



Glamorgan Family History Society

Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluol Morgannwg



*Pont-yr-Hyl (Pontyrhyl) Railway Station in the early 1900s
With kind permission of the Garw Valley Heritage Society*

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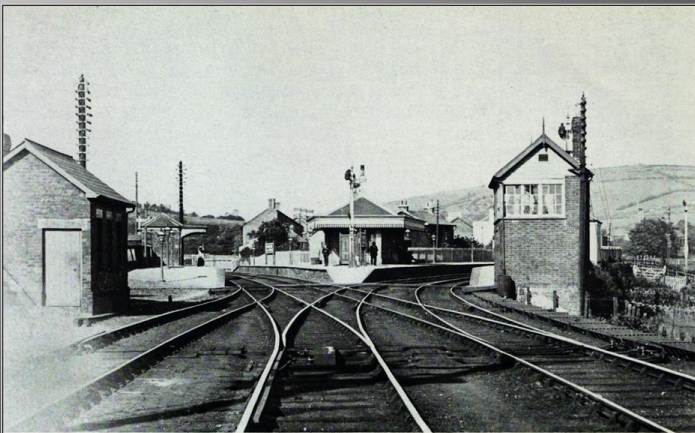
September 2025

The coal trucks taking the coal down to the junction at Brynmenyn below causing a big problem in the 1960s.

Derailment Pontyrrhyl



Brynmenyn station junction to Garw and Ogmore Valley



The Great Western Railway Station at Brynmenyn, c.1908 at the junction of the Ogmore and Garw lines.
Passenger services to the Garw ceased on 9 February, 1953, and to Ogmore on 3 May, 1958

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Society's Objectives

The Glamorgan Family History Society is a registered charity. Its main objectives are to: encourage and stimulate research into genealogy and allied subjects with particular reference to the historic county of Glamorgan: to assist members in their private research; encourage the transcription and preservation of records of family history and the deposit of original documents of value in approved repositories; publish papers of genealogical value and interests; establish, to mutual advantage, relations with other organisations interested in genealogy and allied subjects; maintain a library and regularly publish a journal.

The journal is the official publication of the Glamorgan Family History Society. Articles appearing in the journal may not be reproduced without the written permission of the editor. Views expressed in articles and letters are not necessarily those of the GFHS.

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EDITORIAL

Croeso, Summer's nearly over, and time to think about chilly evenings and warm fires. This edition is another truly eclectic one, subjects include emigration to the USA and Australia, and what Charles Dickens thought of the America-bound Welsh, and there are home-grown politics, the Arts, the third part of the Caswill mining family story, and research into an old family bible, as well as many useful tips and references.

I had asked for some transport stories, road, rail, canals, whatever, and we did get an interesting but sad tale of the early days of aviation, included herein, and Glamorgan Archives have given me extracts from the crew log books for the ships that sailed from Cardiff 100 years ago - a fascinating read! Nothing else transport-related came in however, so I'm holding the opportunity open for the next journal - do let me have any of your past relatives' involvement in the development of transport systems.

Our front cover gives a nod to the theme by showing an early 1900s photograph of a railway station in the Garw Valley, now demolished with the station master's house being converted into a private dwelling, as so many of these old railway buildings have been in South Wales.

Our bi-lingual article from Eirian Edwards for this edition gives an account of her personal experiences at the eisteddfod held in 2004. She will be giving us more eisteddfod accounts in the future.

The letters page is particularly interesting this journal so please take time to see if you can help the correspondents asking for information.

The 50th anniversary journal has been sent out to all members so if you haven't received a copy by now do get in touch and we'll send one on. It has been an interesting task to try and encapsulate and summarise 50 years of existence; there are bound to be omissions, but I hope that most members will be able to identify with some of the events along the way, and will have found something of interest. Who knows where the next 50 years will lead?

To close I endorse Penny Williams' report as Secretary to the Society - **we need more volunteers** to keep the Society running, and especially a **Chairman** to keep things in order, and to provide a casting vote on the issues we face! You can be based anywhere as so much is done nowadays online and you will not be alone - you can ask for help, and it often proves to be fun! Take a look at pages 4 and 8 to see what's waiting for your input. Until the Autumn, and maybe an Indian Summer(?) Hwyl Fawr!

Jean Fowlds, editor@glamfhs.org.uk

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Nancy and I paid a visit to the Awen local history research service in the newly renovated Maesteg Town Hall. We wanted to see what resources they have available, so we can point enquiries in the right direction and to see if we can set up some links with the GFHS and Awen. The staff were extremely helpful and they have a wide range of resources including newspapers and GRO records. We also had a look at their map system which might give us some ideas for making our ARC system more user-friendly.

I attended a recent meeting with the Ogwr Heritage Group in St John's House Bridgend – which is well worth a visit especially at the moment as it is a lovely cool building! There is a lot going on in the local areas among the nine groups involved including Bridgend and District Historical Society's upcoming exhibition on the 600th anniversary of the bridge across the Ogwr in Carnegie House. A second History month is being planned for September with a number of events already pencilled in, including open days at St John's House in Bridgend. The ARC will be open on Saturday 13th September from 10-2 for anyone who wants to see what we are all about or to do some research.

I haven't heard from any volunteers who are willing to help on stalls at upcoming fairs. I think it is vital to have a presence in at least one or two fairs a year and it is unrealistic to expect the same small group of volunteers to attend every fair. Please get in touch if you can help out.

I attended the Family History Federation AGM and General Meeting at the Wesley Chapel in London on May 10th. It was a well-attended meeting and the extremely interesting talks were all on a DNA theme – so I doubled my (limited knowledge) during the day. The Federation are keen to continue in-person meetings and will probably use London again next year. I have also done several Zoom meetings on various topics concerning societies which have been informative. Most family history societies seem in a similar situation to us – falling membership and volunteers but with a core of volunteers to continue doing their best.

I also attended the launch of the Railway Work, Life and Death database at the Engine Shed, Llanelli. Portsmouth University had fronted this project and the database is available for anyone to download at www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk/the-accidents.

Hopefully this will be a useful resource for the Society.

As far as I am aware no-one has stated an interest in taking on the Chairman's role and it might be more productive if we approached some suitable candidates before the next AGM. The role is important to the Society and, while things are ticking along, we need to be pro-active. If anyone has any suitable names for this position, please contact one of the Trustees.

Penny Williams, secretary2@glamfhs.org.uk,

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

To help with a range of Society Administration and Projects.

If you are interested in finding out more about our projects or helping to run the Society please contact the following direct.

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Also the following roles:

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Membership Secretary and

Minutes Secretary

Database Assistant

Journal Indexer*

***Journal Indexer**

Each quarter when the Journal is published we need someone to list the articles and provide a short description of their content to be uploaded to the website. This task takes an hour or so each quarter.

We thank member Pete Spencer for carrying out this task for us in the past. See previous indexed articles on the website or contact website@glamfhs.org.uk for more information. The indexer only provides the list and does not need to know how to upload to the website. www.glamfhs.org.uk/journal-index

THE LIFE AND MISADVENTURES OF HENRY MORRIS ENGLAND

#1804 David England

It is strange how a single decision can alter one's whole life. It can set you on a path that you never thought of before, either for good or ill. And so, it was one sunny and frosty day that Harry ENGLAND, an aeroplane mechanic having serviced the machine, decided that he would accompany the pilot, Leslie MACDONALD, in a flight over the Thames. He had no need to do so but perhaps thought that the view over the river would be worth a look. This would be one of the last decisions that he would make before he died in the muddy and fast flowing waters of this river.

Born on 20 March 1884 he was the son of Mr Thomas Joseph England of Cromwell Street, Merthyr Tydfil, a member of the family that had been prominently identified with the old Cyfarthfa Band. He went to Georgetown Infants school on 14 July 1889 at the age of 5 years, and he can be found with his parents, aged 6, in the 1891 census at 57 Nantygwenith Street, and the 1901 census aged 16 as a 'steam engine fitter in steel works', at Cyfarthfa, at the same address. I could not find him in the 1911 census, but that is not surprising given his career path, details of which were given in the papers after his untimely death in the river Thames on the 31 January 1913 at the early age of 28.

The Western Mail dated March 1913 gave a potted version of Harry's life story and of the incident in the Thames:

MR ENGLAND'S SWIM FOR LIFE: The Drowned Airman

It did not become known at Merthyr that one of the aviators who drowned in the Thames near Dartford was Mr Harry England until a wire was received by the father acquainting him of the sad news. Mr. England's name had previously been given as Ingles.

Mr Harry England, who was about 25 years of age, served his time as a fitter at Cyfarthfa Works and on leaving entered the service of Mr Henry PARFITT, the proprietor of the Dyffryn Engineering Works near Troedryhiw. He was a clever craftsman and on taking another situation at Southampton he studied the science of aviation with great avidity and became well versed in the mechanism of the aerial machine. Subsequently he was engaged by Mr Thomas SOPWITH the celebrated airman whom he accompanied to America where several flying exhibitions were given. He acted as a mechanic and pilot when Mr Sopwith gave the command exhibition before his Majesty the King.

I found online a copy of The *Harlowtown News* from Meagher County, Montana dated Friday, August 23, 1911, which ran an article on Tom Sopwith with a photo from the American Press Association that shows all his team including Harry, who is sitting on the ground. This photo (shown over}, was syndicated in several other papers at that time.

The caption reads:

TOM SOPWITH, the young English aviator who recently came to America, has been doing some remarkable feats in his aeroplane. His reputation was made in England when he won a prize of £10,000 by making the longest flight from English soil across the channel to the continent. He landed in Belgium, making his flight only two days before the date set for the closing of the competition. He flew in his aeroplane to Windsor Castle, where he was received by King George.

He and his sister took luncheon with the English ruler and his family. Sopwith has recently been flying around New York and has carried several passengers, notably Timothy L WOODRUFF, former lieutenant governor of New York, and Mrs Woodruff. He made several flights with Mrs Woodruff, taking her long distances and to a considerable height. One day when Mr Woodruff was wanted, suddenly Sopwith flew out on the golf links, found the politician and brought him back in his machine.

In the picture Mr Sopwith and his sister appear in the centre of the photograph, his manager being on his right, with his mechanics to his left and on the ground before him.

When the young man met his death, he was participating in an experimental flight from the Works of Messrs VICKERS AND CO in whose employ he was. The machine was a Vickers monoplane fitted with a 70-horsepower Gnome motor, and the pilot was a Mr Macdonald. The monoplane went over the Thames and the motor was heard to be missing fire. Immediately after the machine landed on the surface of the water and floated for about a minute.

One man, probably Mr England, as the pilot was strapped in his seat, was seen climbing onto one of the wings when the machine sank. He swam about twelve yards when he also sank, the other man went down immediately with the monoplane.

The most detailed coverage was to be found in the two newspapers on either side of the river Thames. The two papers in question were the Broadsheet *Erith Observer* which carried front page news in its edition of 17 January 1913 with the heading: 'Aeroplane Disaster' and devoted almost three columns to the event. It described how the plane took off, its

flight over the river until the engine cut out and its landing on the water. One occupant (which turned out to be Harry), tried to swim ashore but due to his heavy clothing soon sank. The pilot went down with the plane.

An interesting paragraph from the *Erith Observer* gives a description of both men and what they were wearing as they took off, of which Harry's is as follows:-

'Harry England, 1 Shelford Villa, Erith aged 27, height 5 feet 6 inches, complexion ruddy, hair dark brown, eyes blue, medium build, occupation

**Tom Sopwith, the English Flier,
And His Sister Visiting America**



Photo by American Press Association.

TOM SOPWITH, the young English aviator who recently came to America, has been doing some remarkable feats in his aeroplane. His reputation was made in England when he won a prize of \$10,000 by making the longest flight from English soil across the channel to the continent. He landed in Belgium, making his flight only two days before the date set for the closing of the competition. He afterward flew in his aeroplane to Windsor castle, where he was received by King George. He and his sister took luncheon with the English ruler and his family. Sopwith has recently been flying around New York and has carried several passengers, notably Timothy L. Woodruff, former lieutenant governor of New York, and Mrs. Woodruff. He made several flights with Mrs. Woodruff, taking her long distances and to a considerable height. One day when Mr. Woodruff was wanted suddenly Sopwith flew out on the golf links, found the politician and brought him back in his machine. In the picture above Mr. Sopwith and his sister appear in the center of the photograph, his manager being on his right, with his mechanicians to his left and on the ground before him.

fitter, dress, dark tweed suit, heavy dark green blanket coat, high gaiter boots, buckles on top, soft silk collar and tie, white muffler, leather gloves, no cap'

The clothes that he was wearing were hardly the sort in helping him swim to safety and the heavy blanket coat would have filled with water immediately and hampered him considerably, as would his boots which would have filled with water.

