and a verse: "Behold the smart post lady / Who brings letters to our houses / Also the tram conductor / And these sweet things in trousers". (The latter were window cleaners: women wearing trousers was new.) The first women police officers were also appointed during the First World War: 'copperettes', as they were nicknamed.

³¹ Other local military nurses included the Jenkins sisters, Nellie and Lily, from Gilwern, the Leonard sisters, Caroline and Ethel, from Crickhowell, and Charlotte Somerset, daughter of the rector of Crickhowell.

³² File on Gwenllian Roberts, CDAC; British Army Nurses' Service Records, 1914-18, The National Archives, WO/399/7076, Block 2015: 10-12.

³³ *BCT*, 9 October 1919. Also, *BCT*, 9 August, 28 September 1916; *B&R*, 5 October 1916; 16 August 1917; *Llais Llafur*, 28 September 1918, 25 October 1919.

³⁴ Gleichen 1940: 41, 213, 315-6, 324-5; Belzer 2010: 101-2, 118-9, 194; Crichton 1987: 16-1; Hurley 2008; Atwood 2014: 106-16.

³⁵ *AC*, 15 May 1925, 25 September 1936.

³⁶ At Pembrey in 1917, more than 58 per cent of the workforce was female, with a large number being under the age of eighteen. George 2015: 115. For details on munitions factories in Wales, *ibid.*: 107-17; Beddoe 200: 60-1.

³⁷ *The Lancet*, 12 August 1916. For descriptions of the working conditions women endured in munitions factories, Barlow 2014: 201-2; Lewis 2014: 72-5.

³⁸ Certificate of Death, 5 April 1917; *Rochdale Observer*, 7 April 1917. For more details, Wallace 2016a: 14-17; Wallace 2016b: 3-4.

³⁹ At the explosives factory in Queensferry, between 1917 and 1918, 3,813 acid burns were treated, together with 2,128 eye injuries, 763 cases of industrial dermatitis, and 12,778 other accidents, George 2015: 115.

⁴⁰ *Free Press of Monmouthshire*, 8 March 1918; *Dean Forest Mercury*, 8 March 1918; Blaenavon Community Heritage Museum 2014: 71. For photographs and accounts of a similar funeral procession in Swansea in August 1917 (of two young munitionettes killed in an explosion at the Pembrey factory), Beddoe 2000: 116.

⁴¹ For a vivid portrayal of the experiences of Welsh domestic servants in the first half of the twentieth century, Scadden 2013.

⁴² I am grateful to Dr Nina Baker, who is preparing an entry on Ethel for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, for this information. Also, Walter 2005: 48-50. She died in Hertfordshire, aged 64, and was cremated at Golders Green, her ashes being placed in the family tomb in Llanelly Church cemetery, Gilwern. For obituaries, *Western Mail*, 8 April 1940; *Herts Advertiser*, 12 April 1940. For her father, Basil Jayne, *Western Mail*, 3 February 1891; *Cardiff Times*, 7 February 1891; *Brecknock Beacon*, 8 February 1891.

⁴³ For a discussion of the women's war experience in an industrial area, Snook 2001: 75-87.

⁴⁴ *BCT*, 13 May 1915. For Mrs Gwynne Holford's major contribution to the foundation of the Queen Mary's Convalescent Auxiliary Hospital ('the human repair factory') at Roehampton House in south London in June 1915, a specialist artificial limb-fitting centre for British servicemen who suffered arm or leg amputations in the war, Williams and Wallace 2017: 34-5.

⁴⁵ *B&R*, 20 April 1916.

⁴⁶ Her contact with soldiers and Welsh working-class women offered rich source material for two novels, in particular—*The Soldier and the Gentlewoman* (London, 1932) and *Pardon and Peace* (London, 1943)—both of which feature the return of soldiers from the First World War and the difficulties of adjusting to civilian life again after the horrors of armed conflict. Thomas 2008: 7-8, 96-107; Lucy Thomas' 2014 Introduction to *The Soldier and the Gentlewoman* (Dinas Powys).

⁴⁷ *Pardon and Peace*: 47. Later in the novel, Mark himself graphically describes the horror and brutality of battle. *Ibid.*: 73-4.

⁴⁸ Ruck 1919: 23-5. Also, Beddoe 2000: 67. For Berta Ruck, Lloyd-Morgan 2007: 210-9.

⁴⁹ At this same Brecon meeting, Edith Beckwith, wife of a Llangenny paper manufacturer, reported that in the Crickhowell district "she had only two whole-time workers on her register, but many more were willing to work for part of their time", *B&R*, 20 April 1916.

⁵⁰ Speaking at a public meeting in Bwlch. *BCT*, 13 June 1918. For a forthright condemnation of the reluctance of local farmers to use female labour, *Montgomeryshire Express*, 9 May 1916, (editorial).

⁵¹ *BCT*, 13 June, 4, 11 July 1918; *B&R*, 4, 11 July 1918.

⁵² For more details of women working on the land in Wales, Beddoe 200: 66-8.

⁵³ *AC*, 5, 12 October 1917; *BCT*, 2 May 1918; *B&R*, 25 April 1918.

⁵⁴ *AC*, 17 August, 26 October 1917, 22 February 1918, 12 December 1919; *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 23 February 1918.

⁵⁵ In 1916, two Llanelly women, Ann Williams and Ruth Williams, found the strain of having two sons away at war too great to bear; each committed suicide, one cutting her throat with a razor, the other hanging herself. Davies 2012: 107. For other examples on the same theme, Barlow 2014: 208-9; Michael 2003: 117.

⁵⁶ *AC*, 14 April 1916, 14 September, 5 October 1917, 31 May, 23 August, 13, 20 December 1918; *BCT*, 19 December 1918.

⁵⁷ *B&R*, 14 October 1915; *AC*, 15 October 1915.

⁵⁸ Mary Pritchard of Abergavenny lost both her husband and son on the same day—2 May 1915—during the same battle—the Second Battle of Ypres, *AC*, 7 May 2015. Julia Best of Brecon lost three of her four soldier sons in the space of 11 weeks early in 1917, all killed in conflict with the Turks in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), Brecon U3A Family History Group 2016: 23-9; *B&R*, 19 January 1950. Similarly, all three sons of Mary Witts of Newport perished (within seven months, in 1916-17), as did three sons of Annie and William Lowry of Llandyfaelog, Carmarthenshire.

⁵⁹ *BCT*, 26 September, 10 October 1918; Foley 2014: 18-21.

⁶⁰ Nineteen per-cent of the admissions to the Denbigh asylum in 1918 were attributed to ‘war worry’ and this included women as well as men, Michael 2016: 119-120. For more on this theme, see Davies 2015: 309-10, and footnotes therein.

⁶¹ The Five Sisters Window is in the north transept of York Minster.

⁶² Women in World War I: The Welsh Experience <http://www.womensarchivewales.org> (Accessed 5 February 2018)

⁶³ 240 munition workers are commemorated at York minster.

⁶⁴ For the unveiling of the tablet, *AC*, 8 April 1921. The other war memorial in Govilon is the ‘Roll of Honour’ inscribed on the gateway pillars at the entrance to the King George V Playing Field. For photographs, <https://history.govilon.com/memorial/photos> (Accessed 5 February 2018), Westlake 2001: 83-4.

⁶⁵ *Denbighshire Free Press*, 22 June 1918, 15 November 1919 (Supplement).

⁶⁶ *AC*, 13 April 1917, 29 March 1918.

⁶⁷ *BCT*, 17 May 1917, 4 November 1920; *B&R*, 4 November 1920; Gaffney 2000: 36. Prominent local women sometimes performed such ceremonies too, as in the case of the Bwlch memorial, on the very edge of the Crickhowell rural district boundary, which was unveiled by Mary Eleanor Gwynne Holford of nearby Buckland Hall in March 1921. *BCT*, 24 March 1921.

⁶⁸ *Merthyr Express*, 14 November 1931; Gaffney 2000: 42. The central figure, St Tydfil, stands on an altar of sacrifice, flanked on either side by sculptures of a miner and a grieving mother holding a baby.

⁶⁹ *South Wales News*, 2 December 1926.

⁷⁰ Gunner Thomas Richards was killed in northern France in March 1920, aged 20. Such temporary crosses were to be replaced by the very distinctive headstones, which can be seen in seemingly-endless cemeteries overseas and occasionally in local graveyards around us. For Thomas Richards, Ellis 2014: 41-3; Williams and Wallace 2017: 120. For poignant expression of a mother’s grief, Lord 2011: 228, 231.

⁷¹ *AC*, 15 November 1918. “When the great and glorious news reached Llanbedr on Nov. 11th we at once began to rejoice with the rest of the civilised world”, wrote the local contributor to the *Parochial Magazine*.

⁷² To her biographer, “the book is arguably the greatest work of love, loss and remembrance to emerge from the First World War...there is nothing else in the prose literature of the war that so eloquently and movingly conveys the suffering and bereavement inflicted on the generation of 1914”, Bostridge 2014: xviii.

⁷³ *Ibid*: xv-xvi; Brittain 1978: 462-3.

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CYDMEITHION ANLACH

BRYNACH PARRI

Mae'r rhif deuddeg yn ymddangos nifer nodweddiadol o weithiau yn y chwedlau cynnar sydd yn ymdrin â sefydlu teyrnas Brycheiniog. Wrth gwrs, mae i rifau a rhifolion naws hudol mewn llawer o chwedloniaethau dynol rhyw a chânt eu defnyddio yn aml i gynrychioli cyfanswm bras—2, 40, 100, 300—yn hytrach na chyfanswm penodol. Awgryma'r ffaith bod y Gymraeg a'r Llydaweg yn trin y rhifolyn rhwng 17 a 19—*deunaw* a *tric'hwech*—yn wahanol i'r rhifolion i'r naill ochr a'r llall, bod rhyw natur lledrithiol iddo yn nychymyg ein hynafiaid y Brythoniaid. Fel sydd yn wir am y tabŵ rhag enwi gwrthrychau neu anifeiliaid penodol,¹ mae'r naill iaith a'r llall yn osgoi defnyddio y rhifolion disgwylidig *tri-ar-bymtheg* neu *eizhtek*, gan osod lluosogiad o rifau lledrithiol eraill yn eu lle (2x9, 3x6). Ar wahân i rym y rhif deuddeg yn fathemategol,² mae hefyd yn enghraifft gref iawn o bwysigrwydd rhifau a rhifolion mewn chwedlau, crefydd a mytholeg ledled y byd.

