



Glamorgan Family History Society
Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluol Morgannwg



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CADW OPEN DOORS events in September: Tabernacle in Pontycymer has one of the few pipe organs in Glamorgan still in regular use - here being played by Canon Graham Holcombe, retired, of St David's Cathedral in Cardiff.

FRONT COVER: - A visit to the frozen waterfall on the Ffrwd, near Cefn Coed. The Thomas brothers: Ben 2nd left and William 1st right in the back row with James in the middle front row, with brothers-in-law Albert Hunt 1st left in the back row and Frederick Trott 1st left in the front row. The photograph was found by Brian Thomas, cousin-in-law to Barrie Jones, in a recent delve into family records and the date uncertain, but maybe the thirties. See page 19 for Barrie's' article on the Thomas family and the 1921 census.

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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.

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SOCIETY OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Vacant

Vice President: Diane Brook

Chairman
Vice-Chair

Vacant
Vacant

Secretary/Events Coordinator
secretary@glamfhs.org.uk,

Penny Williams
15 St Brides Road, Aberkenfig, Bridgend, CF329PY

Treasurer
treasurer@glamfhs.org.uk

Guy Bevan
Due West, Leaze Road, Marlborough, SNB1JU

Committee Members: **Ian Black, Jean Fowlds, Anouska Osborne, Billie McNamara, Nancy Thomas**

Branch Trustees: **Pat Rees** (*Aberdare & Cynon Valley*), **Sue Tiller** (*Bridgend*), **Stephen Fairhurst** (*Cardiff & Vale*), **Carolyn Jacob** (*Merthyr*), **Meic Jones** (*Pontypridd & Rhondda*), **Janet Neilson** (*Swansea*)

Membership Team
membership@glamfhs.org.uk

c/o 63 Clos Pwll Clai, Tondy, Bridgend,
CF32 9BZ

Editor
editor@glamfhs.org.uk

Jean Fowlds
10 David Street, Blaengarw, Bridgend, CF32 8AD

Website website@glamfhs.org.uk

Resource Centre Team: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

Branch Secretaries/Contacts

Aberdare & Cynon Valley
aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

Mrs Pat Rees ☎ 01685 875528

Bridgend Secretary
bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

Vicky Salmon, 4 Heol Mair, Litchard, Bridgend,
CF31 1YL ☎ 01656 663940

Cardiff & Vale
cardiff@glamfhs.org.uk

Stephen Fairhurst & Karen Prior

Merthyr Secretary
Tydfil,merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

Suzanne Doolan, 1 Park Terrace, The Walk, Merthyr
CF47 8RF ☎ **01685 385818**

Pontypridd & Rhondda
rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

Meic Jones, 44 Hendrecafn Rd, Penygraig,
CF40 1LL ☎ 01443 434547

Swansea Secretary

Janet Neilson swansea@gfhs.org.uk

Please only telephone for confirmation of meetings dates, venues and times – all other enquiries please write by email or snail mail

EDITORIAL

CROESO, and it's the start of the festive season now that Halloween and Bonfire Night have passed, and there are very interesting articles within to keep you company during the colder and darker nights.

We start with an account of the Kings of Glamorgan from the so-called Dark Ages to the coming of the Normans, written by founder member Dr Diane Brook, who has listed her sources and given inspiration for members to follow their own research programmes. It may be, that along with Barry Davies (see below) you too could be a descendant of one of Glamorgan's rulers!

Martin Owen has given us the 4th and final part of his family's Mormon past, with more of Charles Dickens' comments, and Barrie Jones writes of the 1921 census and how it helped with his Thomas family tree, and we have photographs on the front and inside to illustrate.

Rhian Diggins of Glamorgan Archives gives some little-known facts about the Board of Shipping enquiries that were undertaken in Cardiff over 100 years ago, not something that gets much attention, and I am pleased to include the fascinating story of Catherine Margaret Hopkin, the first woman to swim the Bristol Channel, she seems largely forgotten now, but there are memorials to her both in Ilfracombe and in Penarth, and her very unorthodox early life and upbringing seems only to have been a spur rather than a deterrent to her ambition. This is in 2 parts with the second part in the March edition.

There is no book review this time, as there was not one come to my notice in time that I thought would be of interest, but I have one or two to choose from for the next edition.

NB If any reader wants to recommend a history or family history book that you think would appeal to other members then please do let me know. You would be most welcome to write your review or description for inclusion.

Our Welsh article this time is a sobering account of a pit accident and comradeship from the 1960s, and for contrast and a nod to Christmas, I include some ideas for your Christmas lunch that you may not have thought of!

I wish you and yours, wherever you are in the world, a happy Christmas with all good wishes for the forthcoming year.

Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd.

Jean Fowlds, editor@glamfhs.org.uk

SECRETARY'S REPORT

My final report for 2025 includes a request for volunteers especially to join our Executive Committee. We are still without a Chairman and Vice Chairman so other members of the EC are covering those roles in addition to their own commitments. Some of our Branches are also without vital committee members. If you can help in any way please come forward. You can help these volunteers by taking on a small role to help with the work load. The number of activities, meetings etc we currently can offer has been reduced due to a lack of volunteers. Our Annual Fair being one event that we currently cannot offer for this reason. A list of vacancies is included on page 46.

We are developing our links with Maesteg *Local and Family History Centre* to help promote them and because they have some excellent resources. Personally I think it is very important to promote the Maesteg LFHC as an important centre for the centre of the County. We already have a regular input for the Glamorgan Archive in Cardiff and hopefully the West Glam Archive can be approached to also give us a regular update.

Three volunteers helped out at the Open Doors event at the Glamorgan Archives in September. Sue and Jenni gave talks which went down very well. We chatted to people before they went on tours or into the talks. Some were already members and some interested in joining.

Ogwr Heritage Month was very enjoyable. There were lots going on in the area. The ARC was open one Saturday morning but we only had two visitors. Hopefully can get more involved next year and we will be poaching some of the excellent speakers.

I attended the on-line Federation meeting which included useful advice on keeping on-line meetings safe, and ensuring commercial companies (particularly in the USA) are not uploading our talks and making them available without permission.

Our AGM will be held on Saturday 21 March. The event will be on-line and last year's speaker from the Historical Place Names of Wales, who unfortunately was unwell at the last minute, has agreed to speak. We will need people to run the Eventbrite process. Nomination forms for Society Officers and Trustees are included in the Centre Insert and should be returned to me by 1 January 2026. It just leaves me, on behalf of the Executive Committee, to wish everyone a very Merry Xmas and a Healthy New Year. Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd da.

Penny Williams, secretary2@glamfhs.org.uk

THE KINGS OF GLAMORGAN AND THEIR DESCENDANTS

#2 Diane Brook

Our historic county of Glamorgan was once a kingdom; there were kings in early medieval times, that difficult historical period once popularly known as the 'Dark Ages'. The Normans found local kings in Wales as they advanced west from England in the 1070s after the Battle of Hastings. Wales was not then a nation state but a group of kingdoms with a shared language and culture. Glamorgan was the kingdom of 'gwlad Morgan' or Morgannwg in Welsh, named for one of its earlier kings, thought to be Morgan Hen who died in 974 CE [Common Era, now used instead of the old AD, *Anno Domini*]. There were other kingdoms in Gwent, Dyfed (west Wales), Powys (mid-Wales), and Gwynedd (north Wales). Older smaller kingdoms had been subsumed into some of the larger units; Brecon or Brycheiniog absorbed into Powys, for example.