The temperature of the water, and its flow, would also have been contributing factors.

THE AEROPLANE TRAGEDY.

BODY OF MECHANIC FOUND.

INQUEST AT GRAYS.

EYE WITNESS'S GRAPHIC STORY.

The remains of Harry England, the mechanic who was drowned by the sinking of an aeroplane off Purfleet, on January 13th, were picked up off Grays on Friday afternoon, and handed over to the police. The inquest was held on Saturday afternoon, at the Police Station, Grays, by Mr. C. Edgar Lewis, District Coroner, when a most lucid and graphic story of what transpired in connection with the accident was told by a Metropolitan police constable. Owing probably to the short notice at which the inquiry was held, those present only comprised the officials, witnesses and representatives of the Press, together with Mr. Rowland Thomas, Solicitor, who represented the deceased's relatives.

When the Jury had been sworn in, the Coroner said he was sorry to call them together on Saturday afternoon, which was most inconvenient, but as the body was in such a decomposed state, it was absolutely necessary to do so.

A Juror asked if they were bound to view the body.

The Coroner said it was necessary, but it was only a formal matter.

There was another paragraph in the same edition that gave brief details of the pilot and mechanic.

'Macdonald is said to be a native of Bristol and secured his certificate at the Bristol school. He afterwards went to Australia, and on his return to this country carried out many experiments

for Messrs Vickers. He is described as most unassuming in disposition and a pleasant companion. The firm had every confidence in his judgment and caution, and had he survived he would undoubtedly have made a prominent name in the aviation world.'

England was of Welsh nationality and was connected with the Brooklands department of Messrs Vickers aeroplane manufacturers. He was a skilled mechanic, who accompanied Mr Sopwith on his American visit, and was only engaged temporarily at the Erith works to assist in carrying out experimental operations.

The edition of 7 February gives a half column on its front page to the recovery of the aeroplane but the occupants had yet to be found.

The 28 February edition devotes two columns to the inquest on the pilot, Leslie Falconer Macdonald and the reasons for the fatal crash, and it was decided that due to lack of lubrication in the pistons due to cold weather, that the engine seized, the plane landed on the water and sank, verdict 'accidental death'.

The edition of the 14 March carried the report, again on its front page, of the inquest into Harry that took up nearly two whole columns. The body was identified by Thomas THOMAS of 60 Limes Grove, Erith, the brother-in-law of the deceased.

Parts of the front page of the edition of the *Erith Observer*, 14 March 1913

The other paper was the *Grays and Tilbury Gazette* which gave much of the same information on its front page, in its 18 January edition, under the heading 'Terrible Aviation Disaster off Purfleet' recalling the details of the incident, and the edition of the 8 February, detailed the finding of the aeroplane.

During the inquest it is interesting to note here that the coroner apologised to the jury for calling them out on a Saturday afternoon, which was most inconvenient!

This was a year before the start of WW1 when planes first started coming into their own and they were relatively uncommon, still in the early experimental stage and were a novelty so people were always curious when they saw one, much like us with Concorde in its heyday.

The tragedy of all this is that Harry had no need to get up into the plane. Although mechanics frequently did, it was essentially for a joy-ride and no other purpose.

A copy of the photograph of the recovered plane was also included with the article below which showed how tangled the wreckage was.

The ISLE OF WIGHT TIMES. THURSDAY 16 JANUARY 1913, under the heading 'TWO AVIATORS DROWNED', described the scene where the reporter states that the machine didn't appear to behave satisfactorily, and never attained more than 100 feet. It made its descent easily, settled on the water, but then began to sink, to the horror of the watchers on the bank. There was a sudden explosion, the tail went up and it began to sink. Several bargemen nearby attempted to reach the airman they saw swimming towards them but the swimmer sank, probably due to intense cold and his heavy clothing, before they could reach him.

The report went on to say that Mr Macdonald had been staying at the Bull Hotel at Dartford, and before he left for the flying ground, he remarked that he thought the conditions were not favourable. His tea was prepared ready for his return and a fire had been lit in his bedroom and it was not until some hours after the disaster that news of it reached the hotel. His brother, who arrived at Dartford on Monday night, said that the dead man was only 22 years of age and single. He was a native of Bristol and was

one of the first British airman to secure his pilot's certificate. He was originally with the Bristol Company, and afterwards was a year in Australia, where he gave demonstrations. Latterly he has been in the service of the Vickers company.

A brief item in the Merthyr Express dated March 22, 1913, stated:

'Mr Thomas England and family late of 30 Cromwell Street, desire to thank their many friends who have sent kind regards and expressions of sympathy in their sad bereavement.'

Harry's death was registered in Orsett Ref, 4A 643 and he was buried on the 13 March 1913 from Purfleet, Essex in grave X3/7 Cefn, Ffrwd Cons. His parents are in the same grave.

As an aside, and they would not have been of any use in this case, parachutes were not invented until several years later and then not used extensively by pilots, who considered them unsafe. Many preferred to go down with the plane, as they thought they had more chance of survival.

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LIFE AND DEATH OF A CASWILL COAL MINER

Part 3

#21010 Chris Caswill

Bill (William John) CASWILL was introduced in the March issue. He was a coal miner, born on 29 July 1866 in Cefn Cribwr, a mining village near Bridgend. His parents were 'come overs' from Somerset in the late 1850s. He had married Catherine DAVIES from the White Lion Inn in Bedford Road in 1894. He and Catherine and their six children came to live in Tyn-y-Coed, a house on Bedford Road, running north, downhill from the Cefn Road, towards the coal fields. It was a time of change for the village, which now had running water and mains sewage. A new school building has opened on the Cefn Road in 1902, and all the Caswill children would have been there at some at some stage¹.

The early 1900s were a period of relative stability for the Caswills and their wider family connections. Bill's father had died in 1899 but his mother, Eliza, continued with her 'Fancy Shop' on the Cefn Road. Bill's widowed sister, Elizabeth², was living with her mother and helping with the shop. Their brother, Henry James Caswill, was also a coal miner living on the Cefn Road, with his wife, Dinah, and daughter, Miriam, boarding with her single brother, Richard JOHN. Catherine's sister, Ellen STENNER, widowed in the 1892 Park Slip mine disaster³, had a farm on the Tai Isaf Road, running south off the Cefn through road. Her niece, Gwen, Catherine's illegitimate daughter, born in 1890, was a 'visitor' at the farm⁴. Catherine's other sister and her brother were both married and living in nearby Kenfig Hill.

However, the end of the first decade was much darker. Bill's sister-in-law, Henry's wife, Dinah, died on 26 September 1909, age 57, of appendicitis and peritonitis⁵. From later events it seems her death hit Henry hard. Dinah was buried in the Nebo Chapel. Then Bill's mother, Eliza, died in her Overt Row house in March 1910, at the age of 81.

¹ The school records are in the Glamorgan Archive. The Head teachers were obsessed with pupil attendance which was often much less than 100%, even though attendance was by then compulsory up till age.12. A second revelation was the breadth of the subjects being taught in Cefn, not limited to reading and writing and numbers but also including geography, history and agriculture.

² Her husband George FLEW was killed in a mining accident in 1893

³ Neville Granville (1980) 'Cefn Cribwr: Chronicle of a Village', Stewart Williams, Barry. P.

⁴ The only record of her first 20 years, which otherwise remain a mystery

⁵ Death certificate again signed by Dr Twist.

Happier news came from further away where Catherine's daughter, Gwen, married John COSBY in Merthyr Mawr, near Bridged at the end of 1910. In addition Bill's oldest son, Edwin, was by then a Welsh schoolboy international, something to be celebrated.

In the 2nd April 1911 Census Bill and Catherine were now living at 10 Bedford Road. Bill was a 'coal miner hewer'. Edwin at 16 and William John, 14, were by then also working in the mines, as 'hauliers below ground'. Thomas and Henry were at school but six-year-old Albert was not. Kate was 4. Catherine's 55 year-old sister, Ellen Stenner, had given up her farm and moved closer, to Llanilyd House in Bedford Road, with her two youngest children, Agnes Mary and Luther Samuel. Ellen was now in business as a 'milk vendor', with her children helping.

Bill's widowed brother, Henry James, was still a coal hewer, living with his daughter, Miriam, and his brother-in-law, Richard JOHN, on the Cefn Road. Elizabeth Flew had moved in with her brother-in-law, William SPANSWICK – yet another widower – and his two children at 2A Cefn Road, then known as Manchester House. Elizabeth was listed as a shopkeeper, probably carrying on her mother's shop.

None of them can have been prepared for Bill Caswill's terrible accident on 26th October. He was working underground on the night shift in the Bryndu⁶ colliery, when he was terribly injured attempting to replace a derailed coal tram. According to a later account Bill Caswill fell back in agony and a fellow miner *"picked the man up ...unfastening (his) belt, (he) saw a lump about the size of an ordinary tea cup in his groin"*. Later one of Bill's sons arrived, and about 4.30 in the morning he was brought the two miles home on bumpy roads on a cart looking *"awful bad"*⁷. His unexpected arrival would have been a dreadful moment for Catherine and her family, not least the young Bertie and Kate. There was no hospital, so the injured man had to lie at home in pain in one of the few rooms in No.10. Bill lingered for over 4 weeks before dying at home on 28th November. He was buried in St James graveyard in Pyle on December 2nd 1911.

There was a post mortem, very likely carried out on a table in the Caswill home. Records of the coroner's inquest are lost. However there is a

⁶ There is some uncertainty about the Bryndu colliery reference. Some records claim that Bryndu was closed in 1906 or 1908 but this may have been the Cefn Slip mine which was taken over by the Bryndu company and closed in 1912.

⁷ Glamorgan Gazette, February 2nd 1912. The Cefn volunteer Ambulance Division would only be established in 1913. (Granville, op.cit. p. 176).

newspaper report of Catherine's attempt to sue the Mining Company⁸, which came to court in January 1912. It was Catherine's misfortune to appear before Judge Bryn ROBERTS who had an infamous record of dismissing compensation claims from miners. The Miners Federation had already considered a strike to draw attention to his biased actions⁹.

Her case also failed after the company produced doctors – including the local Dr TWIST – who asserted Bill had cancer and possibly peritonitis – seemingly an all too familiar conclusion - and would have died soon anyway¹⁰. Dr Twist said in court that Bill 'was never a strong man'. It seems Dr Twist attempted to cover his back by several exclamations that the family 'was poor'. Judge Roberts simply found for the company, and Catherine got nothing.

Superintendent Registrar's District <i>Bridgend</i>									
1891. DEATH in the Sub-District of <i>Bridgend</i> in the County of <i>Glamorgan</i>									
No.	1. When and where Died.	2. Name and Surname.	3. Sex.	4. Age.	5. Rank or Profession.	6. Cause of Death.	7. Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	8. When Registered.	9. Signature of Registrar.
128	<i>Evening eight November 1911 10 Redfield Road 60a Bulbourn Sykegerton Neighor Ryndent S. 8</i>	<i>William John Caswell</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>43 years</i>	<i>Coalminer</i>	<i>Cancer accelerated by rupture of the groin due to lifting a tram of rubbish on to the road in Bryndu Colliery S. 4a</i>	<i>Certificate received from Dr. Subberson, Surgeon for Western Division of Glamorgan District held First December 1911</i>	<i>Fourth December 1911</i>	<i>Margaret Davies Registrar</i>

Bill's death certificate drew on the doctors' reports to record the cause of death as "*Cancer accelerated by rupture of the groin due to lifting a tram of rubbish onto the road in Bryndu colliery*". His death left 43 year old Catherine with six children, albeit two of 18 and 14 working in the mines, three of school age and a very young daughter. Two low-paid mining wages would not have supported the family and Catherine must have been heavily dependent on precarious help from her wider family. Then 1912 was also 'a year of general distress'¹¹, the miners' national minimum wage strike, soup kitchens and further mine closures. About a million men were out on the national miners' strike (probably including Catherine's sons) that caused 38 million working days to be lost, even though it lasted only 37 days, from the end of February to 6 April. The strike achieved its minimum

⁸ Presumably with the support of the Federation, the miners' nascent union.