Ystyrir y ddwy ddogfen sydd yn adrodd chwedl sefydlu Brycheiniog, sef *De Situ Brecheniauc*³ a *Cognatio Brychan*,⁴ fel y cofnodion brodorol cynharaf yn Ewrop yn dilyn cwmp y Rhufeiniaid.⁵ Er mai Lladin yw iaith y dogfennau, a'u bod yn gopiau hwyr (y drydedd ganrif ar ddeg: *De Situ*, a yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg: *Cognatio*) o ddogfennau cynharach o lawer, fel y tystia ffurfiau'r geiriau Cymraeg cynnar ynddynt, maent yn cynnig chwedloniaeth 'swyddogol' Brycheiniog. I raddau, maent yn gwrthdweud ei gilydd mewn manylion, ond mae'r ddwy stori'n rhoi darlun o gyfnod ymhell yn ôl yn ein gorffennol.

Y tro cyntaf i'r rhif deuddeg ymddangos yn chwedloniaeth neu hanes Brycheiniog yw wrth i Marchell, unig ferch Tewdrig ac etifeddes i deyrnas ei thad sef Garth Madryn (oedd yn cwmpasu dyffrynnoedd Wysg a Llynfi, gyda'i brif gaer yng nghyffiniau Talgarth) gael ei chynghori gan ei thad i ffoi i'r gorllewin i osgoi'r oerfel (*De Situ Brecheniauc*) neu'r pla (*Cognatio Brychan*) oedd yn bygwth y wlad. Cynrychiolir y ddinistr gan y tri ystum ar arfbais ddiweddarach o lawer Brycheiniog: yr unig dro i'r anifeiliaid hyn ymddangos mewn arfbeiseg Gymreig.⁶ Yn ogystal â'r 300 o wŷr arfog a aeth gyda hi ar ei thaith (*De Situ* a *Cognatio*), nodir hefyd presenoldeb 12 o forwynion yn y fintai (*Cognatio*).

Cychwynnodd Marchell o Lanfaes⁷—rhywle anhysbys yn y plwyf o'r enw Bryn Gwyn (er bod Theophilus Jones⁸ yn mynnu mai dyma enw cae ar ystâd Trenewydd yn y plwyf)—yn gyntaf i Lansefin ger Llandeilo,⁹ lle bu farw treian o'i gwyr arfog o'r oerfel dros nos. Aed ymlaen oddi yno i Feidrim,¹⁰ lle digwyddodd yr un peth i gant arall o'i dynion. Yn ôl y chwedl, aeth y daith ymlaen o Feidrim i Draeth Mawr¹¹ ger Tŷ Ddewi, y porth arferol am deithiau o dde Cymru i Iwerddon.

Mae Cognatio a De Situ fel y cyfryw yn mynnu i'r fintai llai o faint bellach groesi i Iwerddon a derbyniwyd y dehongliad traddodiadol hwn o'r chwedloniaeth gan hynafiaethwyr a haneswyr dilynol dros y canrifoedd. Eto, hoffwn awgrymu ein bod yn ymdrin yma, nid â'r Ynys Werdd ei hunan, ond yn hytrach ag ardal o ymsefydliad Gwyddelig yng ngorllewin Cymru, sef teyrnas Dyfed, oedd yn cwmpasu gogledd Penfro a rhannau cyffiniol o dde Ceredigion a gogledd orllewin Sir Gaerfyrddin.

Alltudiwyd llwyth Gwyddelig, y Déisi, a olygai'n wreiddiol pobl ddibynol neu geithion di-dir, o lys neu orseddgaer Tara yn ddilyniant i rwyg rhyngddynt ag Ard Rí (Uwch-frenin) Iwerddon, Cormac mac Airt, rywbryd yn y drydedd ganrif, gan ymsefydlu mewn gwahanol ardaloedd yng nghanol a de Iwerddon, cyn ymgartrefu yn ardal Port Láirge a Dún Garbháin yn ne ddwyrain Iwerddon sydd yn dwyn eu henw hyd heddiw, ac sydd yn amlwg iawn mewn enwau a theitlau masnachol, mabolgampol a diwylliannol yr ardal: bedyddiwyd y lôn las newydd i gerddwyr a beicwyr ar hynt yr hen reilffordd rhwng y naill ddinas a'r llall yn Rian na nDéisi, (llwybr y Déisi). Ymddengys i ran o'r boblogaeth hon mudo i Ddyfed yn hwyr yn y bedwaredd ganrif neu yn gynnar yn y bumed,¹² o gyffiniau Dún Garbhán a Port Láirge/Waterford yn ne ddwyrain Iwerddon a chofnodwyd cyndad y gangen hon mewn llawysgrifau Gwyddeleg fel Eochaid Allmuir, ystyr yr ail enw yw '*tramor*'.

Yn dilyn enciliaid y Rhufeiniaid o Brydain, ymosododd ac yna ymsefydlodd Gwyddelod yn helaeth ar arfordir gorllweinol Prydain, yn Ar-gul/Argyll (lle y rhoddodd y llwyth Gwyddelig, y Scotti, eu henw i'r Alban gyfan yn y pendraw), yng Nghymbria, Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Dyfed a Chernyw. Ceir tystiolaeth am y mudo ac ymsefydliad Gwyddelod yn Nyfed mewn llawysgrif Wyddeleg o'r wythfed ganrif, Allyriad y Déisi,¹³ ym mhresenoldeb yn Nyfed, ac yn arwyddocaol i ni, ym Mrycheiniog, o'r nifer helaethaf o gerrig ag arysgrifau Ogam y tu allan i Iwerddon, yn achau Brenhinoedd Dyfed a'u cyndeidiau a gadwyd ar y naill ochr a'r llall o Fôr Iwerddon yn ogystal ag mewn tystiolaeth ieithyddol yng ngeirfa dafodieithol Dyfed.

Mae olion ieithyddol yn nhafodiaethau rhannau o Ddyfed yn dangos cysylltiadau ag Iwerddon – geiriau fel feidr (bóthar, *ffordd*), cnwc (cnoc, *bryncyn*), rho (ró, *rhy*),¹⁴ a pharhaodd teyrnas Wyddelig Dyfed hyd at ddyddiau Hywel Dda a briododd Elen, merch Hyfaidd, brenin Gwyddelig olaf Dyfed. Etifeddodd Hywel y deyrnas yn dilyn marwolaeth Llywarch a Rhodri, dau frawd ei wraig, yn 904 a 905.¹⁵

Hoffwn awgrymu yn bellach bod helfa Twrch Trwyth yng *Nghulhwech ac Olwen*¹⁶ hefyd yn cychwyn, nid yn Iwerddon, ond yn hytrach yn Nyfed, yng Nghwm Cych yng nghanol tiriogaeth Gwyddelod Dyfed, gan ddod i ben, nid yng Nghernyw, ond yng Nghoed Cernyw¹⁷ rhwng Caerdydd a Chasnewydd: byddai hynny'n osgoi rhoi'r rheidrwydd ar y baedd i nofio dros y môr o Iwerddon i Gymru ac o Gymru i Gernyw,¹⁸ er y gall y chwedl tarddu o Iwerddon.¹⁹

Mae'r pellterau rhwng Llanfaes, Glansefin a Meidrim yn debyg iawn i'w gilydd, (24/26 milltir) ond mae'n rhyfedd bod y pellter o Feidrim ymlaen i borth Traeth Mawr (37 milltir) bron hanner arall yn hwy. Mae'r ddwy daith gyntaf yn gredadwy, ond buasai'r pellter nesaf yn anodd yn y dyddiau hynny pan oedd y ffyrdd Rhufeinig wedi dirywio a'r dystiolaeth am fodolaeth ffyrdd Rhufeinig ym mhellteroedd gorllewin Cymru'n brin iawn. Byddai defnyddio'r pellter gwreiddiol yn ein rhoi ni yn gadarn yng ngogledd Sir Benfro, craidd ymsefydliad Gwyddelod ar arfordir gorllewin Cymru.

Os anwybyddwn y dehongliad cyfeiliornus o enw Nant Marchell yn Sir Faesyfed²⁰ fel cyfeiriad at Marcellus gwrywaidd,²¹ yr unig enw lle sydd yn gysylltiedig â Marchell i'w canfod yn y cyffiniau hyn, sef Caerfarchell,²² 4 milltir i'r dwyrain o Dŷ Ddewi. Dyma galon tiriogaeth y Gwyddelod ar arfordir gorllewinol Cymru, ac yn yr un ardal ceir hefyd lleoliad nifer o gerrig arysgrifenedig sydd yn adlewyrchu enwau a geir ar gerrig cyfatebol ym Mrycheiniog.

Ar ôl iddi briodi Anlach, mab 'brenin y wlad honno' (*De Situ*) neu mab Cornuc, 'Brenin y lle hwnnw', (*Cognacio*), esgorodd Marchell ar fab, Brychan, ac, er mwyn sicrhau ei etifediaeth fel unig wŷr Brenin Tewdrig, symudodd y teulu yn ôl i ddyffryn Wysg, a chyda nhw yn gymdeithion y daeth 12 o Wyddelod oedd wedi priodi'r 12 morwyn. Dywed Theophilus y ganwyd y bachgen yn y deyrnas Wyddelig,²³ ond nes ymlaen²⁴ honnir iddo gael ei eni mewn lle o'r enw Benni, naill ai yn y gaer Rufeinig, neu ym mhentref Fenni Fach,²⁵ ar lan afon Wysg gyferbyn â Llansbyddid lle y honnir bod carreg yn nodi bedd ei dad, Anlach. Tybir hefyd bod enw pentref Llanhamlach²⁶ yn cynnwys ei enw.