When was Morgannwg a kingdom? The earliest evidence we have for what became Morgannwg are references to a kingdom of Glywysing, named for a supposed early king and saint Glywys, grandfather of Saint Cadoc and father of Gwynllyw, the saint of St Woolos church in Newport, Monmouthshire. These references come from saints' Lives, an uncertain type of source as they were written for the purpose of inspiring the faithful and for bolstering claims to the status and property of that saint's church. Most were written centuries after the saints' actual lifetimes. These Lives sometimes include pedigrees for their saint but again some are suspect or clearly fabricated - the ancestry of Saint Cadoc is a list of all the emperors of Rome as if they were a continuous line of fathers and sons, a pedigree which we know to be false.

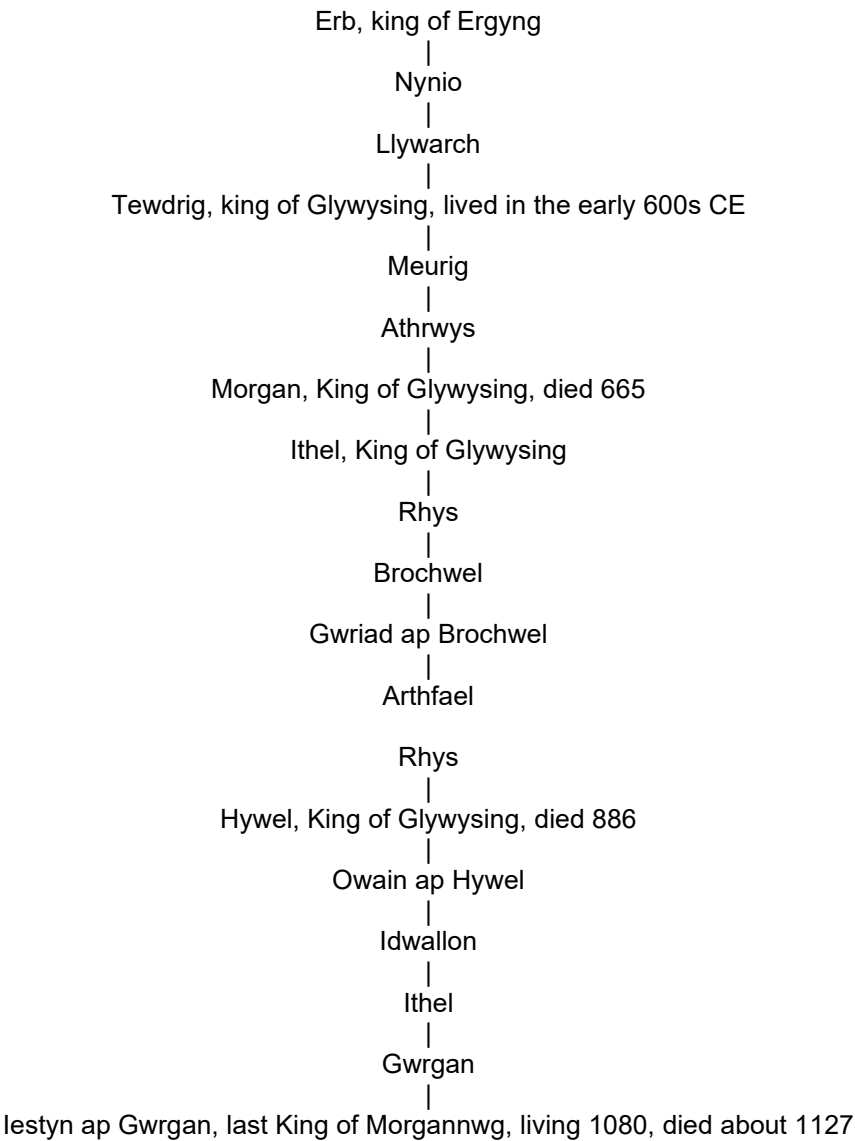
That said, there was thought to be a Saint Glywys as early as the 900s or 1000s CE. We know this from two pre-Norman inscribed stones found near Ogmere and Merthyr Mawr which mention him. The kingdom of Glywysing was thought to be composed of parts of what is now eastern Glamorgan and parts or all of Gwent.

We are used to many types of sources for our modern research but what records do we have for the early medieval period in Wales? The sources are entirely different; no parish registers, no census, no wills. What we do have are chronicles or annals, saints' lives, land charters, a very few histories, and, pedigrees.

The pedigrees cannot always be proved to be genuine but in a number of cases there is other supporting evidence. The best support is always from something written at or very near the time of the people involved. The promising thing is that where early genuine sources survive, they generally do support the pedigrees. That said, the pedigrees are of kings and saints so you will not find

the ancestries of ordinary people or women. Women do appear, but almost always as saints and queens.

The royal lines of Glamorgan which continued to Norman times begin with the great-grandfather of Theoderic/Tewdrig.



The earliest kings in this pedigree were based in what is now south-west Herefordshire, in the Welsh kingdom of Eryng. Welsh was still spoken in the area up to the 1800s and there are many Welsh placenames. There are narratives about some of these people in the Llandaff charters and occasional references in other sources, especially for the later kings. Hywel, son of Rhys attended the court of King Alfred in Wessex and is mentioned in Asser's Life of King Alfred.

Although the Normans conquered much of south-east Wales in the 1070s and divided the lands amongst their leaders, they also married local Welsh heiresses. The Welsh holdings in the uplands continued in native hands for generations into the later medieval period. These people were recorded not only in pedigrees but also in charters and other records, again allowing confirmation of the lineages in some cases.

Modern popular writings on early Welsh kings tend to concentrate on those ruling large areas, the kings of Dyfed, Powys and more especially Gwynedd, the last independent Welsh kingdom to fall, in 1282 with the death of Llywelyn the Last. Mike Astley's book, *British Kings and Queens*, 1998, on Hywel Dda, king in the 900s, states that, after a battle in 942, 'He [Hywel] was now ruler of most of Wales, with the exception of the south-east.' And that is all he says of our area.

The early Glamorgan pedigrees were collated and printed in a huge volume in 1886 by GT Clark, a wealthy industrialist who took an interest in early Glamorgan families as his wife was descended from them. There are very many lines traced forward from several patriarchs including the last Glamorgan king, Iestyn ap Gwrgan. It would be pleasant to report that one could simply look up ancestors from the nineteenth century and take the line back from there, but no. Most of the lines recorded ended as early as the 1400s and only occasionally as late as the early 1700s. On the positive side, daughters and wives were recorded and their descent from their own families allow very many links to be known.

The lack of recent descents is now greatly improved on many lines by the decades of work by J Barry Davies who created a digitised version of the main native Welsh kindreds. He did not include most of the Advenae, the 'incomers', the Norman and English families that married into the local gentry families or otherwise established themselves in Glamorgan, although links to native families are, of course, included. As kings and their noble relatives married sisters and daughters of other kings and nobles, there are descents from many other royal lines included, and, families from many other places, especially Gwent. As Welsh royalty, nobility and gentry acknowledged illegitimate children, descents from these lines can also be traced. This is an immense piece of scholarship, running to over 700 pages.

Barry also wrote an extensive introduction to his new version of the book, reviewing the early kings and their pedigrees with reference to recent historical research, especially the work of PC Bartrum who collated and dated all the available early Welsh pedigrees for the whole of Wales, reviewing variants and adding rough dating. Barry also included references to Prof Wendy Davies' work on the Llandaff charters which established which records contained genuine pre-Norman elements.

There are actually royal Glamorgan lineages traceable to the present. The patronymic system was still in place in medieval and early modern Welsh Glamorgan families, thus one cannot identify modern 'royal' surnames. You could be surnamed Williams and have a direct male line descent from King Iestyn ap Gwrgan. There are even more descents to consider when adding in all the possible descents including daughters.

It would be interesting but a long job to determine just how many male line descents there are from Iestyn and how many descendants across all lines could be found today. Iestyn is recorded as having eleven sons and three daughters of whom eight are recorded as having descendants. Iestyn had 37 recorded grandchildren.