⁹ Numerous compensation cases had been decided against miners by Judge Bryn Roberts. He had found against injured miners and had dismissed cases or else terminated payments at the request of coal companies and their insurance companies. Bohata K, Jones A, Mantin M, et al. (2020) 'Disability in Industrial Britain: A Cultural and Literary History of Impairment in the Coal Industry, 1880–1948', Manchester University Press, Manchester

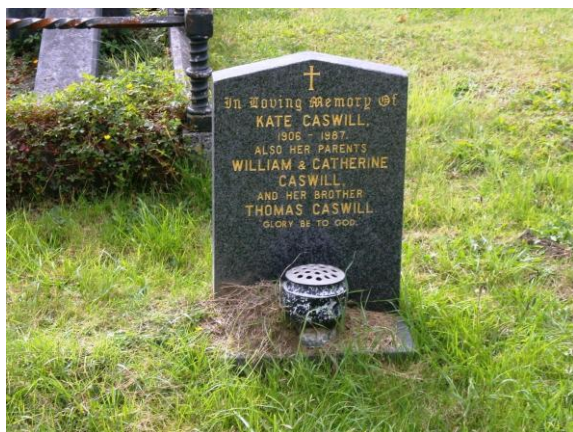
¹⁰ Glamorgan Gazette, Friday 2 February 1912

¹¹ Granville, p. 184.

wage goal, but unemployment followed and it was not a happy time. Food and heat – not to mention money - were scarce.

Catherine then lived through nearly 30 harsh years, including a war, and the deprivations of the twenties and thirties so vividly described in the women's contemporary '*Struggle or Starve*' accounts¹². Another fallout from Bill's death was the confinement of his brother, Henry James Caswill, to the Glanrhyd Asylum¹³, where he spent the remaining 17 years of his life, seemingly affected by the earlier loss of his wife and then of his brother.

Catherine was supported for a decade or so by her married daughter, Gwen, and her family coming back to live with her on Bedford Road - albeit in crowded conditions. Catherine's sons came back from the war but her son Thomas, who stayed home to work in the mines and pay the bills died of Spanish flu in 1918, just as the war ended. Most notably the oldest son Edwin went to Hull and became a rugby league celebrity. The younger children must have been badly affected by their father's death, and many years of his daughter Kate's long life were also spent in mental hospitals.



After Bill's death the family surname morphed for the most part into the more usual Welsh Caswell but when Kate died in 1987, aged 81, her gravestone in the Pyle churchyard not only retains her Caswill surname, but also

commemorates her parents William John and Catherine, and Thomas, who died from the Spanish Flu. So Bill Caswill is after all still remembered in a South Wales graveyard.

¹² Carol White and Sian Williams (Ed.) (1998, reprinted 2002) '*Struggle or Starve*'. Honno Press, Dinas Powys

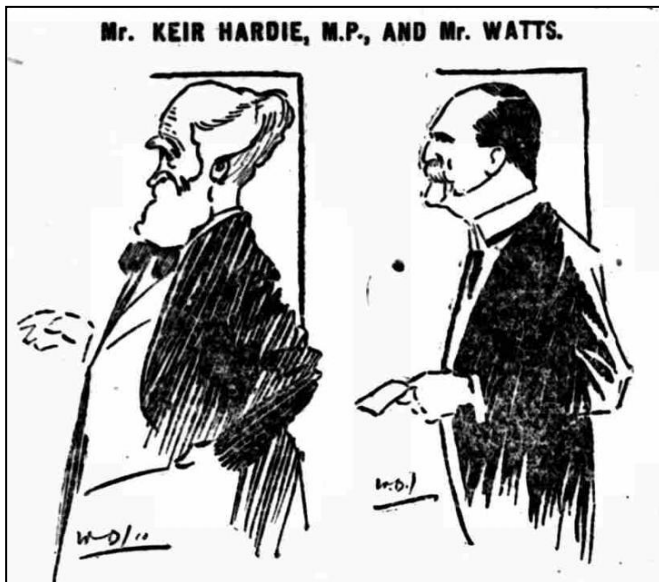
¹³ Just North of Bridgend

ALL FOR NOTHING

#11208 John P Lethbridge

MERTHYR TYDFIL 1913

A General Election was due in 1915 five years after the previous one in December 1910. This five year rule was established by the 1911 Parliament Act, which repealed the 1715 Septennial Act which said that there had to be one every seven years. The General Election due in 1915 was postponed until 1918 because of the First World War. Here I look at the contest to be the Merthyr Liberal candidate at this 1915 General Election which never was.



Merthyr Tydfil became a parliamentary borough by the 1832 first Reform Act when it was given one MP. From the 1867 Second Reform Act to 1918 it elected two members. It was for many years a Liberal stronghold, probably because Protestant Non-Conformity was very strong in the

area. However at the 1900 General Election (James) Keir HARDIE won one of the two Merthyr seats becoming one of Britain's first Labour MPs.

At Merthyr at the December 1910 General Election Edgar Rees JONES, a Liberal barrister, took 15,448 votes; and Keir Hardie 13,841 votes. They became MPs. The Liberal Unionist John Henry WATTS, a Marlow, Buckinghamshire, barrister and legal writer, received 5,277 votes.

John Henry Watts claimed to be directly descended from Dr Isaac Watts, a Congregationalist preacher, hymn writer and poet who died in 1748 aged seventy-four. However Dr Isaac Watts died unmarried and childless. Perhaps this claim was made to impress Welsh nonconformists although they may have been related.

In 1886 the Liberal Unionists led by Birmingham's Joseph CHAMBERLAIN (Neville Chamberlain's father) had broken from the Liberals and allied with the Conservatives. This was because the Liberal Party supported Irish Home Rule and the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives opposed it, seeing it as the beginning of the end for the British Empire. Being a Unionist meant supporting Ireland's remaining part of the United Kingdom.

By 1913 a General Election was looming and the Merthyr Liberals wanted a candidate who could defeat Keir Hardie. He had defeated Liberal candidates at the 1906 and January 1910 General Elections.

The Saturday 28 June 1913 Merthyr Express reported a Liberal shortlisting meeting at Bethesda Chapel, Abernant, on Friday 20 June 1913. These six men each wanted to be the second Merthyr Liberal candidate at the next election:

A William Rees EDMONDS, a Merthyr solicitor, councillor and Liberal party worker

B David Owen EVANS, a London barrister

C Thomas Artemus JONES, a Denbigh stonemason's son who had become a journalist and then a barrister

D The Reverend William Francis PHILLIPS, a Caerphilly Calvinistic Methodist minister

E Edward POWELL JP, of Newtown, Montgomeryshire, the Chairman of Humber Motors a Coventry based motor car manufacturer. His father-in-law was Sir Pryce JONES the Newtown woollen mill owner and mail order magnate.

F David RICHARDS the Chairman and Managing Director of several gold mining and other mining companies across the world, including the Sons of Gwalia gold mines in Australia. He spoke fluent Welsh. His younger brother, John Thomas Richards, a solicitor, was Lord Mayor of Cardiff in 1914-1915.

David Richards received 115 votes, Thomas Artemus Jones 113, and Edward Powell 105. The other three candidates were eliminated. The meeting adjourned, resuming five weeks later on Friday 25 July 1913. The three remaining candidates addressed the Merthyr Liberals.

On the first ballot Thomas Artemus Jones got 147 votes, Edward Powell 54 and David Richards 20. In the second ballot Artemus Jones was unanimously selected as the second Merthyr Liberal candidate at the next General Election.

Thomas Artemus Jones thanked the Merthyr Liberals for selecting him and, to quote the 26 July 1913 *Merthyr Express*, said *that he realised the task*

before him would not be an easy one, but would involve a hard fight. From what he knew of certain gentlemen, the fight would be dirty. He himself had always fought clean, but clean or dirty no quarter would be asked for or given by him (applause). He would be faithful to his trust and put his whole heart into the fight.

The Merthyr Liberals had selected a bilingual barrister with impeccable Welsh working-class roots. They rejected two wealthy industrialists who could easily have funded their own campaigns.

There might have been problems if David Richards had become a Merthyr MP given his world-wide business commitments. Edward Powell would not have had such problems but as an industrialist would have been vulnerable to Labour attacks. The result might have been different but the Merthyr Liberals wanted a candidate to run against Keir Hardie.

The three would-be candidates who did not make the final three-man shortlist were a nonconformist preacher, a local solicitor, and David Owen EVANS, who had started his working career in the Inland Revenue and was called to the bar in 1909, so was less experienced than Artemus Jones.

David Owen Evans became a nickel, copper and other mining companies official and director. He was Liberal MP for Cardiganshire from 1932 to his death in 1945.

The three men shortlisted were probably the three richest of the six would-be candidates. This typifies the Liberal and Conservative mentality in this period. At the final selection the members realised they were picking a candidate to run against Keir Hardie. Some remained loyal to Edward Powell but David Richards's vote collapsed. Given the time it then took to go to Australia and the other countries where he had interests this was logical.

Artemus Jones maintained close contact with the Merthyr Liberals. On Saturday 27 September 1913 the Merthyr Express reported his speech at a Young Liberal meeting in Penrhiwceiber a mining village. He said that the Liberals had the workers' best interests at heart; and that his fight "*was not against Labour but against the wild and impossible and revolutionary ideas with which Mr Keir Hardie and his supporters are identified*".

Artemus Jones said that the Labour Party had tried to smear him. One smear was that he was divorced. He said that "*I have only been in the divorce court once and that was in a purely professional capacity.....On that occasion I appeared for a man from the north who was the co-respondent in the divorce suit – and he was by way of being a socialist*

politician". Another smear was that he was an atheist. This was a lie - and the Labour Party had its share of atheists.

Artemus Jones was asked why the Liberal government had not introduced a minimum wage for miners. He said that they already had a living wage and given the fluctuating price of coal and cost of living this would be inappropriate. The Liberal government had set up the Wages Councils to cover the sweated trades but mining wages were not that sort of low.

Another question was if the government would control prices. He replied that it could no more control prices than it could the weather. He rejected criticisms of how it had let the railways raise freight prices.

Yet another was if Artemus Jones would support protecting Irish Protestants *against the persecution and cruelties of Rome*? He replied that he did not think that the Catholics were any worse than other religious groups in this matter, and that the Irish Nationalist leader, John REDMOND, had offered to give the Ulster Protestants any reasonable safeguards they asked for against religious persecution.

Keir Hardie, a lifelong pacifist, died on 26 September 1915 aged fifty-nine. He was heart-broken at how the international socialist movement had broken its pledges to stop any world war. A Merthyr Tydfil by-election was held on 25 November 1915. The Liberals and Tories did not stand any candidates.

The Merthyr Labour Party stood James WINSTONE, a miner and union official. Charles Butt STANTON, another miner's union official, was an Independent Labour candidate. He had once criticised Keir Hardie from the left but by 1915 supported the British war effort. The Liberals and Conservatives unofficially supported him. He obtained 10,286 votes and Winstone 6,080. This was the first contested British First World War by-election.

At the 1918 General Election the Merthyr Tydfil two-member Constituency became two single member ones - Merthyr and Aberdare. In 1918 Edgar Rees JONES held Merthyr for the Liberals, but at the 1922 General Election Labour's Richard Collingham WALLHEAD took it and held it until his death in 1934.

In 1918 Charles Stanton held Aberdare as a National Democrat. In 1922 Labour's George Henry HALL took the seat from Stanton and held it until 1946.

Thomas Artemus Jones had disappeared from view in Merthyr. When the Liberals split in 1918 into LLOYD GEORGE Coalition Liberals and

ASQUITH Independent Liberals, Artemus Jones supported Asquith, making him *persona non grata* to the Merthyr Liberals. By the time they reunited Merthyr was safe Labour territory.

By the 1923 General Election the Lloyd George and Asquith Liberals had reunited and Thomas Artemus Jones was the Liberal Swansea East candidate. He was defeated by David WILLIAMS whose life I covered in a two-part article published in successive earlier issues of this journal.

To quote Robert Burns: *The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft aglay*. Thomas Artemus Jones was a Liberal candidate at Macclesfield in Cheshire, Keighley in Yorkshire, and Swansea East at General Elections after the First World War. He lost each time.

Acknowledgements. I must thank Sian Anthony of Merthyr Tydfil Library Services. She sent me information about how in 1913 the Merthyr Liberals picked a candidate for a 1915 General Election that never was.

MARGARET LINDSAY WILLIAMS



Sue Hamer has recently seen and photographed the new memorial dedicated to Barry-born artist Margaret Lindsay Williams, who lay in an unmarked grave, sadly forgotten. Dr. Jonathan Hicks is researching her life for a biography and is asking on Facebook for any information: there is an interesting video on Mossford's website (see below).

Karen Heenan-Davies has also written about this forgotten artist for the Glamorgan Family History Society, 'From Barry to Royal Palaces' in Journal 139, September 2020, available to

view/download on our website: www.glamfhs.org.uk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPCW63QqXZ8>.

OUR MORMON FAMILY HISTORY

Part 3, Catherine Jenkins' Emigration Experience

#10900 Martin Owen

A little over a year after Mary Ann Jenkins had sailed to America, (see part 2 of this account in the previous journal) her elder sister, Catherine, and her brother, William Rudolph Jenkins, sailed from London on The Amazon.

The Voyage of The Amazon - 4 June to 18 July 1863

Remarkably, we have a full account by Charles Dickens of the ship before sailing, in 'Bound for the Great Salt Lake' one of the essays in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, published in July 1863.