Ymddengys y rhoddwyd tir i gydmeithion Anlach yn nheyrnas Garth Madryn, a gafodd ei hail-enwi'n Frycheiniog, 'Gwlad Brychan'. Yn y dogfennau, camddehonglwyd enw Uwch-Frenin Iwerddon, Cormac mac Airt, fel 'Coronawg, rex Hiberniae/Brenin Iwerddon', a chynhwyswyd ei enw yn achau Anlach, tad Brychan. Yn anffodus, mae enwau mwyafrif y deuddeg wedi mynd i ddifancoll, gydag ond bratiau o'r rhestr wedi gorfyw: mae *De Situ* yn nodi Kerniol, Fernach, Lithmilich a Lounic, er bod Theophilus²⁷ hefyd yn rhoi enw ychwanegol, Ensernach (gan roi '&' ar ôl yr enw, sydd o bosib yn dangos ei fod yn meddu ar restr helaethach nad yw'n dyfynnu pellach).

Mae enw Lounic yn adlewyrchu enw LLONNOC sydd yn ymddangos ar garreg arysgrifedig yn Rathduff yn swydd Cearrai/Kerry.²⁸ Mae Lithmilich ('Lithlimich' yn ôl Theophilus) hefyd yn ymddangos yn Iwerddon fel LEITMECH. Fernach yw Brynach, cyffeswr neu gydymaith Brychan, mabsant Llanfrynach ym Mrycheiniog a nifer o blwyfi yn ardal y Preseli²⁹ a thri ym Morgannwg. Mae'r ffaith mai 'Brychan Wyddel' yw'r enw a roddir iddo'n draddodiadol yn atgyfnerthu'r achos o blaid symudiad o Wyddelod o Ddyfed i Frycheiniog er bod yr enw Brynach yn awgrymu mai ym Mhrydain

y cafwyd ei eni, sef sant a anwyd yng Nghymru ond yn gweini i gymuned Wyddelig yng Nghymru. Mae'r un ddogfen yn dyfynnu dwy 'ystâd' sef Aberbrynich³⁰ a Mynydd Brynich,³¹ fel tiroedd a roddwyd i ddau eraill o'r deuddeg tybiedig ym Mrycheiniog. Rhaid gwahaniaethu rhwng Brynich, enw dwy afonig ym Mrycheiniog,³² a Brynach,³³ mabsant Llanfrynach, er eu bod mor debyg i'w gilydd a mor gyfagos, gan iddynt gael eu drysu'n aml. Saif Aberbrynich nid nepell o'r gaer neu geirig Rufeinig sydd newydd ei darganfod yng Nghefn Brynich.³⁴

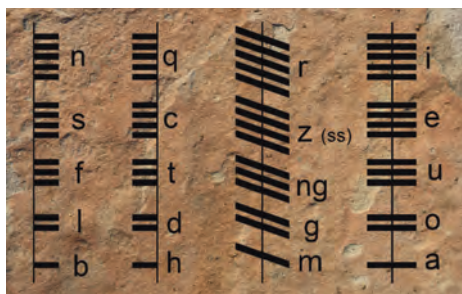
Brycheiniog yw'r unig ardal mewndirol ym Mhrydain lle y ceir nifer o gerrig arysgrifenedig o'r cyfnod cynnar hwn, cyfrifir cyfanswm o 17 at ei gilydd,³⁵ rhai ohonynt ag arysgrif yn Ogam, gwyddor hynod o ddiddorol a phwysig y Gwyddelod cynnar. Mae hyn yn dystiola'n eglur i bresenoldeb Gwyddelod yn y parthau hyn, ac yn cadarnhau dyfodiad y Gwyddelod a ddaeth i Frycheiniog ydag Anlach, Marchell a'r Brychan ifanc.

Wyddor Ogam (Ffig. 1)

Ymddengys mai un o'r cerrig Ogam cynharaf yw carreg TARICORO³⁶ a safai ger Aberhydfer yng Ngwm Wysg.³⁷ Mae'r enw yn unigryw. Dyma'r unig garreg y gwyddir amdani lle mae'r ogam wedi ei dorri ar draws arysgrif Ladin, er ei fod yn ddiddorol nodi bod yr enw Lladin gwreiddiol ar yr hyn sydd yn garreg fedd Rufeinig—TAVRIANVS—yn debyg i'r enw yn Ogam. Mae'r rhan fwyaf o'r cerrig eraill yn Lladin yn ogystal ag Ogam, gyda'r rhai diweddaraf yn uniaith Ladin.

Enw sydd yn ymddangos ddwywaith ym Mrycheiniog yw MACCUTRENI, unwaith yn Nhreacastell, gyda'r ychwanegiad SALICIDVNI,³⁸ ac unwaith ar garreg, bellach ddiflanedig, yng

Nghrai gerllaw, er cof am CANNIANI ET PATER ILLIVS MACCVTRENI HIC IACIT (Ffig. 2).³⁹ Mae'r enw yn un weddol cyffredin, yn ymddangos ar chwe charreg, pedair yng Nghymru (dwy ym Mrycheiniog, dwy ym Mhenfro) a dwy yn Iwerddon,⁴⁰ ac er na wyddys beth yw ystyr yr enw, mae SALICIDVNI yn amlwg yn cynrychioli lle, sef Caer Helyg. Yn anffodus, nid oes cofnod o le o'r enw hwnnw ym Mrycheiniog heblaw am enw fferm Beilihelyg yn Llanfaes, sydd ymhell o'r naill garreg a'r lall. Mae'n debyg mai yr un unigolyn a gofir ar y ddwy garreg, ond mae defnyddio'r geiriau HIC IACIT yn gwneud y garreg yng Nghrai'n garreg fedd, a fyddai'n golygu mai nodi ystâd neu dirfeddiant y mae carreg Treacastell, os nad yw'r ddau'n unigolion ar wahân. Mae'r ffaith bod y Lladin yn defnyddio'r term HIC IACET yn cadarnhau mai claddiad



Ffigur 1. Yr wyddor Ogam. Mike Williams

Cristnogol sydd yma, gyda dylanwad cyfandirol.⁴¹

Mae'r un cysegriad, CAMAGLI HIC IACET NIMNI, yn ymddangos ar garreg uniaith Ladin o Nant Crew,⁴² a fu ar goll, ond a ail-ddarganfyddwyd ym 1947, sydd bellach yn Eglwys Ioan Bedyddiwr yng Nghefn Coed y Cymer.⁴³ Mae'n debyg i gasgliad o bum carreg arall o'r ardal hon fynd ar goll. Mae'r un enw yn ymddangos mewn sillafiad gwahanol ar garreg yn Sgethrog, NEMRINI FILIVS VICTORINI.⁴⁴ Dehonglwyd CAMAGLI fel 'Cadfael'; sydd yn amlwg yn enw Cymraeg, fel hefyd y mae'r CATACVS, 'Cadog', a gofir ar garreg yn Llanfihangel Cwm Du, CATACVS HIC IACIT FILIVS TEGERNACVS,⁴⁵ ac mae enw ei dad yntau, TEGERNACVS, yn ymddangos hefyd yng Nghapel y Brithdir, ger Rhymni, TEGERNACVS FILI MARTI HIC IACIT,⁴⁶ y ddwywaith gyda'r cysegriad HIC IACIT.

Awgrymwyd bod anghysondeb rhwng yr Ogam, DRVGNIATIO, a'r Lladin, RVGNIATO FILI VENDONI, ar garreg sydd bellach yng nghyntedd eglwys Defynnog,⁴⁷ ond gan fod y garreg wedi ei hail-dorri, a nifer o lythrennau Ogam wedi diflannu, mae hyn yn rhagdybiaeth ni ellir ei chadarnhau.

O bosib, ceir camgymeriad arall ar garreg enwog a ddarganfyddwyd ar fferm ger Crughywel, yr arysgrif yw TURPILLI IC IAC PVVERI TRILVNI DVNOCATI,⁴⁸ ond awgrymwyd gan yr Athro Charles Thomas⁴⁹ mai TRIBVNI y dylai hyn fod. Mae'r Ogam yn cyfieithu'r defnydd o'r disgrifiad unigryw PVVERI, (*bachgen, gwas*), gyda'r term MOSAC sydd yn ymddangos unwaith yn unig ar garreg yn Whitefield, Dunkerron North, Ceri.⁵⁰ DVNOCATI yw'r enw Dinogad, yr enw Cymraeg cynharaf oll a nodwyd mewn cerdd ymylol—*Pais Dinogad*⁵¹—mewn llawysgrif crefyddol a ddyddiwyd i'r seithfed ganrif.



Ffigur 2. Carreg Llywel o Fferm Pentre Poeth yn Crai, agos Nhreacastell.

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Nodir Dinogad, mabsant un o'r ddwy eglwys yn Llanymddyfri, fel wŷr Brychan.

Ceir dau enw diddorol ar garreg yn Nhrallwng⁵² sef CVNOCENNI FILIVS CYNOGENI, gyda'r un elfen, CVNO, (*ci*), yn ymddangos yn enw'r tad a'r mab fel ei gilydd. Ceann, yr ail elfen yn enw'r mab yw pen, a'r geni yn enw'r tad yn cofnodi ei enedigaeith. Mae hyn yn ein hatgoffa o'r elfen *ci* mewn enwau nifer o saint cynnar Brycheiniog—Cynog, Cynidr—a nifer o feini yn Iwerddon, er enghraifft, CVNACENA, ar garreg yn Coolmagort, Ceri.⁵³

Ar garreg yn Ystradfellte⁵⁴ cyfeirir at unigolyn, GLUVOCI, sydd yn ymddangos mewn sillafiad arall, GLVVOCCI, ar garreg ym Mreudeth, Sir Benfro,⁵⁵ mewn cysylltiad â rhywun o'r enw, BRIACI, sydd â'i enw, NETTASAGRI MAQI MUCOE BRIACI, hefyd ar garreg ym Mridell.⁵⁶

Ymddengys yr arysgrif mwyaf astrus oll, MQDCD, ar garreg o Gwm Criban, i'r de o'r Bannau, ond eto ym mhlwyf Llanddeti, sydd yn ymestyn o ddyffryn Wysg i Gwm Tâf fel nifer o blwyfi eraill o Frycheiniog, sydd o bosib yn tystio i gylch helaethach o ddylanwad y deyrnas gynnar na dyffrynnoedd Wysg a Llynfi, fel ag y mae safleoedd traddodiadol yn nodi gweithgaredd Brycheiniog y tu hwnt i ffiniau hwyrach y deyrnas, megis Pont-y-pŵl a Throed-y-Rhiw ac enwau lleoedd ger Llangadog yn y gorllewin a'r Fenni yn y dwyrain. Gan mai y llafariad yw'r naddiadau lleiaf oll yn y wyddor Ogam, sydd yn pontio'r llinell sylfaen neu ongl y garreg, ymddengys bod y cytseiniad wedi osgoi'r traul oedd y llafariad yn aberth iddo, a gwelir isod amcan am eu ail-ddehongli. Gwyddys am fodolaeth o leiaf naw carreg arysgrifol i'r de o'r Bannau.