One example of a modern descendant is Barry Davies himself, descended from Iestyn through the Lords of Meisgyn and on down the centuries to Barry's grandmother, some 44 generations from Erb, the founder king. As Barry left descendants, there are known, living, Glamorgan royal descendants. No doubt there are many more.

A possible project would be to analyse the pedigrees in terms of possible further descendants with additional well-researched documentation as well as logging which lines have clearly died out. As there are now so many online resources, this would not be as difficult as it would once have been.

There is a Y-DNA project for Welsh male lines which gets around the problem of patronymics, the Wales Cymru DNA Project on FamilyTree DNA. There are a huge number of tests in the project but many have only one recent ancestor in their subgroup. A few supposedly link back to very early ancestors but I did not spot any of the specific Glamorgan early patriarchs as yet. One needs to have a living male relative of Welsh origin to take part and, of course, pay for the Y-DNA test. No doubt this is an area where information will increase and improve.

As the early kings were Christians, inheritors of the late Roman Christian tradition of the last centuries of the Roman Empire in Britain and the 'Age of Saints' that followed in the next couple of centuries, these people had a literate culture, making inscriptions in Latin and also the Ogam alphabet of the intrusive

Irish settlers. British or Old Welsh was not used on monuments but native Welsh personal names were recorded.

In fact, for south-east Wales, we have reasonably good evidence that there was a continuous legal and religious tradition from late Roman times in the form of the land charters and early Christian monuments. The pedigrees hint that Romanised culture still held some sway in naming into the fifth and perhaps sixth century. Another early king in Ergyng was named Custennin; Constantine. A king in early Gwent was called Ynyr; Honorius. These are emperors' names, a last echo of the Roman Empire here in Wales.

If you want to see royal monuments you should visit Llantwit Major church where you can see a collection of early medieval crosses. The most outstanding is the Houelt Cross, inscribed in Latin with the text '...by Houelt for the soul of his father Res..'. This is agreed to be King Hywel ap Rhys who lived in the 800s. If you are a descendant of the Glamorgan kings, you can visit this ancient church, the royal burial ground of your ancestors and see their monuments.

The Celtic cross head part of the Glamorgan Family History Society logo is copied from the Houelt cross.

Sources:

PC Bartrum,

Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts, 1966

Welsh Genealogies AD 300–1400, 1974

Welsh Genealogies AD 1400–1500, 1983

The latter two publications are online at

<https://research.aber.ac.uk/en/datasets/bartrum-genealogical-project>

Files have to be downloaded in sections.

Also revisions:

Welsh genealogies, AD 300-1400 : additions and corrections

Welsh genealogies, AD 1400-1500 : additions and corrections

Welsh classical dictionary: people in history and legend up to about AD 1000, 1993

See also Family Search and Michael Powell Siddons below.

GT Clark For a detailed biography see online Dictionary of Welsh Biography, <https://biography.wales> and search for Clark, George Thomas.

J Barry Davies, *Limbus Patrum Revision*, 2015. This is being prepared for availability on the Glamorgan FHS website and will be for members only, as Barry wished.

Wendy Davies,

An Early Welsh Microcosm: Studies in the Llandaff Charters, 1978

The Llandaff Charters, 1979

Wales in the Early Middle Ages, 1982

Patterns of Power in Early Wales, 1990

Welsh History in the Early Middle Ages, 2009

Nancy Edwards, *Life in Early Medieval Wales*, 2023

Family Search: All of Bartrum's works are held in the LDS Family History Library and are name searchable.

<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/records/item/195554-limbus-patrum-morganiae-et-glamorganiae-moved-to-97208-being-the-genealogies-of-the-older-families-of-the-lordships-of-morgan-and-glamorgan?offset=119165>

Royal Commission On The Ancient And Historical Monuments In Wales Pre-Norman (v1) (Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan) 1976

Michael Powell Siddons, *Welsh Genealogies, A.D. 1500-1600*, 2017. Extension of Bartrum's work.

Wikitree. As of early September 2025, Wikitree does have an entry for Iestyn ap Gwrgan but with no parents, spouse, or descendants. There is a Wales Project but it is so far very limited with fewer than 1000 entries spread over all centuries up to the 20th.

William Rees, *Historical Atlas of Wales*, last revision 1966.

Online historical maps, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas_of_Wales



Celtic Crosses at
St Illtud's Church
Llantwit Major
L-R Samson or
Illtud Cross,
Houelt Cross,
Samson Pillar
For more information
www.llanilltud.org.uk

OUR MORMON FAMILY HISTORY (Part 4)

The Amazon – Dickens' description

#10900 Martin Owen

*In previous instalments of our Mormon family history I have described the emigration experience of my Mormon great-great aunts, Mary Ann and Catherine JENKINS, and what were some of Charles Dickens' reactions when he boarded 'The 'Amazon' before sailing from London to New York in 1863. He did not think much of the Welsh emigrants at first, as we saw from last quarter's journal, but he later revised some of his opinions about all the travellers, as we can see from a further extract from *The Uncommercial Traveller*, published in 1863.*

On arriving at boarding time Dickens wrote:

'My Emigrant Ship lies broadside on the wharf. Two great gangways made of spars and planks connect her with the wharf; and up and down these gangways, perpetually crowding to and fro and in and out, like ants, are the Emigrants who are going to sail in my Emigrant ship. Some with cabbages, some with loaves of bread, some with cheese and butter, some with milk and beer, some with boxes, beds, and bundles, some with babies – nearly all with children – nearly all with brand new tin cans for their daily allowance of water, uncomfortably suggestive of a tin flavour in the drink. To and fro, up and down, aboard and ashore, swarming here and there and everywhere, my Emigrants. And still as the Dock-gate swings upon its hinges, cabs appear, and carts appear, and vans appear, bringing more and more of my Emigrants.'

After observing the disorder of the bureaucratic paper-work preparations:

'I go out on the poop-deck, for air, and surveying the emigrants on the deck below.... find more pens and inkstands in action, and more papers, and interminable complication. But nobody is in an ill-temper, nobody is the worse for drink, nobody swears an oath or uses a coarse word, nobody appears depressed, nobody is weeping, and down upon the deck in every corner where it is possible to find a few square feet to kneel, crouch, or lie in, people, in every unsuitable attitude for writing, are writing letters.'

The captain told Dickens:

'They come from various parts of England in small parties that had never seen one another before. Yet they had not been a couple of hours on board, when they established their own police, made their own regulations, and set their own watches at all the hatchways. Before nine o'clock, the ship was as orderly and as quiet as a man-of-war.'

Dickens was struck by the amount of calm letter-writing amidst all the hurly-burly. He observed one girl writing a letter whilst mechanically taking part in a choir singing 'glees and catches'. He went down below and saw a few women lost but laughing at it. *'A few of the poor children were crying; but otherwise the universal cheerfulness was amazing'*. He thought 'the most noticeable characteristic in the eight hundred as a mass, was their 'exemption from hurry'.

He spoke to some emigrants who told him about the saving they had had to do to raise the money for the journey.

In the afternoon there was a full muster for each of the 800 or so emigrants to be passed by the Government Inspector and the Doctor. Mormon agents who had organised the voyage, helped in the process:

'By what successful means, a special aptitude for organization had been infused into these people, I am, of course, unable to report. But I know that, even now, there was no disorder, hurry, or difficulty.

All being ready, the first group are handed on. That member of the party who is entrusted with the passenger-ticket for the whole, has been warned by one of the agents to have it ready, and here it is in his hand. In every instance through the whole eight hundred, without an exception, this paper is always ready.'