Unfortunately, Dickens was not favourably impressed by a Welsh contingent on board:

'The faces of some of the Welsh people, among whom there were many old persons, were certainly the least intelligent. Some of these emigrants would have bungled sorely, but for the directing hand that was always ready. The intelligence here was unquestionably of a low order, and the heads were of a poor type. Generally the case was the reverse. There were many worn faces bearing traces of patient poverty and hard work, and there was great steadiness of purpose and much undemonstrative self-respect among this class.'

However, Dickens, like many a sceptic about Mormonism, wrote:

'What is in store for the poor people on the shores of the Great Salt Lake, what happy delusions they are labouring under now, on what miserable blindness their eyes may be opened then, I do not pretend to say. But I went on board their ship to bear testimony against them if they deserved it, as I fully believed they would; to my great astonishment they did not deserve it; and my predisposition and tendencies must not affect me as an honest witness. I went over the Amazon's side, feeling it impossible to deny that, so far, some remarkable influence had produced a remarkable result, which better known influences have often missed.'

As with the *John J Boyd* (Part 2), a president and counsellors were appointed to lead the groups and supervise the provisions, services and care of the sick. The company was divided into fifteen or so 'wards', each with its own 'president', of about 60 persons each.

In a letter near the end of a voyage to another senior Mormon at home, the appointed overall President, William BRAMALL, painted a vivid portrait of a typical day:

'At 5 a.m. the call was to rise, receive water, clean out berths, scrape the decks and prepare for prayers in the various wards at 7 o'clock.

The important subject of breakfast having been discussed, we made a regular and general survey of the condition of the people, by visiting every ward and learning the conditions of every person, when, after the sick were all attended to, the afflicted comforted and the hungry advised how to meet their pressing wants, dinner time had arrived. The afternoon found all busy; and, as sea-sickness wore away, all went in for a season of enjoyment and recreation. The members of our brass band were assiduous in their efforts to promote harmony and give employment for willing feet in the dance. Others engaged, occasionally, in various games and many occupied the time at their disposal in mental improvement or in the exercise of various avocations. To see a tailor sitting busy at work on the spar-deck, with a watchmaker carefully examining the internal parts of a watch and repairing any disarrangement of its delicate mechanism on the one hand, a straw-plaiter putting the splits deftly and beautifully together on the other, and half-a-dozen seamstresses hard at work all around, conveys but a poor idea of the "horrors" of a sea-voyage. But when evening fell and the sweet sounds of praise and thanksgiving, rising from the bowels of the mighty deep, came on the ear, as the wind whistled through the cordage, the sails bellied out before the power of the breeze, the masts bent to its heightened force, and the sea, sublime in its glorious wildness, raged and seethed and boiled around as far as the eye could look over its vast expanse - then our bosoms were inspired with a feeling that God was there to bless and comfort his people, and that those who possessed his spirit and strove to do his will, could rejoice in the manifestations of his power under the most terrifically fearful circumstances. Such scenes make men, who live for and love the truth, feel thankful to God for the revelation of his gospel, and for the power and blessings enjoyed by his people.'

Bramall remarked that the conduct of the company impressed the officers and men of the ship. The doctor told him that he had never seen an emigrant ship kept so clean, and he had acted on government ships carrying government passengers.

Security was a priority throughout the voyage, with many women and girls aboard and a non-Mormon crew, some of whom would have been hostile to Mormonism. One traveller *'was appointed captain of the guard, and put on 1st guard at 9 pm [when the company retired to rest] which consisted of 5 men and a sergeant. One man was stationed at each hatchway & the Sargent to patrol the upper deck. Their duty was to see that no sailors*

went between decks unless accompanied by an officer, & that none of the sisters came up.'

A woman Saint noted that *'the brethren looked in all the girls' berths every night to see that no sailors had got in them'*.

Generally, the Saints' 'senior management' sought to defuse problems quickly. There were apparently tensions at one point between the English and the Welsh (outnumbered by five to one) about the respective merits of their homelands, leading to the leadership giving *'us much good instruction, touching upon the feelings of nationality that had been expressed by some of the Saints on board to the injury of the feelings of others, because they were not born in the same place and country'*.

Periodic general meetings or meetings of wards were held for prayers, singing, personal testimonies, Bible discussion or administering the sacraments'.

By way of entertainment, a mixed choir initially consisting of 17 brethren and 27 sisters was formed and subsequently expanded. An entire brass band from Cardiff was on the journey and when the weather was fine they accompanied singing and dancing and entertained the company.

The journey from New York

As another example of Mormon organisation, the pieces of baggage of each traveller or group were registered before the ship docked to ease the passage through Customs. Meat, flour and sugar were distributed, especially to the poor, to cover the first stages of their overland journey.

They were lucky to arrive in New York a few days after severe rioting in the city against proposals to introduce conscription during the Civil War – the Draft Riots of 13-16 July 1863. Hundreds of people were killed, particularly African-Americans (who were exempt because they were not citizens), and abolitionists and their families, because white dock and other workers saw abolition as a threat to their jobs. These were the deadliest riots in US history.

One group travelled from New York to Albany. There they were loaded into cattle cars and went to St Joseph. As one of the hazards, a fire on one of the trains shortly after leaving Niagara destroyed a baggage carriage and the belongings of many travellers. Compensation money from the railroad seems to have gone missing before reaching the emigrants. The train journey was constant for about seven days and nights.

One Saint recorded: *'On account of the Civil War going on we had to rough it while travelling part of the time all crowded in sheep cars. They said they were afraid of their good cars being burned by the Confederates. It was bad on account of the children and we could not leave the cars to get provisions. Sometimes we were fortunate enough to get some.'*

Then they took a boat up the Missouri via St Joseph to Florence, where they heard Civil War (1861-1865) cannons firing in the distance.

'Here we rested three weeks, doing washing, patching, mending and preparing for the tedious journey across the plains. Finally each individual was assigned to his company and wagon for the trek to Salt Lake City', where they arrived on 2 October.

One party left Florence on 9 August and arrived in Salt Lake City on 4 October. Another party arrived at Salt Lake City on 6 October. On arrival, one traveller recalled: *'We were in all 10 weeks on the plains, when we arrived at Salt Lake City on the camping grounds of the 8th Ward Square. The friends and relations of different ones would come and take them away to their homes.'*

One lady's brother, although ill, walked 15 miles from the City to meet her.

For some, arrival was bitter-sweet. One lady recalled:

'When we got in sight of the mountains, the Utah boys gave a great shout, and up went their hats in the air. The mountains and canyons looked wonderful to us. After walking through canyons and over mountains, we came to a mountain so that we could see Salt Lake City, and over the Valley. Then I felt very lonesome. I thought of the folks at home and wondered if I should ever see them again. I could not help shedding tears for I felt alone in the world. I knew the girls I had travelled with would go different ways.'

An Elder reported back to Charles Dickens:

'The whole company arrived in this city, and encamped on the Union square on Saturday & Sunday Oct 3rd & 4th, in good health and fine spirits. After attending the General Conference, they distributed themselves among the people of the Territory [ie the Utah Territory, later State], like the water of a river as it empties into the sea, and could now only be found by searching 25,000 square miles of country, and by their industrious habits, they are placed where they will soon put themselves in possession of the necessary comforts of life'.

By 1891-1900, 84% of the *Amazon* travellers who could be tracked still lived in Utah, 13% in Idaho (the next State north of Utah) and 3% elsewhere.

Catherine's Later Life

Like Mary Ann, not long after her arrival in Salt Lake City, Catherine married in 1865 a Welshman, David Robert Lewis. David came from Argoed, near Bedwellty. He had been a collier, in 1841, aged 15 (like his 10 year old brother) and a coal miner, living as a lodger, in 1851. He had emigrated in February 1856 from Liverpool on *The Caravan*, probably with a 20 year old brother, John.

Catherine and David lived in Salt Lake City and had five children – Mary (1866-1930), John David (1868-1970), Josephine (1869-1947), Robert Saunders (1872-1929) and Gwendolyn (1874-1874).

Salt Lake City was founded in 1847 and at the time of these emigrations it was a small - albeit rapidly growing - town, with a population of 8,236 in 1860 and 12,854 in 1870. It now has a population of about 200,000 in the 2020s.

In the 1870 US census David and Catherine were living in Salt Lake City with Mary, John and the 6 month old Josephine. David was a day labourer.

David died in Salt Lake City on 11 October 1879, aged 59, and Catherine died aged 81 on 25 October 1926, whilst visiting one of her daughters in Pasadena, California. A headline in the Salt Lake Tribune noted:

*'Catherine Lewis, Ox-Team Pioneer, Dies in Pasadena'
Catherine was buried in Salt Lake City.*

Articles for inclusion in the journal should be sent **via email** to editor@glamfhs.org.uk. It is useful if you can quote the sources used so that other members can benefit from your research findings. **Articles should be approximately 1000-1500 words in length.** We reserve the right to serialise articles which are over a certain length.

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1921 CENSUS

#8653 Barrie Jones

The census taken on 19th June 1921 shows how the 35 million people of England and Wales were living, still suffering from the after-effects of World War 1 and the 'Spanish' flu.

The census is notable for the number of single women who had entered the workplace, many entering the professions of teaching and nursing, and even the law. It is hard not to connect this change in society to anything but the lack of the so many men of marriable age who had lost their lives in the war; over one and a half million women were often designated 'surplus women', who could not find husbands and who therefore had to make their own way in life.

Not all of them were unmarried; many were widowed from the war, and often with young children to bring up on their own. These women would sometimes operate boarding houses which in turn housed the young women now working in factories and shops.

The 1921 census also shows, for the first time, people who were divorced, or at least it allowed people to declare if they were divorced on the forms - not many people did this because of the stigma that was attached to the divorced person - it would be another 50 years before 'no fault' divorces were available, and at that time the costs of legal proceedings were prohibitive.

The state of housing is very noticeable - many large families were squashed into two or three rooms and lived in squalid conditions, and comments on the return forms would reflect their dire straits. '*Where are the Homes fit for Heroes*' would be a common theme, echoing the famous statement made by Lloyd George at the end of the war, and heartfelt pleas for work for the returned soldier, and better care for those who had been seriously injured and 'ruined by war'.

The 1921 Census is now available on both Ancestry and Find My Past subscription websites but are free to view in most local and national libraries and archives.

BBC Radio 4, You and Yours, also has many stories from the 1921 census.

Ed: If you have any interesting stories from the 1921 census please send them to editor@glamfhs.org.uk.

SUBORDINATION AND DEVASTATION: TWO SEA VOYAGES FROM THE PORT OF CARDIFF Rhian Diggins, Glamorgan Archives

Glamorgan Archives holds crew agreements and log books for ships registered at the Port of Cardiff for the years 1863-1913 (ref: DCA). The following incidents illustrate two extraordinary occurrences recorded in these logs.

The master of the *Talca* (official number 50438), Charles WOOLLACOTT, a Devonshire man, aged 41, must have wondered at the events which dogged his ship during a voyage carrying coal from Cardiff to Australia, which began in July 1869 and ended in December 1870. The cook was the main cause of trouble, as Woollacott recorded in January 1870:

.....we find that the man Thom[as] ROELPH engaged as cook and steward at £5 per month, does not know anything about Cooking. He cannot Boil a Potatoe..... It is intended to reduce his Wages in proportion to his Incompetency.

On a long voyage food was of great importance and a cook's inability to provide good food was a threat to the health of the crew and hence their ability to work. The problem was even more serious because the *Talca* was a sailing ship and the work, therefore, even more strenuous. The problems on the *Talca* continued, and in February an entry in the log stated:

All hands came aft to say they could not do their work if they could not get their victuals better cooked.

Mercifully five days later in Freemantle, Australia, Charles Woollacott noted:

This day Thomas Raulph [sic] deserted the ship.

The story did not end here. In Freemantle another man, Richard EVANS, was engaged as replacement cook. As the document among the ship's papers proves, Evans had been a criminal transported to Australia, and, having completed his sentence he was working his passage back to England (although he deserted in Dunkirk). The crew list gives his age as 32, and his place of birth as Liverpool. It is likely that Captain Woollacott would have preferred Richard Evans to have stayed in Australia. The new

cook proved insolent, insubordinate and incompetent, refusing to obey orders, until the master was forced to enter in the Log:

I did not know when I shipped him that he had been a convict. Upon the next occasion I intend to put him in confinement for the sake of Subordination of the Ship, called him aft and read this entry to him. Received a insullent reply and a threat of what he would do when he got home.

Transportation does not appear to have reformed Richard Evans.