Er nad oes unrhyw sicrwydd bod enw sydd yn ymddangos ar feini arysgrifenedig mewn dau le yn cynrychioli'r un unigolyn, diddorol yw nodi bod nifer o'r enwau yn bresennol mwy nag unwaith, ac mewn mwy nag un lle.

Mae nifer o'r enwau uchod hefyd yn ymddangos mewn ysgrifau ar gerrig mewn rhannau eraill o Gymru. Ym Mreudeth⁵⁷ yn Sir Benfro, cofnodwyd yr enwau MACVTRENI⁵⁸ a VENDAGNI,⁵⁹ ac yng Nghlydai⁶⁰ mae'r un enw yn ymddangos ar ffurf arall, sef SOLINI FILIUS VENDONI. Os yr un unigolyn yw Vendagni a Vendoni, cawn gipolwg ar o leiaf dwy genhedlaeth: mae Vendagni (Breudeth) yn dad i Solini yng Nghlydai, y naill a'r llall yn Nyfed, ac yn dad hefyd i Rugniato/Drugniato yn Nefynnog, Brycheiniog.

Ai yr un un yw MACUDECETI⁶¹ yn Llanyaer, Dyfed a'r MQDCD dirgelaidd yng Nghwm Criban yn eithafon deheuol Brycheiniog i'r de o'r Bannau? Mae Maccutreni hefyd yn ymddangos yng Nghilgerran⁶² yn Nyfed. Nodir enw Tegernacvs hefyd fel TIGERNACI DOBAGNI⁶³ yn Nhrefwrddan/Jordanston yn Nyfed.

Mae pob un o'r rhain yng ngogledd Penfro, ardal mewnfydiad y Gwyddelod, ac mae'r ffaith bod yr un enwau'n bresennol ym Mrycheiniog yn awgrymu mudiad unigolion neu grŵp o'r hen Ddyfed Wyddelig i Frycheiniog. Mae hefyd yn nodi perthynas llinachol posibl rhwng cenedlaethau.

Nid oes gennym gofnod llawn o enwau'r 12 dyn a symudodd i Frycheiniog, ond mae'r hanes yn gryf ar gwestiwn y nifer: deuddeg. Er bod enwau nifer o eglwysi yng Nghymru'n nodi nifer y mabsaint (Llanddeusant (2), Llantrisant (3), Pumsaint a Llanpumsant (5), Llanynawsant (9)), dim ond ym Mrycheiniog y ceir cyfeiriadau at 'Llan y Deuddeg Sant', sef yn ardal Llangors, prif eglwys Teyrnas Brycheiniog, a chofnodir y Deuddegsant hefyd mewn enw nant rhwng plwyfi Cathedin a Llangors. Heddiw, Peulin yw sant yr eglwys yn Llangors, ond mae'n ddiddorol nodi enw tŷ ryw filltir i'r gogledd o'r pentref, sef Llanbeulin. Mae hyn yn awgrymu bod enw'r sant pwysig ac enwog, mabsant Saint Pol de Leon yn Llydaw, wedi mudo filltir i lawr yr heol i eglwys Llangors ar ôl i'r cof am y deuddeg wiwo.

Mae'r Athro Charles Thomas⁶⁴ yn mynnu bod y cofnodion o'r eglwys yn awgrymu i enwau'r deuddegsant gael eu hadrodd yn ystod yr offeren yn yr eglwys hon. Gan fod eglwys Llangors ond ychydig o bellter o'r crannog yn y llyn, a ystyrir fel preswylfan haf y teulu brenhinol, ac a ddinistriwyd gan Æthelflæd, merch y Brenin Alfred, yn 916, rhaid ystyried y lle yn ganolog i hanes yr ardal, a'r deyrnesig. Nid rhyfedd felly y byddai adrodd enwau sefydlwyr y deyrnas yn ystod defodau yn yr eglwys.

Mae hyn yn codi dau destun o ddiddordeb ac arwyddocâd. Yn gyntaf, rhaid oedd y bobl a gofnodwyd ar y meini hyn o bwys arbennig, neu yn ymwybodol o'u pwysigrwydd, a'u bod am gofnodi hyn ar gofebion parhaus. Yn ail, mae'r ffaith bod gwahanol genedlaethau o bobl yn amddangos yn awgrymu bod y teuluoedd hyn o bwys parhaus. Mae nifer o'r meini dan sylw, yn enwedig y rhai gyda'r arysgrif HIC IACET, neu'r cyffelyb, yn gerrig bedd, neu'n cofnodi marwolaeth Cristion; gall eraill fod yn feini i ddynodi tîrffeddianaeth neu derfynau tîriogaethau.

Wrth ystyried ein pellter mewn amser oddi wrth y meini dan sylw, ni all y dystiolaeth fod ond yn rhannol. Mae cerrig wedi eu colli a'i hail-ddarganfod, a nid oes gennym unrhyw syniad o gyfanswm posib yr holl arysgrifau: mae nifer o gerrig wedi ddod i olwg ar ôl rhestriad gwreiddiol Macalister, ac mae'n ddigon posib y darganfyddir rhai eraill yn y dyfodol. Ond gallwn ddod i'r casgliad mai'r hanner-Gwyddel Brychan a sefydlodd teyrnas Brycheiniog, ar ôl iddo symud yn ôl i ddyffrynnoedd Wysg a Llynfi o fro Wyddeleg Dyfed i hawlio ei etifeddiaeth, a bod nifer o Wyddelod, 12 yn draddodiadol, wedi dod gydag Anlach, Marchell a'u mab Brychan, unigolion o arwyddocâd digonol i haeddu cofnodiad parhaus, naill ai ar ffurf cerrig beddau neu feini arysgrifedig i ddynodi eu tiroedd. Cawn obeithio y bydd rhagor o feini yn dod i'r golwg yn y dyfodol i atgyfnerthu'r dystiolaeth sydd ar gael i ni.

Nodiadau

- CIIC* Corpus Inscriptionum Insularum Celticarum (Macalister 1945)
- CISP* Celtic Inscribed Stone Project (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/cisp/database/> (darllenwyd 5 Chwefror 2018))
- ¹ Jacot de Boinod 2005.
 - ² Wells 1986: 84-86
 - ³ *Cotton MS Vespasian A*, yn Wade-Evans and Lloyd 2013: xix, 310-315.
 - ⁴ *Cotton MS Domitian*, yn Wade-Evans and Lloyd 2013: I, 315-318.
 - ⁵ Thomas 1994.
 - ⁶ Siddons 1993, Cyf. 3: 2.
 - ⁷ SO 035 282.
 - ⁸ Jones 1804: 40 (nodyn).
 - ⁹ SN 732 287
 - ¹⁰ SN 289 209
 - ¹¹ SM 730 269
 - ¹² Alcock 1970.
 - ¹³ Lebor na hUidre/Llyfr y Fuwch Goch, <https://www.ria.ie/library/catalogues/special-collections/medieval-and-early-modern-manuscripts/lebor-na-huidre-book> (darllenwyd 5 Chwefror 2018)
 - ¹⁴ Jones a Thorne 1992.
 - ¹⁵ Bartrum 1993.
 - ¹⁶ Davies 2007.
 - ¹⁷ ST 275 834.
 - ¹⁸ *Cymdeithas Enwau Lleoedd Cymru*, erthygl gan B. Parri.
 - ¹⁹ Rhÿs 1901, Cyf. 1.
 - ²⁰ SO 125 -133/393-408
 - ²¹ Morris 1993.
 - ²² SM 795 270.
 - ²³ Jones 1804: 40.
 - ²⁴ Jones 1804: 41.
 - ²⁵ SO 021 289.
 - ²⁶ SO 090 268.
 - ²⁷ Jones 1804: 41.
 - ²⁸ *CIIC*: 194A.
 - ²⁹ Pontfaen, Nanhyfer/Nevern, Casfuwch, Castell Flaidd, (Penfro), Llanfyrnach a Llanboidy (Sir Gâr), Penllain a Llanfrynach (Morgannwg).
 - ³⁰ SO 068 276.
 - ³¹ SN 958 229.
 - ³² Jackson 1953.
 - ³³ Bartrum 1993: 67-68.
 - ³⁴ SO 075 273.
 - ³⁵ Thomas 1994: 113.
 - ³⁶ *CISP*: ABHYD/1.
 - ³⁷ SN 859 273.
 - ³⁸ *CIIC*: 341.
 - ³⁹ *CIIC*: 329.
 - ⁴⁰ *CIIC*: 86, Baile Cnoc, Dwyrain Corc 08°04'W 52°02'N Cluan Mór, Rath Bhile./Rathvilly Ceatharleach 06°69'W 52°88'N.
 - ⁴¹ Jackson 1953: 159.
 - ⁴² *CISP*: NANTC/1, SN 993 165.
 - ⁴³ Eglwys Ioan Bedyddiwr, SO 032 080.
 - ⁴⁴ *CIIC*: 339.
 - ⁴⁵ *CIIC*: 334.

- ⁴⁶ *CIIC*: 404.
⁴⁷ *CIIC*: 328.
⁴⁸ *CIIC*: 327.
⁴⁹ Thomas 1994: 124.
⁵⁰ *CIIC*: 216, 52°4 N 9°42W.
⁵¹ Parry 1962: 7/8.
⁵² *CIIC*: 342.
⁵³ *CIIC*: 119.
⁵⁴ *CIIC*: 345.
⁵⁵ *CIIC*: 424.
⁵⁶ *CIIC*: 426.
⁵⁷ SM 856 239.
⁵⁸ *CIIC*: 425.
⁵⁹ *CIIC*: 422.
⁶⁰ SM 857 240.
⁶¹ *CIIC*: 429.
⁶² *CIIC*: 428.
⁶³ *CIIC*: 432.
⁶⁴ Thomas 1994.