Dickens saw young girls whom he thought were like country milliners or pupil teachers albeit rather tawdrily dressed. He speculated that single women of thirty or forty might be going in quest of husbands, as their wealthier counterparts went to India. But Dickens did not believe they had any notions of polygamy:

'to suppose the family groups of whom the majority of emigrants were composed, polygamically possessed, would be to suppose an absurdity, manifest to any one who saw the fathers and mothers'.

He noted that these were primarily working-class people, including craftsmen in many trades, and wrote that had he not known they were Mormons, he would have described them as *'in their degree, the pick and flower of England'*. There were farm-labourers, shepherds and the like but not predominantly so. Most handicraft trades were represented.

The leading spirit in a family group always showed up, even in roll-call:

'Sometimes it was the father, much oftener the mother, sometimes a quick little girl second or third order of seniority. It seemed to occur for the first time to some heavy fathers, what large families they had; and their eyes rolled about, during the calling of the list, as if they had half misdoubted some other family to have smuggled into their own'.

After everybody had been registered, a black box appeared which contained hymn books for sale; the choir in the boat was very popular and pleasant, and was to have been a Band, only *'the Cornet was late in coming on board'*.

Dickens left at tea-time, when the galley became full of tea-kettles, but *'there was no scrambling or jostling for the hot water, no ill humour, no quarrelling'*.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: *What a pity Dickens didn't travel with these emigrants so that we could hear more of his views on their eventual settlement in the New World.*

AN OLD WELSH CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

Taffy

Families would while away the dark hours on Christmas Eve, before Plygain, by boiling up pans of toffee on open fires. Dollops would be dropped into icy cold water and the taffy curled up into all sorts of shapes, like letters, and this was a way of divining the initials of the younger and unmarried future loves.



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BOARD OF TRADE SHIPPING ENQUIRIES

1875-1935

Rhian Diggins

The Board of Trade held responsibility for the general superintendence of matters relating to merchant ships and seamen. This included overseeing formal investigations into any shipping casualties on or near the coasts of the United Kingdom and for any British ship, stranded, damaged or lost.

Amongst the records for Cardiff Petty Sessions Court are a series of files relating to such investigations held at Cardiff City Hall and Law Courts during the period 1875-1935 (ref. CL/PSCBO/BT). Composed of papers assembled for the inquiry, depositions of witnesses and accounts of the proceedings of the court, the files represent an invaluable source for maritime history in the 19th and 20th centuries. Often written in pencil and sometimes hard to read, the bundles of papers provide a wealth of information about matters ranging from ship design to ship discipline.

Since the place of investigation was to be the place most convenient for witnesses, by no means all the shipping casualties investigated in Cardiff were Cardiff-based ships. Some of the ships were registered in other ports and have no obvious connection with Cardiff other than regular trade with a South Wales port. Equally, Cardiff ships were sometimes subject to investigations in other ports, as in the case of the **SS Albion** of Cardiff, which was owned by the Duffryn Shipping Company of Cardiff and was lost off Spain in 1908. The inquiry into her loss was held at Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Among the earliest papers perhaps the most interesting are those highlighting the hazards involved in carrying dangerous cargoes. In December 1880 explosive gas given off from a cargo of coal was suspected as the cause of the loss of the **SS Estepona** of Hull whilst she sailed from Cardiff to Marseilles. The case file for the inquiry includes depositions from the owner concerning the ship, her ballast and insurance, the chief accountant to the colliery which supplied the coal, a foreman trimmer who remembered loading the coal and a Government Inspector of Mines for South Wales who advised on the likelihood of explosive gas forming. In this case there was no definite decision about the cause of the loss, but a year later there were more definite conclusions about the **SS Penwith** of Hayle, which disappeared having left Penarth bound for the Rio Grande. She carried 422 tons of South Wales steam coal, drawn from collieries in the Rhondda and Ogmore valleys. The coal was notorious for the explosive gas it emitted. In his report to the court, the Inspector of Mines outlined the importance of ventilation, since gas was normally given off some days after the coal was wrought, and he criticised the situation whereby the hatches were the only form of ventilation even though these might well have to

be closed in bad weather. In concluding that ventilation on the ship was inadequate, the court attributed blame both to the builder and to the master of the ship as well as to the owner.

Inquiries concerning ships lost in mysterious circumstances obviously generated a greater amount of paperwork since more possibilities had to be examined and more people questioned. In 1907 the **SS Grindon Hall** was supposed lost with all hands in the Black Sea when bound from Sulina in Romania to Glasgow. Only part of her lifeboat was ever found. Amongst the case papers for this particular inquiry are telegrams received from the master concerning the passage of the ship and copies of letters received by and from the master. There are sad personal details of the master's recent return to sea after his wife's long illness, and his last letter reporting the final completion of loading after much trouble and delay which concluded *...hoping we shall have a fine run home*. Evidence seemed to indicate some instability after loading and in considering this, the court carefully examined plans of the ship, lists of repairs whilst in dry dock, a manifest of the cargo, and the testimony of former mates as to the ship's sea-worthiness. The papers combine to supply a full and personal insight into the ship and her crew.

By the early 20th century over-insurance of ships had become a sinister and recurring theme. In 1910 what the *Western Mail* described as “...*the most important and sensational inquiry ever conducted in South Wales under the Merchant Shipping Act...*” was held after the loss of the **SS British Standard of Cardiff** off Negra Point in Brazil. Between July and August, a packed court listened in dismay to detailed testimonies of the crew which highlighted conflicting evidence and glaring discrepancies between the log and the master's report of the mysterious sinking. It became clear that even if the sinking was not caused by human agency, the loss itself could have been averted had the master and chief engineer not been guilty of gross negligence.

The motive for the wilful sinking of the SS British Standard emerged as it was revealed that the promotion of the British Standard Steamship Company as a public company had not been a financial success. Paul BRAUN, the master of the vessel, the same Paul BROWN who appeared on the company's register of shareholders, had helped to finance the Company but had concealed the fact from the underwriters. His brother, the managing owner of the company, owed him £40,000. Most suspicious of all, the ship although valued only at £46,378 was insured for over £55,300. The Chief Engineer had insured his personal effects for the first time.

There were worrying implications for Cardiff itself. Great controversy ensued when it emerged that underwriters demanded higher insurance premiums for Cardiff-based ships as they were considered a bad risk. When the judge

delivered his two and a half hour judgement, “...the expectant hush which fell upon the crowded court reminded one of a great criminal trial”.

He called for legislation to prevent the abuse. The master was suspended for eighteen months and ordered to pay one thousand guineas towards the costs of the inquiry. The Chief Engineer was suspended for twelve months and ordered to contribute fifty guineas as costs. The third engineer was censured for misleading the court with false statements and for his conduct.

The records of shipping enquiries certainly provide a fascinating insight into the problems and hazards which beset merchant shipping in the past.

Editor: We have received the following from member #3388 Terry Leyshon

Members may be interested in my masters dissertation of 2018, a copy of which is available at the Glamorgan Archives entitled "Cardiff, Coal & Cargoes - the logistics of shipping coal from Cardiff between 1845 & 1890".

Of more interest is my database of shipping movements during this period: Vessel, Master, port of departure for arrivals or port of destination for sailings. The number of entries is in excess of 100,000, with 70,000 relating to Cardiff alone. Other Welsh ports, Swansea, Newport, Neath etc are also on file. For a limited period, provided I am not overwhelmed by requests, I will check on the voyages within the database. E-mail your request to bwllfa@outlook.com, ie name of vessel if a 'popular' name then also include the name of the master to differentiate the entries.

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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THE 1921 CENSUS: LESSONS LEARNED

#8653 Barrie Jones

The 1921 Census was the first national census to include detailed questions about the employment status and industry of individuals, reflecting the importance of understanding the workforce amidst the economic challenges of the post-World War 1 era. It also included questions about education, housing, and age demographics, offering a thorough snapshot of British society. There was a further increase in data collection compared to previous censuses, and it provides valuable insights into the demographic, social, and economic conditions of the population during that period.