In contrast, the master's entry for the SS Afonwen (official number 105191) for December 1908 records an event of a different kind. Whilst the ship was docked in Messina, Sicily, on a voyage carrying coal, the area was struck by a severe earthquake. The crew members acted with great bravery, two of them being awarded the Albert medal and a third was decorated by the King of Italy for attempts to rescue local people from the disaster, risking their own lives. The ship was used to bring the injured to safety in Naples. The master, William Owen, shows professional restraint in his entry in the official log for 28 December 1908 and mentions only the physical effects of the earthquake on his ship:

At 5.15 all hands disturbed by heavy earthquake shock causing great confusion on board, rushing on deck but being pitched dark and the air full of dust was unable to see anything; same time tidal wave came over quay which raised the ship bodily tearing adrift all moorings... unknown steamer which was adrift collided with our starboard bow damaging same... the water now receded and ship grounded... At 7 am sky cleared when we found out the quay had collapsed and town destroyed...

One member of the crew, Yemen-born Ali HASSAN, was reported as being ashore at the time and the entry against his name in the crew list gives him as “*supposed killed in earthquake*”.

An article in the Western Mail for 15 December 1965, using letters and recollections of the crew, tells a more vivid tale. Captain OWEN, by then in retirement in his native Amlwch, Anglesey, recalled:

...a great wall of water sprang up with appalling violence; it was a miracle we came through it. The wind howled around us and waves continually swamped us as though a squall had come on. Vast eddying clouds of dust settled on the ship like a fog.

Many people fleeing the earthquake tried to swim for the ships in the harbour. Nineteen such people are said to have reached the Afonwen including by a strange coincidence, a man from Cardiff. The next morning

Captain Owen took a party of three men ashore to seek instructions at the British Consulate, but they found it had been destroyed. He wrote in the Log for 29 December 1908:

At 8 am this day I went on shore but unable to find any means of communication and no one to give instructions I returned on board and decided to proceed to Naples, sailing from Messina 10 am.

One of the crew who went ashore with him was Eric POSSART, given in the crew list as an 18 year old apprentice from Cardiff. He wrote of the incident in a letter home to his father:

The people were all cut and bleeding... As fast as we could we were taking them aboard ships. We could only find one doctor alive. Little girls and boys saw their own hair turning white as snow...

Over 100,000 people were reported to have been killed.

The majority of voyages recorded in the Cardiff crew agreements were less eventful, but the records are no less interesting as they give valuable insight into trade from Glamorgan ports, life on board a ship, as well as information on the crew and on the conditions under which they served.

WELSH GOLD DIGGERS

#1801 Clive Davies

The first of my family to reach Australia was baptised at Margam Parish Church, on 9th June 1832 as Edward RHODERICK. Edward was the youngest of eight children of David (1788-1867) and Mary R(h)oderick, nee JENKIN (1790-1843). At the 1851 census Edward was residing at Fferm Fach in Water Street, a hamlet between Margam and the village of Kenfig:

David Roderick, Head, Wdr, 60, Farm Labourer, born Glam, Margam
Mary, Dau, S, 20, At Home, born Glam, Margam
Edward, Son, S, 18, Farm Labourer, born Glam, Margam
Ann, Gr Dau, S, 10, At Home, born Glam, Margam.

On 22nd November 1854 Edward left Liverpool and arrived Melbourne on 8th February 1855 aboard the 'Shalimar', of 1,402 tons. He and three Margam friends, George DAVIES (b 1829) and the brothers Elias (b 1825) and William DAVID (b 1830), were amongst 413 passengers. Many were bound for the Victorian Goldfields and Edward was to be found at Sebastapol on the 1856 Ballarat West Electoral Roll. He was eligible to vote as a holder of a digger's license. He eventually settled in the Castlemaine area, 120 miles northwest of Melbourne. There were six men to every woman on the goldfields but 24

years after his arrival there, he married the twice-widowed Margaret REES at the Dry Diggings, Mt Franklin in 1879.

Margaret was born in Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire in 1833, the illegitimate daughter of Elizabeth GRIFFITHS and Timothy EVANS. She had married Morgan GWILLIM at Ystradgynlais, 10 miles from her birthplace, in 1852 and they sailed to Australia with their two infant sons on the 'Amazon', arriving in Adelaide in April 1856. The brother of Morgan, David Gwillim, his wife and his three daughters were also aboard.

After a stint at copper mining at Burra, 100 miles north of Adelaide, the two families travelled 500 miles by bullock cart on rough tracks to the Victorian goldfields. The adults walked behind the cart laden with their young children and possessions. They initially settled at Golden Point, four miles from Castlemaine. 'Settled' might convey some permanence, but their first dwellings would almost certainly have been tents before a more substantial, if temporary, abode at the Golden Gully, a largely Welsh village, on the outskirts of Chewton. In 1858 tragedy befell the family when Morgan Gwillim drowned when he fell into a mine-shaft at Dog-Leg Reef whilst walking home at night from Castlemaine after a visit to the 'Robbie Burns' tavern. His body lay undiscovered for six weeks.

Eight months after Morgan's death, Margaret married another Welsh gold-miner, William Morgan REES, (born 1813 Brynaman, Glamorgan), the son of Morgan (1795-1875) and Rachel (THOMAS) Rees (1796-1846). The couple had three daughters, but only one survived infancy. Two were to die when aged 3. The harsh conditions on the gold fields took the lives of many children. The Pennyweight Flat Children Cemetery holds over 200 graves. Illness also took William to an early grave in 1868 and he lies beside his daughters in Franklindale Cemetery.

Margaret's third marriage to Edward Roderick also produced three children:

1. David (1870-1941) - Born Dry Diggings, married Ann FULLWOOD in 1895 and fathered nine children. Died at Castlemaine. In April 1995 David's granddaughter, Elwyn HUNT, an enthusiastic family historian, was the organiser of a reunion for the descendants of the three marriages of Margaret Roderick. The gathering was held at a hall on Wesley Hill, Castlemaine, a short walk from Roderick Street, named in honour of the pioneering family. Many of the over two hundred known descendants of Margaret viewed the memorabilia on display with a keen interest (see the previous journal for further accounts of Margaret). *(Ed: page 46, Journal 106, June 2012 'The Margam Gold Digger' – this 'Australian' edition of our Journal can be viewed in the Journal Archive on our website www.glamfhs.org.uk/journal-archive).*

2. Edward (1872-1962) - Born Dry Diggings, married Ada HANSON in 1895. One of their two children, Bramley, became a mayor of Castlemaine. Edward died in Castlemaine at the age of 90.
3. William (1873-1938) - Born Dry Diggings, married in 1895 to Alice WOOLNOUGH and had a family of ten children. One of William's grandsons, Barry PULLEN, was a senior Victorian state minister from 1988 to 1992. William died at East Brunswick, Melbourne.

Edward Roderick passed away in August 1904 and his obituary appeared in the Castlemaine newspaper, 'The Mount Alexander Mail', on 26th August of that year:

Another of the old pioneers of the district, Mr Edward Roderick, died at his residence, Little Bendigo, on Wednesday night at the age of 71. In following his calling as a miner he contracted miner's disease which eventually proved fatal. For fifty years he had lived in Victoria and seen all his family grown up, the youngest son having reached the years of manhood.

'The Mount Alexander Mail' of the following day:

The remains of the late Mr Edward Roderick of Little Bendigo were interred yesterday in the Campbells Creek Cemetery and were followed by a large concourse of people. The Revd HD Archer officiated at the grave and the mortuary arrangements were carried out by Messers T Odgers & Co.'

Edward's wife, Margaret, was not to die until 1929. Her death notice appeared in the 'Castlemaine Mail' on the 22nd July of that year:

One of the earliest residents of the district, Mrs Margaret Roderick, died yesterday at her residence, Little Bendigo, at the advanced age of 96 years and despite her great age maintained her faculties to the end. She was born in the Caermarthen(sic) district of Wales, and was the last of a group of Welsh people who arrived in Adelaide in 1856. She came to Forest Creek, the same year, and except for some years at Yandoit, has resided here continuously and was held in the highest regard by all. She was twice married (actually thrice), her two eldest children being T Gwillim of Mildura who is 76 years of age and Mr R Gwillim who resided with her. Her second (third) husband, Mr E Roderick, died twenty-five years ago and among the children of that marriage are Messers David and Edward Roderick of Castlemaine.

Family members recall Nain (Welsh for Gran) Roderick as a woman of resolute if sometimes stubborn character. Her son, Richard Gwillim, who lived with her, had a girlfriend of whom she did not approve. The girlfriend used to live outside Castlemaine and Richard would go to visit her by train. One night he missed the final train and, rather than face the wrath of his mother, walked home. On his arrival in the small hours of the morning he found Nain waiting, furious that he should be spending the night with that 'hussy'. He would not marry whilst his mother was alive. Alas, the girlfriend was to remain forever

such, as Richard expired aged 56 while Nain was to wait some twenty years before she met her Maker.

A granddaughter recalled that Nain insisted I speak Welsh to her although my fluency was poor, being third generation Australian.

PS The brother of Edward's father was also named Edward Roderick (1784-1840). He was the great-great-grandfather of Edward Roderick Davies, born Caerau, Bridgend 1915 – died 1992, Florida. He emigrated to USA in 1929 with his impoverished family. His engineering acumen made him a multi-millionaire. He was the father of Ann DAVIES, the wife of Mitt ROMNEY, the 2012 Republican Presidential candidate. There lies another story.

NEW DOWNLOADS

**The following Memorial Inscription publications are now available on
Genfair: www.genfair.co.uk**

C1203 Heolycyw (Coychurch) Bethel Independent MIs £5

F0202 Flemingston St Michael MIs £5

F0301 Fochriw Pentwyn Cemetery MIs £10

G0301 Gower Calvinistic Methodist Chapels Mis £5

G0401 Groes Faen St David & Bethell Calvinistic Methodist MIs £5

P1506 Hopkinstown Capel Rhondda Baptist Mis £5

K0101 Kenfig Hill Pysgah Welsh Baptist Mis £5

K0201 Killay & Knelston Baptist Chapels Mis £10

L0102 Laleston St David Mis £5

L0103 Laleston Bethel Welsh.Baptists Mis £5

L0202 Leckwith St James & Michaelston-le-Pit St Michaels Mis £5

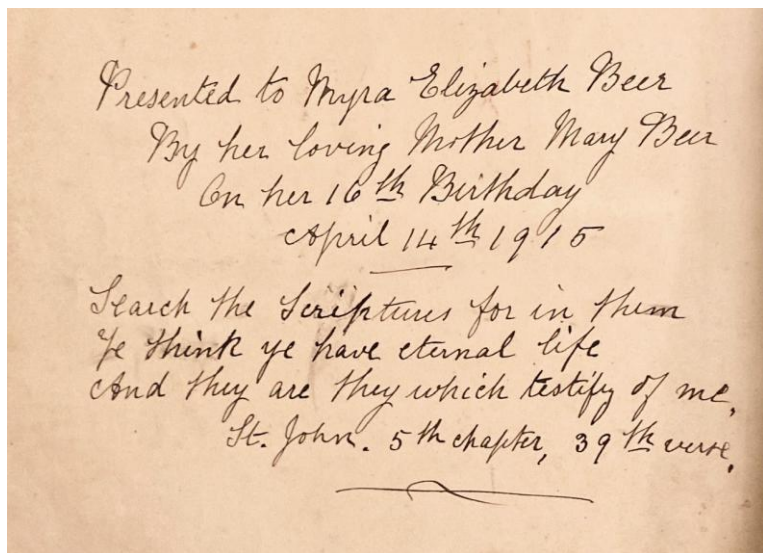
L0402 Llanblethian St Bleddian & St John Mis £10

P1507 Hopkinstown St Davids Mis £5

FINDING A HOME FOR THE BEER BIBLE

Part 2

#2 Diane Brook



As a result of being passed a large family bible with the inscription above, from a fellow committee member (see part 1 of this account in the previous journal), I thought I would look into the family further and made it an exercise in 20th-century research, not something I usually do, being mostly occupied with extending trees back from the 19th century where possible. As ever with research, you find things you ought to have known but didn't.

All the addresses are in Barry unless otherwise stated.

Electoral Registers. I tracked Myra and her husband from their marriage in 1919 through electoral registers up until George's death in 1959 and Myra's in 1980. I made this the occasion of visiting Glamorgan Archives in Cardiff as no doubt the registers were not online. Wrong! They sat me down at a computer with Ancestry; 'Glamorganshire, Wales, Electoral Registers, 1832-1978'. I did have to chase up post-1978 entries in the Archive's bound volumes for son William Lewis and his wife.

Women's Suffrage. I was surprised not to find Myra on the electoral roll before 1928. On checking, of course women got the vote in 1918 but only women 30 or over and with a property qualification. The full vote for all women 21 and over came in 1928.