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Abstract

This article explores the Ogam inscriptions from Breconshire and south-west Wales in the context of the myth of Anlach and his 12 companions bringing Brychan (later King of Brycheiniog) to the county. A full translation is available at <http://www.brecknocksociety.co.uk/>.

NOTES AND QUERIES

SIR JOHN LLOYD, THE BRECKNOCK SOCIETY, AND THE BRECKNOCK MUSEUM

KEN JONES

Introduction and early life

John Conway Lloyd was born on 19 April 1878, at Dinas House in Brecon. As he grew, he became fascinated by the history of his family, all the way back to Elystan Glodrydd in the eleventh century. He was very aware that the Lloyds had, for over a hundred years, made a significant contribution to the administrative, political, and social life of Brecon and Breconshire. In every generation since 1798, for example, the eldest son had been appointed High Sheriff of Breconshire and elected as Bailiff (Mayor) of Brecon (Fig. 1).

John Lloyd's mother died in 1882, when he was four, and his father in 1893 when he was 15. He attended school at Eton and then, in 1897, went up to Christchurch, Oxford. During 1900, he graduated with a Second Class in History. After his father's death, and while he was still a student at Christchurch, he inherited the family estate. The following year he was made a Justice of the Peace. In 1906, he was High Sheriff of Breconshire, which was the same year he was elected to Brecon Town Council, of which, in 1909, he became an Alderman. Three years later, he was Mayor of Brecon.

It is unclear when John Lloyd joined the Army, but, in 1910, he was a Second Lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion of the South Wales Borderers (SWB) (Fig. 2). Just before the outbreak of war, he was promoted to Captain and proceeded to France in January 1915. On 9 May 1915, he was very lucky to be only slightly wounded during the disastrous battle for Aubers Ridge. Eighteen of the 30 officers, and 235 of the 977 non-commissioned ranks in the 3rd Battalion of the SWB, were killed that day, the great majority within about 30 metres of their front line. Lloyd also survived the carnage of the first day of the Battle of the Somme. In January 1917, he was awarded the Military Cross for "gallantry during active operations against the enemy". A few months later, he was promoted to Assistant Provost Marshall. At this time, he was still based close to the front line and, in mid-1918, one of his Breconshire friends was killed a few minutes after they had been speaking to each other. After the Armistice, he was promoted to Deputy Provost Marshall of the Army of the Rhine, with the temporary rank of Lt. Colonel, and was based in Cologne.

In March 1919, John Lloyd was elected for St. Mary's Division, Brecon; a seat he then held for 39 years. On the County Council, John Lloyd—who was, for many years, the Leader of the Conservative group—became known for his determination to ensure that children of poorer families should not have to pay



Figure 1. Sir John Lloyd as Mayor of Brecon, 1912 and 1913. *Brycheiniog* Vol. 4



Figure 2. Lt. Col. Sir John Conway Lloyd (from a painting by St. Helier Lander). *Brycheiniog* Vol. 4

for secondary school education, and that, during the economic depression, children of the unemployed or those who earned very low wages, should have free school meals. He had a keen interest in education but also in the finances of Breconshire County Council, which he felt were uncoordinated. He was soon appointed as Chairman of the Finance Committee. While holding this position, he was critical of County Councillors who did not make themselves familiar with all the financial details of papers to be discussed by the Council, and he also “objected to the waste of money in calling so many meetings.”¹

In addition to being a very active senior member of the County Council and Brecon Town Council, he was, for varying amounts of time:

- Chairman of the Quarter Sessions and Chairman of the Mid-Wales Police Authority;
- Chairman of the Governors of the Girls’ and Boys’ County Grammar Schools;
- Governor of Christ College;
- member of the Court of Governors of the National Museum of Wales;
- represented the County Council on the Courts of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, Cardiff.

In 1938, John Lloyd was knighted for his “services to the county of Breconshire”.

Brecknock Society and Brecknock Museum

Three events during the years 1923 and 1924 caused John Lloyd alarm due to his interest in the archaeology and history of Breconshire. First, in 1923, the National Museum of Wales asked for the sixth-century Victorinus commemorative grave stone from Scethrog to be placed in the National Museum. Secondly, the National Museum of Wales decided to excavate *Y Gaer* (the Roman fort to the west of Brecon) and, thirdly, the log-boat in Llangorse Lake was discovered. The boat was purchased by Lord Glanusk and, initially, it was taken to the National Museum of Wales for preservation. The alarm was shared by many others in Breconshire, all of whom felt it was important to ensure that significant artefacts remained in the county.

John Lloyd and Capt. Evans of Ffrwdgrech first tried to establish a dedicated Breconshire Archaeological Society. In June and July 1924, John Lloyd held public meetings in Brecon, Ystradgynlais, and Brynmawr to assess the degree of support for this project. The response was disappointing, so the idea was abandoned.

When it became known that the finds from *Y Gaer* were to be taken to the National Museum, and that the Llangorse log-boat might stay there, John Lloyd, Capt. Evans of Ffrwdgrech, J. B. Garsed Price, Captain Christy of Llangoed, and Dr K. D. Pringle agreed that what was needed was not just a focussed archaeological society but a broader 'Brecknock Society'. The first objective of the proposed Brecknock Society was establishing a museum for the county, which would house important artefacts, books, and documents relating to Breconshire. Lord Glanusk, who owned the log-boat, and was a close friend of John Lloyd, told him that, if a Brecknock Museum was established, he would present the find to the museum.

On 30 March 1926, John Lloyd organised a Public Meeting in the Guild Hall, Brecon, to assess the degree of support for "the formation of a county museum." Twenty-nine people attended, and a committee was formed to further the idea, comprising four people from Brecon, two from Bulth, and one each from Brynmawr, Ystradgynlais, Cefn Coed, Ystradfellte, Crickhowell, Talgarth, Crickadarn, and Tregoyd. John Lloyd informed the meeting that the former English Congregational Chapel in Glamorgan Street, which had been empty for some years, had been purchased by John Price of Morganwg House, and Price was prepared to rent it to the Brecknock Society to be developed as a Museum. The builder, Benjamin Jenkins, submitted a tender of £127.10s to convert the building into a suitable space for the museum; a further £125 was required to install a heating system. John Lloyd and Capt. Evans started a fund-raising campaign, but the amount fell short of the target. Until, one day, while out fishing together, Lord Buckland asked John Lloyd how the fund-raising was proceeding. He told Buckland that £300 was still required. Buckland asked to see the plans and, after consideration, gave John

Lloyd £300 to meet the fund target (the current equivalent of around £17,000).

In March 1927, John Price agreed to lease the building to the Brecknock Society for 27 years, at a rental of £30 per annum, with the eventual option of purchase. Sometime later, in 1944, the Society purchased the building from the executors of John Price for £402.8s (the current equivalent of around £70,000).

In October 1927, John Lloyd wrote to 25 friends inviting them to become Friends of the Museum, and to contribute to the cost of maintaining the building, the salary of a curator, and future running costs. Apart from one positive reply from Lord Buckland, who stated that, "I would like to help you further in this splendid effort of yours and will be pleased to subscribe £50 a year for seven years towards the Institution", the response was very disappointing. Most of the replies pleaded financial difficulties because of taxation and the recession (which had started in 1925, when Britain left the Gold Standard). A few felt that there were many other deserving causes to support, one person writing, "personally, I cannot help feeling that there are so many charities, hospitals etc. more deserving of one's assistance than a museum. Who do you think will go into the museum? There are not at present many tourist visitors to the town and the farmers on market days would sooner visit the pubs, after they have finished their bargaining."

Despite the disappointing initial reaction to John Lloyd's personal appeal to friends, his public appeal for funds raised enough money to complete the reconstruction of the building as a museum, and to pay the salary of an experienced curator. The alterations commenced in January 1927.

On 16 December 1927, the organising committee for the Brecknock Society, comprising John Lloyd and four others, drafted the constitution and objectives of the Society. Six days later, the *Brecon and Radnor* newspaper carried a two-column report of the meeting of subscribers and promoters of the "Brecknock Society and Museum". John Lloyd, the Chairman, reported on the conversion of the old chapel into a museum, made an appeal for exhibits, and announced the appointment of Mr. M. P. J. Mountjoy of Brighton as curator, at an annual salary of £240, and Mr. Frank Green as caretaker, at £76.10s. Green also became the assistant secretary and assistant treasurer of the Society. The organising committee also announced that there would be two types of members: associates at a minimum fee of 2/6, and full membership at a minimum fee of 10/6. Full members would have access to a Members' Room, which would contain the Society's library.

John Lloyd was given very helpful advice on the development of the museum building, and its contents, by Professor Mortimer Wheeler of the National Museum of Wales. It was opened on 1 March 1928 by Lady Buckland (Fig. 3). At the opening, John Lloyd commented that he hoped, "someday to see the



Figure 3. Opening of the Brecknock Museum, Glamorgan Street, Brecon by The Lady Buckland, 1 March 1927. Sir John Lloyd is in front of the door and Lady Buckland to his (proper) right (in black hat).

Transactions of the Brecknock Society Vol. 1

Town Council approach the Brecknock Society to take the museum over and put it on the rates for all time”.²

The first General Meeting of the Society was held in County Hall on 23 May 1928. Thirty-two members attended, three of whom were appointed as Officers: Lord Aberdare as President, John Lloyd as Secretary, and W. H. Jones Parry as Treasurer. The Chairman of the AGM was to be appointed at each meeting from the total membership. During the next 23 years, while different members held the positions of President and Treasurer, John Lloyd remained Secretary throughout.

By the second AGM, John Lloyd was able to report that there were 381 members of the Brecknock Society, 700 visitors to the museum, and over 400 exhibits on display. These varied from the Llangorse log-boat to a box of early matches (Fig. 4). Also, the 50-page, “*Transactions of the Brecknock Society and Records of the Brecknock Museum*” had been printed and distributed. (In 1931, it became the practice of the Society to publish its annual report in the *Brecon and Radnor*.)