Key findings from the census include:

- Population: the census recorded a population of approximately forty-two million people in the United Kingdom.
- Employment: data revealed significant changes in employment patterns, with an increase in the number of women in the workforce, partly due to the impact of WW1.
- Housing: the census highlighted issues related to overcrowding and inadequate housing conditions, prompting discussions and actions about housing reforms, eg the Wheatley Housing Act 1924.
- Labour Relations: the census recorded the impact of the early stage of the economic decline in the coal industry. In 1921 in south Wales alone there were 270,000 miners, but by 1946, the year of eventual nationalisation, there were 116,000 miners remaining in Wales.

I started mine and my wife's family tree in the early 1980s and it soon transpired that 'our' tree was largely populated by ancestors who were of the labouring class, and some may be better described as the labouring poor, most of them living and working in the South Wales valleys. Therefore, I was eagerly waiting to explore the 1921 Census which for the first time recorded not only everyone's occupation but also their employer and place of work.

Unexpectedly, of our coal mining ancestors studied, the majority had the phrase 'out of work' alongside their occupations, with others entering the phrase 'on strike.'

This highlighted the story of trade relations between coal owners and their employees at the onset of the inter-war recession and the reason for the late census date of 19th June. Britain's coal and railway industries were brought into state control during WW1 (1914-1918) as part of its wartime planning, and during that time workers within these industries enjoyed better pay and working conditions. The mine owners lobbied for decontrol of the coal mines following the end of the war but the then Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, was

reluctant to agree but in 1919 he set up a royal commission to consider the options of joint or state ownership (nationalisation) of the coal mines. Under the chair of Justice Sir John Sankey, the Sankey Commission considered such issues as working conditions, wages, and hours. Whilst offering some compromises on wages and hours, the majority report of the Commission recommended nationalisation. Citing the Commission's lack of overall agreement, the Government refused its recommendations and on 31st March 1921 the coal mines were returned to private ownership.

Seventy-five percent of the cost of coal was labour cost, and faced with the management of uneconomic pits the owners posted notices announcing drastic wage cuts: in South Wales this was as much as forty-nine percent. In addition, national agreements were changed to the old system of district rates. The miner's demand for a national pool to regularise wages was rejected by the owners and the miners rejected the owners' terms on wages. Consequently, the mine owners introduced a full lockout on pits on 1st April 1921.

To forge links to secure united action in labour disputes in 1914 a Triple Alliance had been formed between the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, the National Transport Workers' Federation, and the National Union of Railwaymen. In April 1921, faced with an impending national strike, the Government declared a state of emergency, appointing special constables and planning military preparations. To ensure that both central and local government remained focused on the effect of the strike, on 14th April the national census planned for 24th April was postponed.

However, the anticipated solidarity of the unions in the Triple Alliance crumbled. On Friday 15th April the railway and transport workers' unions decided against joining the strike, agreeing only to instruct transport and rail workers to refuse to handle imported coal. The collapse of the alliance left the miners isolated and vulnerable and led to significant economic hardship for the miners and their families. The strike dragged on for three months but by July the miners returned to work on the owners' terms. The average wage fell from 89s 8d (£4.48) per week to 58s 10d (£2.94), a fall of thirty-four percent. The term "Black Friday" symbolizes the deep disappointment and the sense of betrayal felt by the miners and their families. With a national strike averted the state of emergency was scaled down and the 1921 census was conducted on 19th June 1921.

The 1921 Census and the Thomas Family

The census confirmed that the majority of ‘our’ near ancestors were living in Merthyr Tydfil and the valley communities as far south as Merthyr Vale, and it was no surprise that of the thirty-nine ‘adult’ males searched in the census thirty-three were employed in the coal industry and of those eighty-eight percent were with the two key coal companies in Merthyr Tydfil District: Hills Plymouth (22) and Crawshay Brothers (7).

Also of interest was the variety of coal industry trades recorded and, that given the mature age of most of the thirty-three men, the high number of better paid jobs recorded:

Trade	No of Men
Hewer	9
Miner	6
Haulier	4
Timberman	2
Blacksmith	2
Ripper	2
Roper	1
Traffic	1
Labourer	4
Helper	2
Total	33

The 1921 census data for ‘our’ ancestors also highlighted the draw that the Hills Plymouth collieries had on the local communities of the Merthyr Tydfil district. The following table shows the mining occupations of my wife’s paternal grandfather, James THOMAS (1884-1954), and seven of his close relatives living in Cefn Coed in 1921:

James THOMAS	1884-1954		Hewer	Hills Plymouth	Graig Pit
George W THOMAS	1877-1956	Brother	Miner	Hills Plymouth	South Pit
William E THOMAS	b 1899	Brother	Hewer	Crawshay Bros	Gethin Pit
Benjamin THOMAS	b 1882	Brother	Miner	Crawshay Bros	Castle Pit
Cyrus THOMAS	1901-1978	Nephew	Labourer	Crawshay Bros	Gethin Pit
William E JOSHUA	b 1900	Nephew	Miner	Hills Plymouth	Thomas Level
Frederick G JOSHUA	1905-1970	Nephew	Helper	Hills Plymouth	Thomas Level
Frederick J TROTT	1882-1967	Brother-in-Law	Ripper	Hills Plymouth	Graig Pit

The village of Cefn Coed north of Merthyr Tydfil grew serving the Cyfarthfa Iron Company, with its workers employed in the iron works, farms, quarries, and mines of the company. Following the final closure of the iron works in 1919, now coal mining dominated and many adult males living in the village worked in the mining industry. The coal workings of the Crawshay Brothers, formerly the Cyfarthfa Iron Company, were some distance south of Cefn Coed: for example the Gethin and Castle pits were approximately four miles down valley near the village of Abercanaid on the west bank of the river Taf, while the Hills Plymouth Collieries of Graig and South were approximately five miles further south between the villages of Pentrebach and Troedyrhiw on the east bank of the river. Thus, Cefn Coed could be classed as a mining village but with no local pit.

James's grandfather, George THOMAS, (1829-1881), was born in St Ishmael, Pembrokeshire, and moved sometime before 1850 to Bedwellty, Monmouthshire, to work in the Tredegar Iron Works. There he married Mary EVANS, (b 1830), in Feb 1850, and over the coming years their family grew: William (1850-1899), Benjamin (b 1852), Martha (b 1856), Thomas (b 1858), George James (1864-1921) and Miriam (b 1867). William, the eldest son, followed his father working in the Tredegar works and in May 1872 he married Mary Ann DAVIES (b 1852) at the English Wesleyan chapel, Bedwellty. William's strong association with the English Wesleyan denomination was to continue for the remainder of his life.

Whilst living in Bedwellty, William and Mary had five children: Miriam (b 1873), George William (1877-1956), Mary Elizabeth (1879-1962), Benjamin (b 1882), and James (1884-1954). Sometime after James's birth (1884) the family moved to Cwmcapel houses, Cefn Coed. Working as a fireman/heater William had moved to work in the Cyfarthfa Iron Works, which had reopened in 1879. At Cwmcapel a further five children were born: Edith (b 1886), Annie (1889-1965), Maggie (b 1892), Tryphena Alice (1894-1896), and William Edward (b 1899).

Sadly, William was to die on 28th May 1899, aged forty-nine, from heart failure. He may have been ill for some time as in 1895 he had retired from his role as superintendent of his chapel's Sunday school. Fortunately, both Benjamin and James were able to help support their widowed mother and younger siblings. Needless to say, most of William and Mary's children married and most set up home in the village: George William married Mary Ann ROGERS¹ (1876-1939) in January 1901, Mary Elizabeth married Edward JOSHUA (1874-1944) in October 1898, Edith married Albert HUNT (1884-1951) in September 1912 and Annie married Frederick John TROTT (1882-1967) in October 1910.