Myra and George lived with his parents, confirmed from the 1921 census, now available with images on Ancestry as well as Find My Past, until 1927, then to their own house at 6 Lowdon Terrace. After the War, they were living in Jenner Road, first at number 12, then at number 5. Myra moved later, by 1970, once George had died, to 12 Cornwall Road and then 12 Brecon Court although a look at Google Earth suggests these are the same house with a name change. She disappeared from Barry after 1976. I assumed it was a different Myra Lewis on the electoral register in 1978 in Michaelston near St Fagan's as a Thomas LEWIS was also listed. Again, wrong. I bought Myra's death certificate which showed she had died at The Court, Michaelston Road, St Fagan's. The place still exists and is a nursing home. So this was indeed our Myra.

I tracked William, Myra's son, assuming the William E Lewis and Sarah LG Lewis of Barry were the son and daughter-in-law. They are almost certainly the William E Lewis and Sarah LG EVANS married in the June quarter of 1943 in East Glamorgan which includes Barry. It would need a purchase of the certificate to confirm it. Although Glamorgan Archives have various church registers this late, I do not know which church they may have married in, or if they married in the Register Office.

The couple then appear on the electoral registers from 1947, first at 61 Colcot Road until 1953 when they moved to 113 Porthkerry Road for seven years before moving to 2 Broad Close in 1961. They remained there for the rest of their lives. Sarah is listed there alone in 2003 but not in 2006.

Recent Birth and Death Certificates. The electoral register entries fit with deaths listed on the General Register Office website (www.gro.gov.uk, free registration) for William in 2001 and Sarah LG Lewis in the first quarter of 2006 although she was registered in Kent. I thought I would order their death certificates as these are not too expensive and quick to get now that PDFs are sent online. Another assumption corrected. The online PDF birth and death certificates are only available up to 1957, and the online indexes are missing after that until 1984. After 1957 the certificates are posted on paper and are more expensive, £12.50 rather than £8.00 where a PDF is available. I decided to get them anyway.

Deaths. Modern death certificates in England and Wales are much more informative than the ones we get for the 19th century and earlier 20th century. The modern ones have the full date of birth of the deceased, accurate, assuming the informant knew the correct date. They have the maiden names of married and widowed women, and, the full last known address of the deceased and of the informant, not always given in earlier years.



Myra's death certificate confirms her full date of birth and maiden name of Beer. The informant was William Lewis, son, of 2 Broad Close, Barry. Thus the assumption that the William of Broad Close was Myra's son was correct.

William died 14 May 2001, in hospital in Cardiff but his usual residence was 2 Broad Close, Barry. The Sarah LG Lewis, who died 16 Dec 2005 (not indexed until the next quarter), was correctly identified as Sarah Leah Gladys, nee Evans, widow of William Edward Lewis, but her usual residence was a nursing home in Kent.

Newspapers.

I looked for newspaper obituaries for Myra Lewis, her husband George, and son William. I started with the

indexed collections on Find My Past, then Newspapers.com. The National Library of Wales has its own searchable free digitised collection online (<https://newspapers.library.wales>) but only before 1919 so no use for much of the twentieth century.

More recent local papers still reside in local studies collections in reference libraries. I went to Barry Library to search the main local newspaper, the Barry & District News, for Myra's death. The Library staff were very helpful and patient, setting me up with their aged microfilm reader. After abortive attempts to make the thing work reliably, I agreed to try their hi-tech solution, a film scanner linked to PC software. This was much more reliable and even had rotate and reverse image controls as well as a 'zoom in' feature in the software. I checked every page of the Barry & District from 12th January through 7th February 1980 for any obituary or death notice but there was none. I had forgotten how slow and tedious real-time page searching is! I must be getting soft, depending so much on indexed records online.

Burials

Modern burials are very often now in civil cemeteries rather than parish churchyards and chapel graveyards. These cemeteries often have online indexes available. I checked the Barry Cemetery index (<https://css10.clearskieshost10.co.uk/Web/BarryTownCouncil/GenealogyV2/G>

enealogy) but none of the family, George, Myra or William Lewis are listed with a burial or cremation there. Of course, we might not expect Sarah to be brought back to Wales all the way from Kent. I then guessed that the Lewis family might have opted for burial in Cardiff as Myra was born there. I then found another aspect of recent tracing. Cardiff Bereavement Service manages eight cemeteries (<https://www.cardiffbereavement.co.uk/genealogy/>) but only offers paid searches, burials beginning in 1859 at Cathays Cemetery and cremations at Thornhill from 1953. I decided against paying the minimum fee of £40 for up to five names. Some of the earlier burial registers are held at Glamorgan Archives (Cardiff Burial Board, Records, Burial registers, 10 Jul 1859-9 Apr 1951, BUBC/1) but again, do not cover the latter half of the 20th century or the any of the current century. And, it may even be that some or all of the family were cremated and ashes scattered elsewhere than in a cemetery.

The Findspot

2 Broad Close must be the place where the Bible was found. Although the location doesn't fit exactly with the sketch map Jean Jones gave me, the description was correct in that Broad Close is a short row of 1960s-style houses on Pontypridd Road, the lane behind being called Broad Close. I guess that the Bible was put in the loft and not remembered once William died and Sarah was moved to Kent.

It turns out William and Sarah did have a child who appears briefly on some of the electoral registers and is the informant for both their deaths. This person lives in Kent but is not on any of the available family history sites so is not a genealogist. I discovered this after giving the Bible to Lisa who is a very keen family historian so I feel it has gone to the right person.

Lisa is descended from an earlier Beer ancestor, Myra's grandfather, but Lisa particularly treasures the Bible as she has her own special interest in the family history of this line. We offer these items from the past into the future so those to come have links to their own past.

I have two more Bibles to place but don't plan to take on any more Bibles after that. It is, though, very rewarding to bring objects or documents and related family historians together. I recommend it!

EDITOR'S NOTE: *As we can see from Diane's account, 'Bible stories' can be fascinating, so please let us have yours!*

YR EISTEDDFOD

#8631 EE Edwards



Gan fod Eisteddfod Pontypridd yn 2024 wedi bod mor llwyddiannus, a Phabell GFHS wedi denu llawer o ymwelwyr, mae wedi f'atgoffa am yr holl adegau y bum mewn eisteddfodau ledled Cymru ar hyd y blynyddoedd. Ambell flwyddyn roeddwn yn helpu ym mhebyll naill ai'r Brifysgol Agored yng Nghymru neu Brifysgol Caerdydd fel rhan o'm gwaith, neu roeddwn yn cystadlu mewn rhyw gôr neu'i gilydd – bob amser yn cael hwyl. Glaw neu heulwen roedd wastad yn wythnos unigryw, gan fynd i'r Babell Lên, i gyngherddau'r nos, dramâu ac ati. Ym Mhontypridd roedd yn ddiddorol y tu hwnt mynd â chyfnither o Ganberra, Awstralia o gwmpas y maes ac i Seremoni'r Coroni – roedd hi wedi

gwirioni ar y fath wledd yng ngwlad ei chyndeidiau, yn wir, roedd hi'n methu â ffeindio geiriau i ddisgrifio'r profiad pan ddychwelodd adref.

Ond i mi mae dwy Eisteddfod yn sefyll allan – 1998 Eisteddfod Bro Ogwr a leolwyd ym Mhen-coed. Dyna'r Eisteddfod lle ges i wahoddiad i ysgrifennu'r cyflwyniad llenyddol i'r ardal. Roedd yn dipyn o dasg ond yn gyfle ardderchog i rannu hanes cyfoethog yr ardal i eisteddfodwyr o bob rhan o Gymru.

Rwy'n siŵr nad oedd rhyw lawer yn gwybod am y teulu o benceirddiaid, disgynyddion Rhys Brydydd o Dir Iarll, a fu'n ymweld â theuluoedd fel y Stradlingiaid, y Bassetiaid, y Carniaid, a llawer eraill gan gael eu talu am ganu eu clodydd. Roedd copiwyd hen lawysgrifau pwysig iawn hefyd yn yr ardal, Llywelyn Siôn yn arbennig, a dramodydd a ysgrifennodd yn nhafodiaith yr ardal, a Thomas Richards, y Curad a'r Geiriadurwr.

Ac yna roedd Eisteddfod Casnewydd yn 2004, a gynhaliwyd ym Mharc Tredegar. Yn honno cefais fy nerbyn fel aelod o Orsedd y Beirdd er anrhydedd fel Eirian Cwm Cynffig. Roedd y wefr o gael fy nghyflwyno i'r Archdderwydd yn gwbl arbennig, ond yn rhyfeddach fyth ar yr un diwrnod pan oeddwn yn eistedd ar y llwyfan yn Seremoni'r Cadeirio, pwy safodd fel enillydd y Gadair ond Huw Meirion Edwards, fy nai! Profiad na ellir ei anghofio.

THE EISTEDDFOD

#8631 EE Edwards

Because the Eisteddfod in Pontypridd in 2024 was so successful, and as the GFHS's tent had attracted many visitors, it has reminded me of all the times that I attended eisteddfodau around Wales over the years. Sometimes I was helping out in the tents either of the Open University in Wales or Cardiff University as part of my work, or I was competing in some choir or other – always enjoying myself. Rain or shine it was always an unique week, going to the Literary Tent, to evening concerts, dramas etc. In Pontypridd it was extremely interesting to take a cousin from Canberra, Australia around the field and to the Crowning Ceremony – she was delighted with such a cultural feast in the country of her ancestors, indeed, she could hardly find words to describe the experience when she returned home.

But to me, there are two years that stand out: 1998 the Bro Ogwr Eisteddfod which was held at Pencoed. That was the Eisteddfod when I was invited to write the literary history of the area. It was quite a task but an excellent chance to share the rich history with eisteddfod goers from all parts of Wales.

I'm sure that not very many knew about the family of chief poets, the descendants of Rhys Brydydd from the Earl's Land (Tir Iarll), who visited



families like the Stradlings, the Bassetts, the Carnes and many others, being paid to sing their praises. There were also very important copiers of ancient manuscripts living in the area, particularly Llywelyn Siôn, plus a dramatist that wrote using the local dialect, and

Thomas Richards, the Curate and author of a Dictionary.

And then there was Newport Eisteddfod in 2004, held at Tredegar Park. It was there that I was made an honorary member of the Gorsedd of Bards, known as Eirian Cwm Cynffig. The thrill of being presented to the Archdruid was very special, and, more incredibly, on the same day when I was sitting on the stage for the Chaining Ceremony, who stood up as the winner of the Chair but Huw Meirion Edwards, my nephew! An unforgettable experience.

LETTERS/EMAILS to the EDITOR

If anyone can help, then please contact the Editor who will pass on all answers and relevant contact details.

editor@glamfhs.org.uk

#21135 Marcus Payne

I have a much treasured 'Ancestral Family Photo Album' where I have at least one photo or more of my parents, grandparents and great grandparents and their siblings, with one exception. I don't have a photo of my great grand-mother Bridget ROACH, born in 1874, died in 1952, who married Cornelius MCCARTHY (born 1875, died 1918), on 26th December 1897, in Cardiff. I even have one photo of Cornelius with his brothers, possibly taken at the same time.

Is there anyone in the GFHS or beyond, who has any photos of Bridget, and Cornelius? It would fill in the remaining glaring gap in my photographic collection. If so, please let me know through the Editor.

#21305 Liz Jack

I'm searching for the truth behind a rumour I have come across which states that William CATCHMAYD of Monmouth (c 1747–1793) ran away with the family's maid. I have found a marriage in Bristol in St Mary Redcliffe, dated 27th August 1778 of William Catchmayd of Monmouth, gentleman to Betty COLLINS, spinster and believe this is the couple involved.

Four years later, in 1782, William Catchmayd of Monmouth changed his name to GWINNETT by Royal Licence so that he could inherit the Gwinnett estates in Gloucestershire. Three months before William died in 1793, his brother George Catchmayd similarly changed his name by Royal Licence to George Gwinnett, also in order to inherit the Gloucestershire estates.

In his will, William then Gwinnett then 'of Monmouth', left all his property to "my dear wife, Betty" and requested her "not to give or dispose of any part thereof to my ungenerous and ungrateful family". There followed several Chancery Court cases to decide whether Betty or George inherited the estates. George appears to have won as he was later described as Lord of the Manor of Badgeworth. Can anyone tell me the background to William and Betty's romance? Was she the family maid? Did they elope? Or was Betty simply someone William's family did not approve of? Any information to clarify the situation would be very much appreciated.

#21123 Lynette Pusey writing from Australia. I was born in the Cardiff District in 1954 and then adopted at 3 weeks of age. My birth name was Janet HISCOCK(S). Through genealogy research, I have found that my maternal biological family mainly lived in Bridgend and surrounding areas.

My maternal grandparents were George Hiscock and Catherine Morfydd RICHARDS (not to be confused with George's first wife, Catherine Ann HARRY).