By May 1930, the number of visitors had increased to 3,784 and nine years later, it reached 4,280. But, in that time, membership of the Society had declined

to 287. The number of exhibits also steadily increased, to 974 in 1939, and there were nearly 1,000 volumes in the Society library. During World War Two, the number of visitors increased steadily until, in 1944/45, it reached 13,815. There were around 1,000 artefacts on display or in store. Membership of the Society, however, continued its slow decline to 262 members.



Figure 4. The Llangorse log-boat as presented to the Brecknock Museum by Lord Glanusk.

Although the subscriptions of the members were, at first, sufficient to pay the salary of the curator and caretaker, plus maintain the building, and purchase a few small items for the museum, after two years it became clear that the Society could not afford to employ a curator. From then, until just before his death in 1954, John Lloyd acted both as Secretary of the Brecknock Society and unofficial curator and archivist of the Museum.

During the years John Lloyd was Secretary of the Brecknock Society (1928–54) and the unofficial curator of the museum (1930–51), the major achievements of the Brecknock Society were:

- establishing and developing the museum and its collection;
- organising the campaign to raise the necessary money to purchase Tretower Court;
- and then presenting it to the nation;
- the publication of Volume IV of the Glanusk edition of, “The History of Breconshire” by Theophilus Jones;
- initiating and organising the annual Henry Vaughan Service at Llansantffraed;
- campaigning for over 20 years to replace the inadequate original obelisk to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (The Last) at Cilmeri with the current memorial;
- the purchase of the Old Museum by the Brecknock Society in 1944;
- an annual programme of lectures and the organisation of significant one-day summer schools related to the archaeology, history, geology, fauna, and flora of Breconshire given by leading academics;
- negotiating, in 1951, for Breconshire County Council to take financial responsibility for the maintenance and development of the Museum.

Conclusion

Without the enthusiasm of John Lloyd, the Brecknock Museum would not have been established in 1928. Moreover, it was his dedication that enabled the Brecknock Society to develop the museum, without any financial support from the county, throughout the difficult period of the 30s and World War II.

In September 1952, for reasons of health, John Lloyd resigned from the County Council but remained active in the Brecknock Society until his death on 30 May 1954.

Notes

¹ *Brecon and Radnor*, 17 March 1927.

² *Brecon and Radnor*, 8 March 1928 (“Hear, Hear” and Laughter).

Ken Jones is a past Chairman and President of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends.

LETTERS

JOSEPH COBB REVISITED

Dear Editor,

Since the publication of my article, *Cottages and Castles*, in *Brycheiniog* last year, I would like to add some more information about the life of Joseph Richard Cobb, the landowner, businessman, and antiquarian who played a prominent role in the life of Brecon in the second-half of the nineteenth century. Cobb was a ruthless operator who relished his battles with business adversaries and acquired considerable wealth; in modern terms he would be described as a multi-millionaire.

There is some mystery about how Joseph Cobb, the son of an Oxfordshire family, came to live in Brecon. But, there is a clue: Joseph's father, George Cobb, brought his family to live in Monmouthshire during the 1830s in a house, then called The Tump, sitting on a hillock above the River Monnow. They rented the property, the name of which was changed later in the nineteenth century to Rockfield Park.¹ During this period, the name of George Cobb appears regularly in the local newspaper, *Monmouthshire Merlin*, not least as a benefactor to the poor in the nearby village of Rockfield.²

This makes the arrival of Joseph Cobb in Brecon as a young man more explicable. It is conceivable, although there is no record of it, that he was a pupil at Christ College, Brecon. He certainly served as a governor of the school from 1871 until the year of his death in 1897. He was remembered as a benefactor, notably as the donor—anonously at first—of the Parry de Winton scholarship, named after his father-in-law. The scholarship awarded £40 a year to boys leaving the school for Oxford or Cambridge. It was reported in *The Breconian* that a portrait of him was unveiled at the school speech day on July 26, 1898; a portrait that still hangs in the school dining hall today.³

With his father-in-law, John Parry de Winton, Joseph Cobb was an enthusiast for bringing the railway into Brecon, and he served as secretary to the Brecon and Merthyr Railway Company for more than a quarter of a century. In that capacity he played a key role in enabling the final stretch of the line to be completed from Tallyllyn to Brecon in 1864. A new station had to be built at Tallyllyn, and Cobb designed and supervised the building of six terraced cottages nearby, to house railway workers.⁴ The 1881 census shows the terrace occupied by a station master, three train drivers, one guard and one signaller, plus, of course, their families. The row of cottages, still known as Cobbstown, remains largely in its original condition.

As related in *Cottages and Castles*, the Brecon and Merthyr Railway did their best to obstruct the line coming in from the west, which became known as the Neath and Brecon Railway. Joseph Cobb used his land holdings to hinder the

rival company from connecting to the Free Street station, and he continued to make life difficult for the Neath and Brecon, which was in constant financial trouble. In 1869, the Neath and Brecon sought an Act of Parliament to restructure the company and suspend legal proceedings against it. Joseph Cobb was amongst those who petitioned against the Bill. Appearing before a Select Committee of the House of Lords, he was asked, “Is your purpose in opposing this Bill to throw this line into the bosom, or the arms, of the Brecon and Merthyr?” He replied, “I have no such idea whatsoever”. It is clear from the proceedings that the Neath and Brecon Railway thought that was exactly what he was trying to do.⁵

By the 1870s, Joseph Cobb had acquired enough wealth from his holdings in property and land to venture into a riskier enterprise. Another Brecon-based entrepreneur, Mordecai Jones, already a colliery owner, bought the mineral rights to the land around Maerdy Farm at the top of the Rhondda Fach. But he needed more capital to reach the coal beneath the ground, and brought in Joseph Cobb as a partner in the enterprise. In 1875, they sank the No. 1 pit and were fortunate in hitting a rich seam of steam coal. The following year the No. 2 pit was sunk, and soon afterwards Jones built a railway line to connect the colliery to the Taff Valley Railway lower down the valley.⁶ On the death of Mordecai Jones in 1880, the mine was leased to the Locket’s Merthyr Company (Fig. 1). The Cobb family were still receiving a share of ground rents and farm rents from ‘The Mardy Estate’ until the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1947.⁷



Figure 1. Maerdy Colliery, No. 1 and No. 2 pits.

Despite his many achievements in business and as an antiquarian, Joseph Cobb remained plain Mr Cobb. The monument to Joseph Cobb in the cathedral at Brecon styles him as ‘Lord of the Manor of Brecon and Caldicot’, but these were titles acquired by Cobb rather than awarded to him. He was clearly anxious for greater honours, for he wrote to “Her Most Excellent Majesty Victoria” asking for “a rank above that of an Esquire”. As the owner of Caldicot Castle since 1885, Cobb was fascinated by previous owners from the Middle Ages, and he argued that some reflection of their titles should come to him. The de Bohuns had been Earls of Hereford and Lord High Constables of England, so Cobb asked for “a title such as Knight Constable”.⁸ There is no record of any reply from Queen Victoria.

The will of Joseph Cobb, written in August 1894, reveals more about the extent of the land and property he owned. He bequeathed all his ‘real estate’ in the counties of Brecon, Monmouth, Warwick, and Pembroke to his wife Emily, which included the family house, Nythfa, in Brecon, and Caldicot Castle. Other property, in Swansea, Pembroke, Shropshire, and Essex, he divided amongst his children. The complex division of his considerable wealth among his family created some disputes over succeeding years, ending at one stage at the High Court of Chancery.

Nythfa remained the family home until 1964, first for Joseph’s eldest son Geoffrey (known as Wheatly) and then from 1926 for Joseph’s eldest daughter Lucy, her daughter Muriel (known as Lassie) and Lassie’s husband, Hugh Fowler. They had been living at the Priory, but those premises were now required by the newly disestablished Church in Wales to house the Dean and

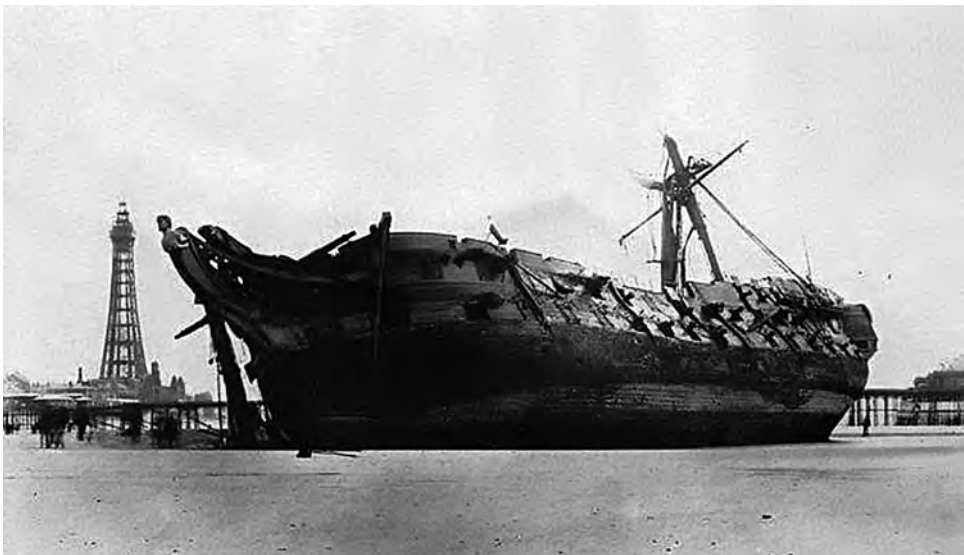


Figure 2. Wreck of the Foudroyant.

staff for the new Cathedral. After the death of Lassic, Nythfa was sold in 1964 for the surprisingly low price of £11,500 (minus the lower fields).⁹ Jo Copping, great-great-granddaughter of Joseph Cobb, remembers that, “the whole family was devastated by the loss of the family home”.