¹ Mary Ann's nephew was Lancelot (Lance) David Rogers (1916-2001), Lance was a volunteer in the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39.

James was the only one of the Thomas households to eventually move away from Cefn Coed; in 1905 he married Elizabeth Ann LEWIS (1884-1955) at New Tabernacle Chapel, Merthyr Tydfil. Elizabeth was the daughter of William LEWIS (1854-1935) and Mary NEALE (1860-1939), the Lewis family coming from a long line of iron puddlers working for the Cyfarthfa Iron works. Early in their marriage James and Elizabeth lived next door to James's mother in Cwmcapel, eventually moving to 4 Sunnybank, Merthyr Tydfil, sometime before 1912. There they resided the remainder of their lives, eventually raising a total of eight children: Gwladys (1907-1977), Tryphena May (1909-1985), William Glyn (1910-1983), Harold (1912-1929), James (1916-1916), James (1918-1984), John George² (1921-1993) and Iris (1924-2005). Of note, neither of their children nor their sons-in-law worked in the coal industry, so the Thomas mining dynasty lasted just one generation.

Over the following decades I had less enthusiasm in researching our ancestors further back than the mid eighteenth century and concentrated more on the living and working conditions of those I had discovered, and so our family tree resembles a fruit espalier more than a sturdy oak.



James Thomas
1884-1956



Elizabeth Ann (nee Lewis)
1884-1955

² An account of my wife's father's war service in the RAF (1941-1946) can be found in the December 2021 Journal, 144, pp 18-21.

CATHERINE MARGARET HOPKIN, 1906-1987

A REMARKABLE WOMAN, A REMARKABLE STORY

Part 1

#10902 Gail du Pisanie

I am not related to Catherine Margaret HOPKIN. I became interested in her when researching my maternal grandfather's cousin, Margaret MORGAN. My grandfather, Rees William MADDOCK (1868-1940) and Margaret Morgan (1882-1972) were first cousins. Rees's mother, Margaret Alice Morgan, and Margaret Morgan's father, Thomas Morgan, were sister and brother, both children of Thomas and Margaret Morgan, tenants of Sker Farm from about 1865 until the family relinquished the tenancy in 1916.



Thomas Morgan married Martha Hopkin of Ty Talbot Farm, Nottage, in 1880. They had two children: William Hopkin Morgan (1880-1962) and Margaret Morgan (1882-1972). The family lived initially with the Hopkin family on Ty Talbot Farm, before moving to Cwmallwg Farm, Margam. In about 1910 Thomas and Margaret Snr took the tenancy of Tyncellar Farm, Margam. Neither son, William, nor daughter, Margaret, married and they continued to farm at Tyncellar until they surrendered the tenancy in about 1942.

The unmarried siblings then retired to 21 West Road, Porthcawl, living there until their respective deaths.

My mother's sister met siblings William and Margaret Morgan (her father's first cousins) on a number of visits to the area in the 1950s and 1960s. I heard tell my aunt speak of 'Willie' and 'Maggie' Morgan in the ensuing decades.

As I delved into my family history in Wales, I was interested to see what clues Willie and Maggie's wills held. When Willie died in 1962, he left his estate in trust, with the proceeds to be paid to his sister in her lifetime. Thereafter, the trust was to be divided into six parts, one part to his cousin, Ivor Morgan's son, Gwyn, of Mawdlam, and the remaining parts to four cousins (or their descendants) in Canada and a cousin, Catherine DAY, in Kent. When Maggie died in 1972 her will contained a number of bequests to various relatives and friends. Among these were, again, Gwyn Morgan of Mawdlam, the cousins in Canada, and **Catherine Day**.

Extract from will of Margaret Morgan (1882-1972)

- (e) To Robert Hopkins of 4054 West 19th Avenue Vancouver Canada the sum of £800.00p (Eight hundred pounds) _____
- (f) To Thomas John Hopkin of Sedgewick Alberta Canada the sum of £800.00p (Eight hundred pounds) _____
- (g) To the children living at my death of William David Hopkin deceased of Osoyoss British Columbia Canada the sum of £800.00p (Eight hundred pounds) such sum to be divided between them in equal shares _____
- (h) To Catherine Day of St. Giles 79 Danson Road Bexleyheath Kent the sum of £800.00p (Eight hundred pounds) _____

From my research I knew that Willie and Maggie's mother's maiden name was Hopkin, and hence the relationship of Willie and Maggie to the various Hopkins named in their will was readily established. I was curious, however, about Catherine Day, named in Willie's will as a cousin. This led me to discover the fascinating history of this remarkable woman.

Catherine Margaret Hopkin's birth family

Maggie and Willie Morgan were the children of my grandfather's uncle, Thomas Morgan (1854-1922) from Sker Farm, Kenfig, and his wife, Martha Hopkin (1855-1936), of Ty Talbot Farm, Nottage. Martha had seven siblings, the youngest of whom was Robert Rees Hopkin (1873-1950).

In the 1881 census Robert Rees was listed as a scholar and in 1891 as a farmer's son, on the family farm. In 1901, when his father had died and his mother was listed as head of the household, Robert Rees was still included in the Ty Talbot census, with his occupation given as a butcher for own account. In the same census, at the Porthcawl Hotel, John Street, Porthcawl, was a 23-year-old housemaid, Alice SCHERTZER. Alice was reported to be a naturalised British subject, born in Peru. Despite her Germanic surname Alice was of a Cardiff family, and of Irish and English descent. (Alice's family played a very significant part in her daughter, Catherine Margaret's, upbringing and her achievements, and for more details of this family please see part 2 of this account in the next journal.)

How or when Robert Rees Hopkin and Alice Schertzer met is not known, but their locations in the 1901 census were only about 1.5 km apart, and the population of Porthcawl in that census was stated to be less than 2000.

Robert Rees Hopkin in the 1901 census

11	Go (qualit)	1	William Hopkin Head	Male	40	Employer	20
			Margaret Hopkin	Female	35	Employer	20
			David Hopkin	Male	37	Employer	20
			Robert Rees Hopkin	Male	33	Butcher	20
			Henry Hopkin	Male	15	Worker	20
			Edward Hopkin	Male	20	Worker	20
			Thomas Hopkin	Male	16	Worker	20

Alice Schertzer in the 1901 census

12	Go (qualit)	1	Honor Lily Schertzer	Female	14	Hotel	20
			David Schertzer	Male	10	Hotel	20
			Miss Schertzer	Female	23	Hotel	20

Robert Rees Hopkin and Alice Schertzer married in the first quarter of 1902 in the civil registration district of Pontypridd, Glamorgan, Wales. It must have been in the first few weeks of 1902 because on 8 February 1902 Robert Rees travelled as a steerage passenger on the SS *Braemar Castle* from Southampton to South Africa. He gave his age as 30 and his occupation as 'butcher'. His age was listed in the 'single' column. He was booked to disembark in Natal.

Robert Rees Hopkin to South Africa

✓	Hopkins	Mr R	Butcher	30
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About six weeks after he embarked, on 22 March, his and Alice's son, Robert Rhys, was born. Robert Rhys was baptised at the church of St John the Baptist, Newton, Porthcawl, on 4 May 1902. His mother's full names are not completely legible, but appear to be Alice Marie Louis (sic) with some additional names following. The place of residence is given as Ty Talbot Farm, Nottage, and his father's occupation as 'butcher'.