I am travelling to the UK later this year and will be in Bridgend from 6th until 9th November to do some further research. If any of George's descendants are available at this time, I would love to catch up.

His daughters' married names were Queenie MOLD, Eileen HARRIS, Beatrice CROUCH, Mildred GALE and Nancy (Anne Miriam) MORDECAI.

NOTE: arrangements are being made for Lynette to visit the ARC during her time in Bridgend.

#20045 Myfanwy Lloyd Jones has written with some additional information on a previous article:

This is a belated response to the Glamorgan Archives report in the March 2025 issue of the GFHS Journal, relating to the minute book of the Aberdare Branch of the Glamorgan County Nursing Association. It was stated that the main focus of the branch at that period was to employ a District Nurse to work throughout the Aberdare area. The Nurse was to be 'preferably Welsh speaking and able to cycle'.

I believe that my great-aunt, Elizabeth Mary (Lizzie May) SPINK, nee WILLIAMS, was that first District Nurse. She was very much a Welsh speaker, and had been born and brought up in Aberdare, although she moved to London to train as a nurse, in St Alfege's Hospital, Greenwich.

The 1939 Register records her living with her parents, Edgar David and Elizabeth Williams, in the family home, 359 Cardiff Road, Aberdare. She appears to have been unemployed at that time, and her husband, Stanley Spink, was living in Greenwich. He and Lizzie May divorced some time later, and she reverted to her maiden name, being known as Sister Williams.



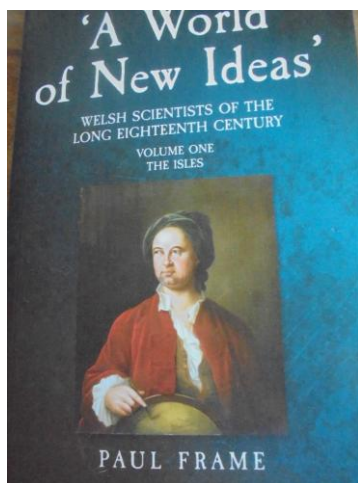
I remember my father saying that she had been a District Nurse in Aberdare, and I think he said that she travelled round her patch on a bicycle. I am not sure when the photograph above was taken; she looks relatively young in it (she was born in 1901).

BOOK REVIEW

A World of New Ideas: Paul Frame

If like many people you thought that Wales contributed little to the discoveries and energy of the long 18th century labelled the Enlightenment, then this book will prove an eye-opener.

It is packed with fascinating characters who contributed to the world of changing ideas in religion, science, education, medicine and the arts, proving that this small country was capable of playing a large part on the world stage. The book is divided into three parts: Part 1 is labelled 'Foundation' which looks at science up to 1650 and the challenge to religion. Part 2 is headed 'Gaining a Knowledge of Science', looking at the languages of science and spreading the word, and Part 3 is discussing practical science, of the earth, nature, health and social well-being.



There is a very useful Prologue giving the aims of the book, many illustrations, and a comprehensive index and detailed footnotes. Some names, such as Richard Price, Lewis Morris and William Morgan will be familiar, but there are many whose achievements are ground-breaking but who are unknown today, so a great opportunity to discover these forgotten men (and they were nearly all men of course).

Paul Frame is a retired geologist and now an independent researcher into the Enlightenment/Welsh Enlightenment history. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth and is currently working on a second volume in the series.

University of Wales Press, paperback, 472 pages,
ISBN 978-1-83772-009-5

Jean Fowlds

SOCIETY NEWS & REPORTS

ABERKENFIG RESOURCE CENTRE

The Tuesday openings for the ARC are going well with a few visitors from afar joining the small but steady flow of local people calling in. One visitor has been chasing military ancestors' records, which has proved very interesting, although a little elusive!

The ARC continues to welcome both members and non-members. Visitors are always welcome and if possible, a little advance notice of both your visit and what you are looking for help with would enable us to better focus the help on offer. Group visits can also be accommodated, but once again a little notice is needed as the ARC is a relatively small area. Also, remember we can open at other days/times but will need a week or two's notice to ensure we can have two or three volunteers there to help.

The Bridgend branch committee continues to open the ARC once a month on a Saturday for two hours, contact us to check dates. They will be offering a warm cuppa and help with research the same as is available on the Tuesdays.

The ARC is also now welcoming volunteers to help with a number of projects. To avoid disrupting the ARC Open days there will be set "Volunteer Days" for this. It is hoped that volunteers will be able to come and help lead a specific project, giving a sense of ownership and fulfilment when progress can be seen. One or two projects can be undertaken remotely, so even if you cannot get to the ARC, you may be able to help from home and a Zoom chat on the Volunteer days could help you still feel involved and provide a catchup on your and others projects. If interested just contact us at the ARC email below.

The ARC holds considerable stock of both hard copy booklets and CDs of all the Parish Records, Chapel Records, Monumental Inscriptions and a wide range of what we call Miscellaneous Records. Stock levels of **some items** are a little high, so a "*Flash*" sale is being considered for the CD stock. This is a short-term offer and members must contact us by 1st October for Delivery mid-October. If there is an area that you have been exploring and have been thinking of ordering a relevant CD, contact us **before** you buy and we may be able to offer you a discount price... again contact us on the ARC email below. Please keep an eye on the GFHS Website and our Social Media pages for news and information/dates of all the above, as changes can happen and new events/activities may become available.

Contact us on: arc2@glamfha.org.uk

ARC Publications focus this journal is:

Mountain Ash Nazareth English Baptist

This is a collection of records that are spread out over three sets with a compilation of them being available in a CD or Download. They include:

- ▶ Admissions / Dismissions
- ▶ Members lists by surnames
- ▶ History of the church minute books
- ▶ Lords supper lists

SURNAME	FORENAMES	NO.	REMARKS	ADDRESS	YEAR
JOHN	MRS	197	-	KNIGHT ST	1893
JOHN	MRS	174	-	KNIGHT ST	1894
JOHN	MRS	158	-	KNIGHT ST	1895
JOHN	MRS	144	-	RICHMOND RD	1896
JOHN	MRS	129	-	RICHMOND RD	1897
JOHN	WILLIAM	066	-	DOVER ST	1891
JOHN	WILLIAM	061	-	DOVER ST MT ASH	1892
JOHN	WILLIAM	057	-	DOVER ST	1893
JOHN	WILLIAM	051	-	PENRHIWCEIBER RD	1894
JOHN	WILLIAM	051	-	PENRHIWCEIBER RD	1895
JONES	AMY MISS	187	TO HAVERFORDWEST	CARDIFF RD	1892
JONES	AMY MRS	216	-	CARDIFF RD	1891
JONES	CAROLINE	295	BY LETTER 00AUG1893	CEFN PENNAR COTTS.	1893
JONES	CATHERINE	286	BAPT 00FEB1894	TONCOCH FARM	1894
JONES	CATHERINE	239	-	TONCOCH FARM	1895

Together they provide a valuable insight to members during their time with this church, although it must be remembered these are LISTS and as such may provide limited information. For some members listed they do provide addresses. So, if you have ancestors from that general area it may be worth considering adding one or two of these to your collection of resources. *Example page above.*

ABERDARE/CYNON VALLEY

The last few months have been a very quiet time within the branch, attendance has been low, and we would like to take this opportunity to wish our members with ill health a speedy recovery.

May's meeting unfortunately had to be cancelled.

June - We welcomed Stuart Davies a new speaker to our branch. Stuart gave an excellent talk on "Two local Hirwaun men and the Battle of Arnhem". This talk was well received, very enjoyable and informative. Being based on two local men somehow gave it more significance to the story as some members were familiar with the men identified within the talk.

July - Keith Jones made a welcome return. His talk was on "Pontypridd Miners as Tunnellers Underground on the Western Front in the First World War" and was based on the miners who served in the Royal Engineers Tunnelling Companies of whom very little was known and of whom a third did not survive the war.

Pat Rees, aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

BRIDGEND

Our regular 3rd Monday evening meetings are continuing although it is becoming ever more difficult to find speakers. In July the branch started two projects, which will run over the next few months. Two members of the branch committee visited the Maesteg local history resource centre to look at their organisation of resources, especially maps and to make ourselves more familiar with their range of resources. We are hoping to be able to work with them on projects of joint interest. The small number of staff there are really helpful and they have wide range of local history and genealogy related knowledge and resources.

The first project is researching names on the local War Memorial and the second focuses on names recently published as part of the Railway Work, Life & Death Project, titled The Railway Injuries and Fatalities database. We are hoping that members/volunteers will help us move these projects forward. Any and all help is welcome.

The Branch will be hosting a research session at the ARC as part of Ogwr Heritage Month on Saturday 13th September – please come along for any research queries or just for a chat and a cup of tea. Other events through

the month will be published on the Ogwr Heritage website and if they are similar to the 2024 events they will be well worth attending.

In July several of the Branch visited Glamorgan Archives for a guided tour in the morning and then an afternoon digging through their resources. Hopefully more branch members will join us for future events – see photo inside Back Cover.

CARDIFF & VALE

Our May meeting at the Archives was on “Sport and Entertainment” followed in July by a comprehensive tour of the Archive building. Rhian Diggins, senior archivist, was our guide. The archives of Glamorgan have been kept here since 2010. Since 2023 part of the building has been used for Cardiff Registration services while City Hall undergoes maintenance so it is not unusual to have a wedding on the premises!

In the main reception area is “Clip Corner” a large screen where the Wales Broadcast Archive from NLW can be accessed, and computers where Ancestry and Find My Past can be used. From here the research room can be entered on production of a card (two forms of ID needed to register) and pre-ordered items viewed or reference books consulted.

On our tour behind the scenes we were told about the buffer zone that separates the storage area from the outside walls. This is an area which helps to control temperature and humidity. It also holds the fire suppressant system - multiple tall cylinders of Argonite, an inert gas mixture of Nitrogen and Argon. Argonite extinguishes by means of reducing the oxygen content within a room to the point at which a fire can no longer burn, but without compromising the safety of individuals working thereby keeping the documents safe.

We saw the room where new acquisitions arrive for inspection by the conservation team. Any mould, dust, insect infestation or vermin damage is dealt with by isolation, freezing, or cleaning before being catalogued, packaged in acid-free boxes and stored on mobile racks. Items are stored by size not collection to economise on space, and volumes are placed in made-to-measure boxes from the box-making department. As well as protecting these items from movement damage this machinery helps to generate a significant income stream for the archives.

We also visited the conservation studio where members of staff were working on their current project of plans by William Burges and we could

see the huge map wall, used to repair maps and plans vertically, under lighting, and by use of airport steps to reach them!

We were shown the room where the equipment for digitisation of records takes place. The walls are black so that reproductions are of the highest quality without glare. Again some of this work is carried out for partner organisations.

There is a virtual tour available on the archive website which illustrates some of these areas.

Rhian then gave us hints and tips on using Canfod, the archive catalogue, Welsh for Discover. She advised that when looking for documents, search using various ways, thinking of how they could be described with different spellings, use of Welsh, and make use of the research guides, and drop-down menus to narrow or broaden a search. She also explained the use of the Action Bar which can be used to save references if working at home or to email them to yourself or others.

We were very pleased to have such a good turn-out and be joined by members who visited from other parts of Wales and England.

Our next meeting will be in September, and then in November we hope to have a practical session in the research room putting our knowledge of the catalogue to good use.

Don't forget that the Archives has a shop selling packaging materials and it is possible to have a bespoke labelled box made to protect an individual family photo album.

Karen Prior, cardiff@glamfhs.org.uk

MERTHYR TYDFIL

The Merthyr Tydfil Branch continues to meet in Soar on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1pm for a meeting at 2pm; we love the coffee there but are also available for a chat on family history. We recently had to switch speakers as our June speaker cancelled, and Carl Llewellyn stepped up as usual giving his excellent talk on the Italians of Merthyr Tydfil and Wales. In the audience were members of the Galleozzie family, a large Merthyr family whose ancestors not only are not from Bardi but they also were not café owners or ice cream sellers. We were once asked if Louis Galleozzie or Dominico Basageleo was the earliest Italian to arrive in Merthyr Tydfil; both were from Genoa. Huw Williams then took his place in July to deliver a wonderful talk on how our ancestors are portrayed in Welsh art and contemporary literature.

The Branch has attended and assisted at a number of local events; the launch of the Cyfarthfa Castle bicentenary book and the Dic Penderyn Society Day Conference. Our member, Viv Pugh, who is also the chair of the Dic Penderyn Society, has been researching into the women who played a major part in the Merthyr Tydfil Uprising of 1831 and has written about them in the July newsletter of this society.

Carolyn Jacob, merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA

Branch meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Pontypridd Museum. We usually have 10–12 attendees, including occasional guests.