In the last few years of his life, Joseph Cobb was the financier behind an entirely different kind of venture: a campaign to rescue Nelson’s flagship, HMS Foudroyant, from the breakers’ yard. An energetic campaign across the whole of Britain was led by his son, Wheatly, in a bid to save what they called “this splendid relic of a heroic time”. The passion was Wheatly’s, but the money was his father’s. The Foudroyant was saved from the breaker’s yard, refurbished, and then used as a training ship for young sailors. Funds were raised by touring the ship to seaside resorts, but, off Blackpool, the ship dragged its anchor in a gale and was blown onto the beach, damaging the North Pier in the process (Fig. 2). The crew were rescued, but the vessel could not be saved and became a much-photographed wreck. It was sold off to a salvage company, and the copper, brass, and timber were used to make mementos of Nelson for sale to an eager public.¹⁰ The last registered owner of the Foudroyant was J. R. Cobb, who died only a few months after the disaster.

Notes

¹ Bradney 1904.

² *Monmouthshire Merlin*, various 1837–1838.

³ *The Breconian*, various 1897–1898.

⁴ Llyn Syfaddan History Group; Cobb Family Papers courtesy Jo Copping.

⁵ Proceedings of the House of Lords, 2 July 1869 (Brecknock Museum).

⁶ Owen 2004.

⁷ Cobb Family Papers, courtesy Jo Copping.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Examples at Monmouth Museum.

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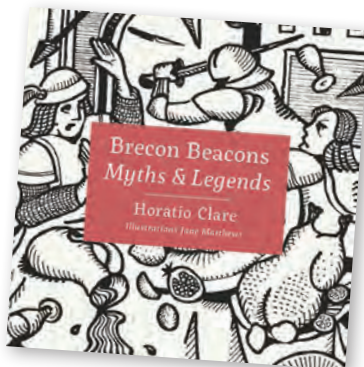
BOOK REVIEWS

Brecon Beacons: Myths & Legends by Horatio Clare. 2017. Graffeg. Hardback: 160 pages. £9.99. ISBN-10: 1912050544. ISBN-13: 978-1912050543.

Legends of the Brecon Beacons Colouring Book by David Blazer. 2017. Little Bird Creative. Paperback: 34 pages. £7.99. ASIN: B06WLHXSDJ.

2017 was designated the Year of Legends in Wales, celebrating our rich heritage of myths and stories, as well as our modern-day heroes. It was also a means of showcasing the tourist potential of our land, both on a national and on a local scale. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, as part of their commitment to the theme, commissioned local author, Horatio Clare, to rewrite some of the myths and legends of the Brecon Beacons for a modern audience. This book is the result. Clare was a brilliant choice as author both because he grew up in the Black Mountains (the subject of his first book *Running for the Hills*¹), and because his sparse, compelling and, at times, brutal narrative is perfect for the book. To anyone living in the area, the stories will be familiar but Clare's way of telling them is anything but. Here is the True Prince of Wales riding shotgun in a souped-up Fiesta, a jaded woman journalist chasing two boars the length of Wales, and King Arthur's knights, grumbling at the thought of a long sleep under Craig y Dinas. As befits a book commissioned by the Park Authority, each story is accompanied by a hand-drawn map, so that readers can visit the locations of their favourite stories. The maps and illustrations are by Jane Matthews, her second collaboration with Clare,² and they perfectly capture the prose of the book; although I have never envisaged the Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach as wearing high heels and with such a short skirt. This is our past with a modern gloss, and it is wonderful!

If you want more legends from the Brecon Beacons, (and with minimal duplication from Clare's book), you could try *Legends of the Brecon Beacons Colouring Book*. If you do not know already, adult colouring books are very popular at present as a way of de-stressing through creative stimulation. Using colour, and being bounded by the lines set by the drawing, is seen an alternative



to meditation and there are several claims for its health benefits. Local artist, David Blazer, has drawn 15 scenes, each taken from a myth or legend of the Brecon Beacons. You can find characters and themes such as the Ceffyl-Dwr of Aberhonddu, the lovers of Sgwd Gwladus, and the Defynnog Yew. Text on the facing page to the illustration tells the story, and you get an opportunity to reflect on its subject and meaning whilst you colour in Blazer's art. It is enchanting at all levels and for all ages (someone has told me that his grandchildren, down to the age of four, are enjoying colouring in the pictures!).

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of Brycheiniog

¹ Clare, H. 2006. *Running for the Hills*. John Murry.

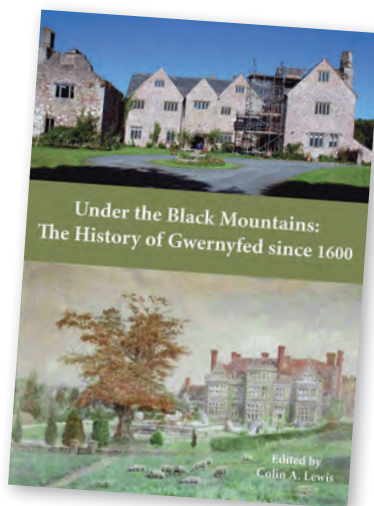
² Clare, H. 2015. *Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot*. Firefly Press.

Under the Black Mountains: The History of Gwernyfed Since 1600
edited by Colin A. Lewis. 2017. Logaston Press. Paperback: 128 pages. £12.95.
ISBN-10: 1910839159. ISBN-13: 978-1910839157.

As stated in the preface, the idea behind this book, well-illustrated and printed on high-quality paper, is to bring together various memories of past times at Gwernyfed and in the surrounding communities of Glasbury, Velindre, and Three Cocks. It is edited by Colin Lewis who also wrote several chapters.

Lewis is well-qualified to undertake this task as he is the son of Rev. E. T. D Lewis who served as vicar of Glasbury from 1946 to 1984. Through this connection, he has a detailed knowledge of the area. By profession, he is a geographer and has lectured and conducted research in various University Departments, most notably in South Africa.

Part One of the book is by Colin Lewis himself and comprises four chapters dealing with the history of Gwernyfed estate over the years. 'Old Gwernyfed' with its winged (E-plan) design is one of the great houses of our part of Wales. The chapter on the seventeenth-century period contains the wonderful bardic poem 'Croeso y Wernyfed', written about the house and its grounds to mark the marriage of Sir Henry Williams to Eleanor Whitney in 1605. The poem refers to the hall, kitchen, parlour, and wine cellar; to the whitewashed walls and the clear glass windows, as well as to the tables full of silver dishes; and to



the beds with gold and silver in their hangings. I might add that studies conducted as part of a current Brecknock Society and Museum Friends project, gives 1584–6 for the date of timbers in various parts of the building, make it some 20 years-old when it was described in the poem.¹

A significant change in circumstance took place when the wealthy Wood family from London married into the Williams family, with the union of Thomas I Wood and Mary Williams in 1776. The estate grew both in size and importance, and, in the late 1870s, an enormous Victorian-Jacobean mansion was built, to be known as Gwernyfed Park. It is in this building that Gwernyfed High school opened in 1950.

Parts Two to Five of the book comprise four papers, each written by a different person. Colin Lewis explains that they had been brought together by his father but that he had died before he could edit and publish them. The starting point is a manuscript that Elyned Hore-Ruthven, a member of the Wood family, had given to Mr Lewis in 1965. It was written for her grandchildren and gives a delightful account of her Victorian childhood at Gwernyfed and elsewhere. Then there is an essay by Thomas Perks on life at old Gwernyfed when it had become a farm and one by J. W Hobbs about his time on the railway in the Three Cocks area. Finally, there is Mary Kinsey with her long-term memories of many people, occupations and occasions, including of her visits to places such as Capel-y-ffin.

There are several appendices. Appendix One builds on various articles by Colin Lewis (including one in *Brycheiniog*²) and describes the process of improving the quality of the horses which, in the past, played such a crucial role in the rural economy. Starting in Scotland in the 1830s, ‘heavy’ horse-hiring societies were established. Owners entered into contracts to take their stallions along an advertised route, and mares that were in season could be brought to one of the stopping places to be served. By the early-twentieth century the whole country was divided into horse-breeding areas and a map shows the route of the Glasbury Shire Horse Society’s stallion during the middle decades of the last century.

In summary this book is an excellent addition to the publications focussing on the local history of Breconshire.

JOHN GIBBS

Chairman, Brecknock Society and Museum Friends

¹ Suggett, R. 2017. The Vernacular Houses of Breconshire: Following Jones and Smith. *Brycheiniog* 48: 22-75, pages 36 and 50. The dendrochronological work is conducted as a joint exercise between the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends and the RCAHMW. The late-Elizabethan date makes good sense in relation to the poem but is rather earlier than the Jacobean date that had been proposed previously on the basis of architectural style.

² Lewis, C. 1988/1989. Travelling Stallions in and Adjacent to Brycheiniog. *Brycheiniog* 23: 75-84.

On the Black Hill. Dir. Andrew Grieve. Perf. Bob Peck, Gemma Jones, Mike Gwilym, Robert Gwilym. British Film Institute, 2016. DVD and Blu-ray.

This film is based on Bruce Chatwin's novel of the same name and was filmed almost entirely within Breconshire. It was originally made in 1985, released in 1988, and is now available as a remastered DVD and High Definition Blu-ray. The story, essentially, concerns two couples. Welsh hill farmer Amos Jones (Bob Peck) and his intellectual English wife, Mary Latimer (Gemma Jones), and their sons, identical twins Benjamin and Lewis (played by real-life brothers Mike and Robert Gwilym).

Amos Jones is a hill farmer, born and raised in the area, who falls in love with Mary, the daughter of a well-travelled Viceroy, now retired into the clergy. The two are complete opposites but find love when Amos, seizing his opportunity, soothes Mary's grief following the death of her father. They marry and, in a scene that bursts with barely controlled eroticism, Mary watches her husband wash in the half-light, her eyes burning with desire, all to the score of Sir Hubert Parry's *I was Glad*. Brian Hoyle, in the 32-page guide to the film included with the Blu-ray, calls it, "one of the finest uses of music in all of British cinema." Their marriage, however physically charged, is tinged with tension right from the start.