Birth and baptism of Robert Rhys Hopkin, 1902

Born	1902	Robert Rhys	Robert Rhys Hopkin	Ty Talbot Farm	Butcher	W. Jones
March	22	14	Alice Marie Louis	Nottage		Rector
1902	No. 1260					
Born	1902		Eugene Hopkin			

It wasn't long before Robert Rees Hopkin's little family joined him. On 6 September 1902 Alice and little Robert sailed from Southampton for the Cape on the *SS Kinfauns Castle*. Less than a year later, on 17 July 1903, their second child, William David Hopkin, was born. He was baptised in the parish of St Michael's, Boksburg, Transvaal, on 11 May 1904. His father's occupation was 'butcher' in Boksburg, and his mother's given names were recorded as Alice Marie Louise.

Before long the family were heading back to Wales. Alice travelled with the two boys, Robert Rhys and William David, on the *Braemar Castle*, arriving in Southampton on 7 May 1905. Robert Rees followed on the *Saxon* in August 1905.

The family settled in Treherbert in the Rhondda Valley, at 161 Bute Street. Their third child, Catherine Margaret, was born on 19 April 1906 and baptised in the Parish Church of St Alban on 20 May that year. The fourth child, Doris Irene, was born on 8 August 1907 and baptised in the same church on 1 September 1907. Their father's occupation was recorded as 'butcher'. In the last quarter of 1909 another son, John Thomas, was born.

Baptism of Catherine Margaret Hopkin

When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents' Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1906 May 20th. No. 616	Catherine Margaret Daughter of	Robert + Alice	Hopkin's	161 Bute Street	Butcher	Rev. D. Evans Vicar

Baptism of Doris Irene Hopkin

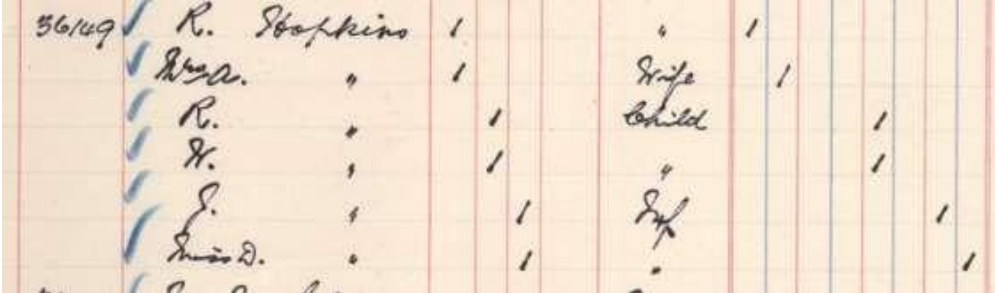
1907 Sept. 1st No. 686	Doris Irene Daughter of	Robert + Alice	Hopkin's	161 Bute Street	Butcher	Rev. D. Evans Vicar.
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The Hopkin family migrate to Canada

On 22 March 1910 the Hopkin family sailed on the *SS Grampian* from Liverpool, bound for St John, New Brunswick, Canada, via Halifax in Nova Scotia. The shipping records contain interesting information. Robert Rees Hopkin gave his occupation and intended as 'labourer' and 'farmer', claiming that he had 30

years of experience as a farmer. The family was travelling to Alberta and carrying \$250 in cash. They were intending to stay in Canada.

The Hopkin family travel to Canada on the SS Grampian in March 1910



The most interesting detail, however, that Robert and Alice were travelling with 4 children, not 5. The children were two boys between 1 and 12 years of age, and two infants, one girl and one boy. They were named on the landing documentation as Robt, Wm, Jon and Doris. Catherine Margaret, now aged 4, was notably absent.

The next available information about the family occurs in the Canadian census recorded in the Medicine Hat district of Alberta in 1911. Robert Rees is listed as a butcher in the census and it contains some curious information. The year of immigration is recorded as 1909 instead of 1910, and the birth dates are mostly inaccurate (months and years). John Thomas was recorded as having been born in November 1909 in Alberta. Included in the family was daughter Kathleen, recorded as born in May 1906 in Wales. I have not found a record of Kathleen having arrived in Canada.

The Hopkin family in the 1911 census in Canada

	name	sex	age	date of birth	place of birth	date of immigration	place of immigration	occupation	religion
Hopkins	Robert R.	M	1	1909	Wales	1909	England	Butcher	Anglican
	Alice	F	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican
	John	M	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican
	Jon David	M	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican
	Doris	F	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican
	Kathleen	F	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican
	John Thomas	M	1	1909	Wales	1909	Canada		Anglican

Robert Rees, Alice, and the four children (not Kathleen) appear in the 1916 census, in the Medicine Hat district. They are recorded as all having been born in England, and having immigrated in 1911. Robert's occupation was that of farmer. The 1926 census had the family in Camrose County, Alberta.

The Hopkin family in the 1926 census in Canada

97	Horan	James					James	F	5	10	Scotland	Scotland	Scotland	Scotld	1911	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	
98	Robinson	Robert	30	4	11	4	Head	M	1	19	Wales	Wales	Wales	Wales	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	
		Robert					Leg	M	1	23	Penn	USA	Wales	Swan	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	
		Robert					Pen	M	1	24	Wales	Wales	Penn	Wales	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	
		William					Pen	M	1	22	Swan	USA	Wales	Penn	Wales	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L
		James					Leg	F	5	19	Wales	Wales	Penn	Wales	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	
99		John					Pen	M	5	16	Wales	Wales	Penn	Wales	1910	Canada	1/2	1/2	English	1/2	1/2	L	

All four children who were named in the 1916 census are listed with their parents, and the year of immigration is recorded as 1910. This census did not require occupations to be recorded.

Catherine Margaret Hopkin, left behind in Wales

Catherine Margaret did not travel with the family to Canada. None of her extended family in Wales had a child of about 5, called Catherine Margaret Hopkin, listed in the 1911 census. However, in this census her great-aunt and uncle, Kate Minerva THOMAS and John Henry Thomas, of Penarth, had as part of their family a daughter named **Kathleen Thomas**, aged 4. Their son, John Thomas, included in the 1901 census, was not included in their census return but this was not surprising as he would have been about 19 in 1911. In the same year the Hopkin family in Alberta, Canada, included a daughter named **Kathleen**, born in May 1906. One must conclude that **Catherine Margaret** Hopkin was now known as **Kathleen** and she was included in the Thomas household in Penarth as a daughter.

The Thomas family in the 1911 census in Penarth

[illegible]

It would seem that Kathleen prospered in her new household in Penarth. In particular, by the age of 13 she was already making a name for herself as a swimmer. From that age her achievements found their way into the newspaper, and indeed she was already a Welsh Champion by then. The following reports appeared in the Western Mail and other newspapers as she continued to excel as a swimmer:

In 1920 she won the 50 yds championship at the Penarth Swimming Gala (Western Mail 17 Sep. 1920). In 1922 she attempted the English Ladies' Long Distance Championship for the first time (Western Mail 26 August 1922). The course was 5.03 miles from Kew to Putney and 16 year old Kathleen came 5th in this race (Gloucester Echo 29 September 1924), and in that year also she won the Welsh Long Distance Championship (North Devon Journal 24 July 1924).

In Ilfracombe, where she gave a swimming exhibition at the Ilfracombe Gala, she was referred to as the 5 mile champion (Birmingham Daily Gazette 27 August 1926), and she again competed in the Ladies' Long Distance Championship in London in that year.

In March 1927, shortly before her 21st birthday, Kathleen obtained the Welsh Amateur Swimming Association (WASA) Teachers' Certificate. However, she had greater ambitions.

For more on Catherine/Kathleen's life and historic achievements, please see the next edition of the Journal, and the author's thoughts on how Catherine was left behind and re-named Kathleen, whilst her family went to Canada.



PIT ACCIDENT 26/11/1961

Keith Brocklebank

I went to work on the afternoon shift on this day, my workmate, Keith Dyer, was waiting at the pithead and we went down together. It was just an ordinary shift to us, as soon as we got to our workplace we got going. On afternoons everyone was trying their best to get the work done to finish early and go up the pit.