Our speaker for the May meeting was Hywel Matthews, Rhondda Cynon Taf's reference and local studies librarian. Hywel took us through the list of substantial historical resources held by RCT libraries. Many of these are invaluable to family historians, who are welcome to visit the libraries at Pontypridd, Treorci and Aberdare to view them.

Unfortunately, our speaker for the June meeting had to cancel at very short notice. One of our members, Creighton Sims, saved the day and presented an interesting, illustrated talk on Crime and Poverty.

In July, Dr Stuart Broomfield spoke to us about the Home Guard during the Second World War, with several local references and inevitably, a mention or two for Dad's Army! Most of us learned something new and there were a few amusing anecdotes from members to end the evening.

Members from other branches are always welcome to attend. Please see our programme for the autumn. If anything interests you, you will be guaranteed a warm welcome.

Eleanor Aubrey, rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

SWANSEA

In May our speaker was Darris Williams (USA), who formerly worked at Brigham Young University, developing the FAMILY SEARCH website. He now works as a freelance researcher. He was in the UK to learn more about his Welsh ancestors. Darris gave us updates and tips on how to use FAMILY SEARCH in different ways, and about the future developments which are "in the pipeline".

Since his talk, I have added “family photos” to the MEMORIES section of the site, but this is only one aspect amongst many which you may wish to explore.

In June Janet Neilson spoke about researching family history using online newspaper reports, eg family funerals, with particular reference to FIND MY PAST. Janet used, as examples, surnames in her own family and was able to find lists of all those who attended family funerals and the relationship to the deceased, as well as detailed wedding reports and a court case which ended in a member of her family being sent to gaol for embezzlement (this report included a sketch of the guilty man).

The branch is now on its summer break.

Janet Neilson, swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

NEWS FROM GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES APRIL-JUNE 2025

Staff

- Katie Finn, Archivist, joined the team in April. Some of you may remember Katie from her time at the Archives in 2019/2020, when she worked as project archivist on our Time and Tide project, cataloguing records of Cardiff Bay Development Corporation and Associated British Ports. Katie will now be taking on a full role across all areas of the office, including our searchroom.
- Our annual volunteer trip took place in June with a visit to Carmarthenshire Archives. We were given a behind the scenes tour of their new building. This was followed by lunch at Carmarthenshire Museum.

Access and Community Engagement

- Our talks in April and June were both fully booked. In April Keith Moger spoke about ‘The Story of Cardiff’s Hospitals’ and in June Trevor Goldbold from Tiger Bay and the World spoke on ‘Partnering with Glamorgan Archives to Preserve the Stories of Tiger Bay and Cardiff Docklands’.
- In May we hosted the Women’s Archive Wales day school ‘Out of the Shadows’, which featured a full programme of talks on the history of women in Glamorgan. Again, this was a sold out event.
- On 24 July we will be joined by Stephen K Jones for a talk on ‘Barry Railway: Coal’s last Burst’. This will be part of this year’s Railway 200 celebrations. The talk is already sold out.
- School visits continued, with 275 pupils from Ely and Caerau in Cardiff attending for a workshop looking at the development of their local area.

We welcomed Year 5 pupils from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in Cardiff. They are moving to a new building in September, and visited to learn more about their current school site prior to the move. A workshop was delivered to history students at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Edern on the Second World War.

- Postgraduate students in history at Cardiff University visited for a discussion about undertaking archive research. Staff from Gwent Archives also attended.
- Members of GFHS Cardiff & Vale Branch visited the Archives for their May meeting which explore records relating to sport and entertainment.
- The latest cohort of Invisible Cardiff trainees visited for archive research training at the end of June. The project trains people who have experienced homelessness to become tour guides.
- Visits have also been made by a range of groups, including the Heritage and Cultural Exchange in Butetown, the Innovate Trust, Cardiff People First and Vale Stepping Stones.
- The latest issue of the Glamorgan Archives newsletter was circulated in early-June. You can sign up to receive it by email by subscribing to our blog <https://glamarchives.wordpress.com/>.
- We commemorated the 80th anniversary of VE Day with an article on our blog featuring a letter written by Veronica Moverley of Cardiff detailing the celebrations that took place that day. The blog also featured an article on the centenary of the establishment of the Great Western Garden Village Society, Caerphilly.
- Glamorgan Archives has now joined Blue Sky. We also post regularly on Facebook and Instagram and share video content on Tik Tok.
- The monthly 'Ask the Experts' family history sessions continue with the valuable support of volunteers from GFHS.

Collections

- We held a successful collections week in June. Progress was made in cataloguing the records of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. Cataloguing of a significant deposit of WI records was completed. And the stock take in the strongrooms continued.
- Notable accessions received recently include:

Capel Rhondda, Hopkinstown, Pontypridd Records (DWBAP14)

This quarter we received six deposits of records from the Baptist Union of Wales. These records were all passed to the Union when the decision is made to close a church due to the unsustainable size of the congregation. Records for Capel Rhondda, Hopkinstown include a minute book, account book, registers of graves, Sunday school register of attendance and accounts, correspondence and chapel history.

Valleys Kids Records (D2109)

Valley Kids began in 1977. In collaboration with the Probation Office the organisation initially worked with closed groups of young probation clients. By the end of 1978 it began offering youth activities for all young people in the local area providing a range of services for the community including play work, youth works and community work. By 2021, Valley Kids had established four community projects in Rhondda Cynon Taf, at Penygraig, Penyreglyn, Rhydyfelin, and Dinas. It has developed a youth arts team, a family team, The Play Yard (a social enterprise,) The Factory Arts and Culture Centre in Porth, and Little Bryn Gwyn, a residential centre in Cilibion, Swansea. Records include minutes from organisational meetings, notes from meetings with young people, event posters and tickets, and papers relating to the history of the organisation.

W Clarke of Llandaff, Masons, Records (D2117)

The family firm has a long history in Cardiff, dating back to 1841. Masonry work was undertaken for Llandaff Cathedral (including post-war rebuilding), for churches across Glamorgan, on Cardiff Castle (linked to William Burges) and on private houses. The collection spans the 20th century and includes plans of proposed work, glass plate negatives (including digital copies) of completed work, financial records, and dairies.

Archdiocese of Cardiff - Minevia, Education Records (D2119)

Records for Catholic schools from across the area, including Heathfield House, St Cuthberts' Primary School, Corpus Christi High School, Archbishop Mostyn Secondary Modern School, St Richard Gwyn, St David's College, and St Illtyd's College.

Wellings Family of Pontlottyn Collection (D337)

This is an addition to an existing collection. It includes many photographs taken during the 1950s of miners' housing in Pontlottyn; Bargoed and Aberbargoed. In the 2000s, David Wellings took additional photographs of the same streets to record how they had changed.

Don't miss the 'Cut-Off Dates'

*Material for possible publication should reach the Editor
before the following dates:*

March Issue	20 January	June Issue	20 April
Sept issue	20 July	Dec Issue	20 October

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Please contact the Branches for up to date information about all meetings.

ABERDARE BRANCH

aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

Cynon Valley Museum at 2pm on the second Thursday each month

11 September: AGM & Speaker topic TBC

8 October: Rob Jones "They Buried Then At Home" based on the Cynon Valley Commonwealth War Graves

11 November: Research Session.

December: No Meeting/Xmas Lunch – Nadolig Llawen

BRIDGEND BRANCH

bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

Aberkenfig Resource Centre at 7.30 pm third Monday each month

15 September: AGM

20 October: TBC

17 November: TBC

December: No meeting – Nadolig Llawen

CARDIFF & VALE BRANCH

cardiff@glamfhs.org.uk

1st Tuesday every other month 2 pm at Glamorgan Archives, 7

2 September: Shopping and Trade Directories

4 November: Research in the Searchroom
(Booking will be required nearer the time)

6 January: New Material received during 2025

7 October (Online): 7 pm AGM (Members Only)

7.30 pm Speaker: Diane Brook, J Barrie Davies Collection

MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH

merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

2pm Soar, Welsh Centre, Pontmorlais on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

9 Sept: Lisa Powell, Public Health in mid Victorian Merthyr Tydfil.

14 Oct - AGM

11 Nov: Linking with the Tuesday morning history class to celebrate the life and family history of the Dowlais historian Gwyn Alf Williams who was born in November 1925. Talk by Huw Williams and Viv Pugh

9 Dec: Christmas Social

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA BRANCH

rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

7 pm at Pontypridd Museum

16 Sept: 'A Pictorial History of Pontypridd Part 1'- Creighton Sims

21 Oct: AGM followed by

'A Pictorial History of Pontypridd Part 2'- Creighton Sims

18 November: Howard Thomas

'The Italian Café Communities of Pontypridd'

December – no meeting – Nadolig Llawen

SWANSEA BRANCH

swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

2pm at West Glamorgan Archives,

Oystermouth Road, Swansea, SA1 3SN

9 September: "What's on the shelves in the West Glamorgan Archives",
eg BMD registers, how to use the catalogue and how to order archive
material which is kept in the strong room, eg school log books, school
registers, estate records (e.g. Margam and Penrice) etc.

7 October: **AGM** at the Civic Centre, Speaker Jeff Phillips' talk on the
different types of transport over the years in Swansea.

11 November: 2pm in the Civic Centre Remembrance

December - no meeting – Nadolig Llawen

**It is expected that West Glamorgan Archives will be moving to new
premises in the city centre in December.**

ARC OPENING DATES FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR

NOTE: Bridgend Heritage month - ARC will be open
Saturday 13 September 10-1pm, in addition to dates below.

September 9th and 23rd

October 14th and 28th

November 11th and 25th

December 9th (closed 23rd).
NADOLIG LLAWEN

Glamorgan Family History Society will be at
The Family History Show 'London'
Saturday 4 October 10-4
At Kempton Racecourse

<https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/london/>

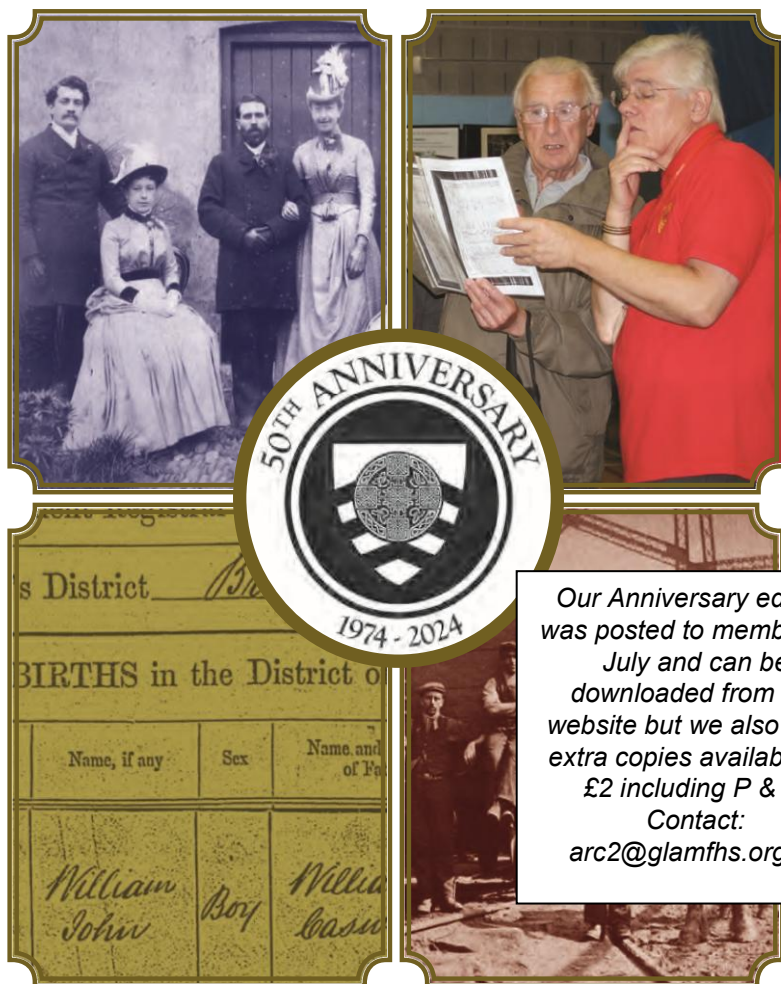
Early bird tickets are currently available at Two Tickets for £14.

If any local members are available for an hour or so during the day to help on the stall please contact: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk



Penny, Mari, Liz and Nancy, from Bridgend, on a recent visit to Glamorgan Archives

GLAMORGAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



50TH ANNIVERSARY
1974 - 2024

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BIRTHS in the District of

Name, if any	Sex	Name and of Pa
<i>William John</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>William</i>

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Our Anniversary edition was posted to members in July and can be downloaded from our website but we also have extra copies available for £2 including P & P.
Contact:
arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

A FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EDITION