The newlyweds rent a farm on the Welsh-English border called 'the Vision', a figurative place that divides the couple as much as the nations. Mary is all erudition and worldly knowledge, Amos stuck with a life lived in rural struggle; a scene in which Amos ploughs his heavy soil in the pouring rain standing for his drudgery. There are two instances in the film that resonate with symbolism of this tension. In one, Amos finds his wife asleep with a copy of *Wuthering Heights* on her lap. He retrieves the book and (in the film as well as—according to Grieve—in reality) smacks the book around Mary's head. She leaps up with unfeigned anger. In the other scene, one of the sons is conscripted and, in a misguided assumption that evokes our pity for the bedevilled farmer, Mary blames Amos. She picks their wedding photograph from the mantelpiece and smashes it at his feet. They both use a symbol of the other's world to express what words cannot.

The birth of Amos and Mary's sons, Lewis and Benjamin, brings a brief ray of happiness to their story. The boys are followed by the birth of a daughter, Rebecca, who, in an act of teenage rebellion, falls pregnant by an Irish lad and is banished forever by her father. It is an action, and we suspect one of many,



that the man comes to bitterly regret. Amos could be a monster, but Chatwin and, within the film, Grieve, never make him that. Amos carries flaws like all of us and, on more occasions than we might like, is ruled by them. But he is seldom cruel. When he sits in desolation, in an auction in which his own house is being sold over his head (to a vindictive neighbour, who means only to push the price to a ruinous level before withdrawing), we desperately feel for the man who only wants to secure what, through back-breaking toil, is his own.

Once the twins reach an age that they make their own choices, the film's narrative point of view switches from father to sons. Grieve makes the transition seamless. As the years pass, which is really the narrative drive of the film since there is no overarching storyline, the family moves through a multitude of events, including the beginning of mechanisation, two World Wars, and, eventually, the death of both parents. The boys have an almost supernatural bond, and neither can long stand being apart from the other. When Benjamin is conscripted, just before the end of the war, Lewis' nose bleeds when his brother experiences a bloody nose in a one-sided boxing match. But they have a bittersweet relationship. As Bruce Chatwin records in his novel, "Because they knew each other's thoughts, they even quarrelled without speaking." Eventually, the twins end up as much as a couple as their parents, even sharing the master bed. It is something that Lewis, fleetingly, regrets near to the end of the film, that he has gained, yes, but also lost so much from the intimacy with his brother.

The novel was, for many years, considered un-filmable as it essentially comprises a series of loosely-connected episodes spanning more than 80 years from the beginning of the twentieth century. Director Andrew Grieve comments that he bought the rights to the book for a very reasonable price, as nobody else wanted them. Chatwin was ambivalent about the film, once commenting, "I loathe films", and told Grieve to make it his own. In a way, Grieve did, choosing a farm (in Llanfihangel Nant Brân, near Sennybridge) that even Chatwin agreed was better than the one he had in mind when penning the book. But, in a very real sense, Grieve stayed true to the novel, breaking the film into loosely linked episodes, just as the book does. What is common to both is the glorious landscape of the Black Hill (filmed in the Black Mountains, and in and around Hay-on-Wye and Crickhowell) made almost transcendent through the ravishing cinematography of Thaddeus O'Sullivan.

This new release of the film includes both a remastered version of the DVD, and an all-new conversion to High Definition Blu-ray. Is it worth it? For the DVD: definitely. The film has benefited immensely from remastering. For the Blu-ray: a more cautious yes, since the film's original bleach-bypass process, which sought to avoid romanticising the lush green hills of Wales, has made the High Definition transfer more grainy than I would have liked. But that is a small drawback; most of the dust and specs associated with the original 35mm

film have been eradicated and are now all but unnoticeable (on both DVD and Blu-ray versions). The sound is also remastered, albeit limited to the original mono recording. But for a film that eschews a musical soundtrack over the noises and sounds of farming life, this is not really an issue. But, when hymns are sung in full voice, like *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau* at the auction, or, with symbolic resonance, *Cwm Rhondda*, in English, at the start of the film, the recording creaks but not oppressively so.

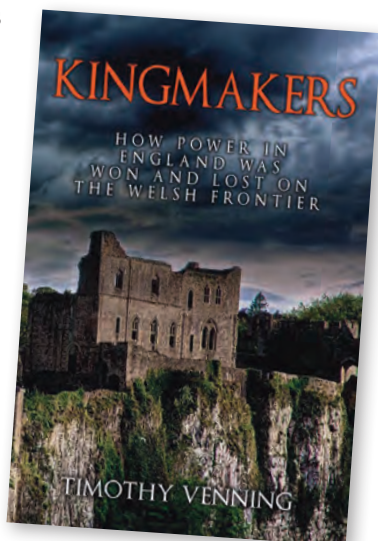
There are other reasons to recommend this release. Grieve was influenced by two earlier films, both in the BFI archives, that show sheep farming in the early-twentieth century. *Shadow on the Mountains* (Arthur Elton, 1931, 20 mins) and *O'er Hill and Dale* (Basil Wright, 1932, 16 mins) are small masterpieces and well worth watching. The transfers to High Definition are, considering the age of the recordings, remarkable.

On the Black Hill is also packaged with a 20-minute introduction to the film by Andrew Grieve (from which quotes in this review were taken) and, on the DVD disk, the full script, filmed from its first draft by BFI after many other studios rejected it. You can see their point: how can a film that spans more than 80 years, set almost entirely on a Welsh hill farm, be remotely interesting? Oh! how wrong they were. The film is an underappreciated classic and the new High Definition transfer will hopefully open its extraordinary brilliance to a new audience.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of Brycheiniog

Kingmakers: How Power in England Was Won and Lost on the Welsh Frontier by Timothy Venning. 2017. Amberley Publishing. Hardback: 336 pages. £20.00. ISBN-10: 1445659409. ISBN-13: 978-1445659404.

Timothy Venning is the author of several books covering this part of Wales, including *The Kings and Queens of Wales*,¹ also published by Amberley; a well-thumbed reference work on my bookshelf. Venning's research is impeccable and he has a vast knowledge of the period he writes about. *Kingmakers* is no different: there is a huge amount of data contained within its pages. So why did I find it such hard going? Unlike some of Venning's other books,



Kingmakers seems to have bypassed an editor and it reads like a stream of thought straight from Venning's mind. Paragraphs are all but eschewed and each sentence covers so many points, additional points, and various tangential points, that, by the time you get to the end of it, your mind is so muddled that you completely forget what point started it all.

Venning's premise: that the Lords of the Welsh Marches influenced the fate of the English monarch (and we could add also the princely crown of Wales) is a good one. His focus is not on the great kings of England but on the Lords who carved out their own empires in the Welsh-English borderlands and maintained their grip from conquest in Norman times to their dissolution in the Tudor reign. It should be a fascinating read. But, for the reasons given above, it is not. Which is a shame. Venning, and his copious research, has been poorly served by an editor, or, perhaps, not served at all.

¹ Venning, T. 2015. *The Kings & Queens of Wales*. Amberley.

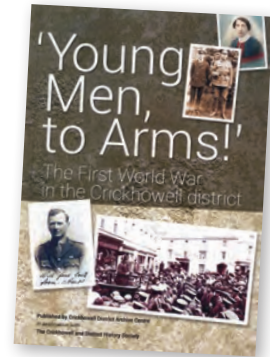
MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of *Brycheiniog*

OTHER TITLES RECEIVED

'Young Men to Arms': The First World War in the Crickhowell District by Geoff Williams and Ryland Wallace. 2017. The Crickhowell District Archive Centre: 138 pages.

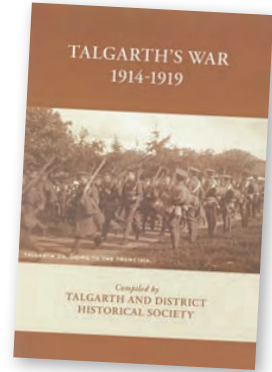
Many of Breconshire's local history groups have published books relating to World War One (and reviews of two have featured in the last volume of *Brycheiniog*) but this is one of the best produced. It is the culmination of the *Behind the Stones* project, seeking to find the stories of the men, and some women, who are listed on war memorials in Crickhowell and eight adjoining parishes. Their names, and brief histories, form the second part of the book. The first part is a broad chronological overview of the war and its effects on the south-east portion of Breconshire, from the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 to the armistice in November 1918.

The book is fully illustrated with black and white photographs (many of the soldiers themselves) with two maps for orientation. If you want an idea of writing style, turn to the article by Ryland Wallace in this volume of *Brycheiniog*. Here, Wallace, a joint author of *'Young Men to Arms!'*, draws on research not used in the book to tell the story of the women of Crickhowell in World War One. Overall, the book is a fitting and respectful tribute to those who paid the ultimate price for the war effort and, moreover, a very good read.



Talgarth's War 1914–1919 by Alan Lovell. 2017. Talgarth and District Historical Society: 98 pages (and a supplement in Welsh, translated by Victoria Brown: 32 pages)

Arranged thematically, *Talgarth's War* is an edited work bringing detailed insight into the town and its citizens during World War One. At the time, Talgarth was a rural community where shopkeepers served their customers personally and farmers brought their stock into town to sell. There is a wonderful illustration on the rear cover of the book that sums up this bucolic ideal. But, for all its tranquillity, the town did not escape the horrors that war brought, with a sobering chapter on the war memorials revealing the shocking number of individuals who died. There is also a small



but interesting chapter on conscientious objectors, most abstaining themselves due to religious conviction, and the opprobrium to which they were subjected. Many townsfolk, having lost loved ones in the war, saw them as cowards. The *Brecon County Times* made its view clear in the issue of 23 March 1916, when it quoted local eighteenth-century preacher Howell Harris of Trefecca—speaking at a much earlier time when Britain was facing invasion from the French—stating his intention was to go to war “freely and conscientiously”, committing, “my family to the Lord” (page 60).

Illustrated with black and white and occasional colour photographs, the book is well written and very informative. Mention must also be made to the supplement in Welsh, a translation of the chapter noted above on the war memorials. Whilst one may be tempted to think the entire book deserves a Welsh translation (as do all the local history books of this nature) Talgarth and District Historical Society are to be commended for the effort they have made. Like ‘*Young Men to Arms!*’, *Talgarth's War* is both a fitting tribute to all those who lost their lives to the war and a very interesting read. Both volumes show the inestimable value of local research and deserve to be read widely.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of Brycheiniog