Billy Dyke and his workmate Ivor Garfield worked next to us, we were packers and they were borers and rippers. Their job was to make safe the place we had to go into to be able to do our packing of the roof.

We hadn't done much before we heard a shout from Cyril Einon, a face worker, that there had been a bad accident and to go and get a stretcher and blankets. Keith Dyer and myself were the youngest and fittest working on the face on that shift so it was up to us to do the running for first aid equipment.

When we arrived on the scene Billy was lying flat out where Cyril had put him, his face had been covered so as not to cause anyone to be frightened by his injuries. By this time about six other face workers had arrived but all were over sixty years old and most were full of dust.

We quickly got Billy on to the stretcher as instructed by Cyril who was a real brick all through the time we were handling Billy: he said to get him out as fast as possible to save him. After all this time I think he knew he was dead and had been killed instantly and felt nothing, but he did this to keep our hopes up as no one likes to be carrying a dead person out of the pit.

Keith and myself did most of the carrying as we were the fittest. It was about half a mile to the pit bottom and we did it double quick time. When we got to the Ambulance room our job was done and we waited outside only to be told that Billy was dead on arrival. This news really upset us all as Billy was known to us all as young man with a family, a nice chap who enjoyed a pint and a good game of darts.

I know it took Keith Dyer and myself a good while to get over what we saw that day, there was no counselling for shock in those days, and it was back to work the next day as usual.

DAMWAIN YN Y PWLL 26/11/1961

Keith Brocklebank

Translation EE Edwards

Euthum i'r gwaith ar y shifft prynhawn y diwrnod hwn, roedd Keith Dyer fy nghydweithiwr yn aros wrth ben y pwll ac aethom i lawr gyda'n gilydd. Roedd yn union fel shifft arferol i ni, cyn gynted ag y cyraeddasom ein gweithle, bant â ni. Yn y prynhawniau roedd pawb yn ceisio'u gorau glas i orffen y gwaith yn gynnar ac i ddychwelyd i'r top.

Roedd Billy Dyke a'i gydweithiwr Ivor Garfield yn gweithio nesaf atom ni, roeddem ni'n bacwyr a hwythau'n dyllwyr ac yn rhwygwyr. Eu gwaith hwy oedd gwneud y lle roeddem ni'n mynd mewn iddo'n saff er mwyn inni fedru pacio'r to.

Doeddem ni ddim wedi gwneud llawer cyn inni glywed gwaedd gan Cyril Einon, gweithiwr ffas, bod damwain cas wedi digwydd a gofyn inni fynd i nôl elor wely a blancedi. Keith Dyer a minnau oedd yr ifancaf a'r fwyaf ffit yn gweithio ar y ffas yn ystod y shifft honno ac felly roedd i fyny i ni redeg i nôl deunyddiau cymorth cyntaf.

Pan gyraeddasom y lle 'roedd Billy'n gorwedd yn fflat ble roedd Cyril wedi'i roi, roedd ei wyneb wedi'i orchuddio er mwyn sicrhau nad oedd neb yn cael ei frawychu gan ei anafiadau. Erbyn hyn roedd rhyw chwech o weithwyr ffas eraill wedi cyrraedd ond roedd pob un dros ei drigain a'r rhan fwyf ohonynt yn llawn llwch.

Rhoddasom Billy'n gyflym ar yr elor wely fel roedd Cyril yn dweud wrthym, roedd e'n hen foi iawn trwy'r amser roeddem yn trafod Billy: dywedodd wrthym am ei gael allan mor gyflym â phosibl er mwyn ei achub. Ar ôl yr holl amser rwy'n credu ei fod yn gwybod ei fod wedi marw, ac wedi'i ladd yn unionsyth gan deimlo dim byd, ond gwnaeth hyn er mwyn cadw ein gobeithion i fyny gan nad oes neb yn hoffi cario corff allan o'r pwll.

Gwnaeth Keith a fi'r rhan fwyaf o'r cario gan mai ni oedd y fwyaf ffit. Roedd rhyw hanner milltir i waelod y pwll ac mi wnaethom gyrraedd yn gyflym iawn. Erbyn inni gyrraedd Ystafell yr Ambiwllans roedd ein gwaith drosodd ac arhosom ni y tu allan dim ond i glywed bod Billy yn farw pan gyraeddasom. Roedd y newyddion yma wedi ein cynhyrfu i gyd gan inni adnabod Billy fel gŵr ifanc gyda theulu, boi hyfryd a oedd yn hoff o'i beint a gêm dda o ddartiau. Rwy'n gwybod iddi gymryd cryn amser i Keith Dyer a minnau ddod dros yr hyn a welsom y diwrnod hwnnw, doedd dim cwnsela ar gyfer sioc yn y dyddiau hynny, a mynd nôl i'r gwaith oedd hi'r diwrnod nesaf fel arfer.

READY FOR CHRISTMAS??

If you are already thinking of your Christmas meal, what to eat and drink, then the following might inspire, and if this seems a little excessive, then you might like to go to the other extreme and read about the Christmas fare the Boer War soldiers had to make do with in 1902 - a report sent to the Cardiff Times.

Sir Watkin Williams Winn, Bart, ordered a banquet to be held at his country estate, Wynstay, for his 21st birthday in April 1770.

Sir Watkin (1749-1789) succeeded to the title when he was an infant, and was the 4th baronet, ruling his vast estate of 5 Welsh counties and parts of Shropshire.

His profligacy knew no bounds as can be seen from his 'shopping list' below.

An embroidered suit believed to have belonged to him can be seen in the National Museum of Wales.

From information gained from the newspapers of the time, Sir Watkin was reported to have required the following for his banquet:

Main course:

30 bullocks	50 hogs	60 calves
80 sheep	18 lambs	70 pigs
51 guinea fowls	37 turkeys	84 capons
400 chickens	360 fowls	96 ducklings
48 rabbits	15 snipes	

For his fish courses:

425 lbs of salmon	40 brace of carp	36 pike
60 dozen trout	109 lobsters	96 crab

Pies and tarts:

108 apple pies	104 pork pies	30 beef pies
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Desserts:

60 Savoy cakes	24lbs of cake	144 ice creams
18000 eggs	150 gallons milk	60 quarts of cream

And to drink: 70 hogsheads of ales (a hogshead was approximately 54 imperial gallons), and 120 dozen bottles of wine

This was not the finished list!

BOER WAR SOLDIERS' RECIPES (circa1902)



A report in the Cardiff Times, 11/1/1902

The following recipes have been sent to us direct from the South African veldt by an army 'chef,' in the Glamorgan Yeomanry and deemed suitable for Christmas fare.

Trek Ox Stew

Take an Ox, (preferably belonging to someone else) about 50 years old, kill it if it is not already dead, and cut it into four or more parts. Boil it in a pot of muddy water over a green wood fire, when done take it out and wait for a sandstorm then serve.

Sponge Cake

Take two or three handfuls of Indian meal and sufficient dirty water to make a stiff paste. Put this onto the back of a shovel and place over an open fire until thoroughly burnt.

Alternatively use some Indian corn up by putting it into an old bully-beef tin add water and boil until soft. Steal salt to taste.

Beverages

Tea or Coffee: fill up the cooking pot with water (no need to wash the pot beforehand, as the sand in the water cleans it). Boil water, throw in a handful of Tea/Coffee, serve up in a mess tin that you have just fried bacon in. Result: a most refreshing drink.

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

LETTERS/EMAILS to the EDITOR

Howard Martin is asking if anyone has or had an interest in the Martin family: Isaac Martin (1778-1851) and his wife Catherine (nee Hopkin 1785-1870), who after their marriage in 1808 lived all their lives at Oldcastle, Lower Coity, Bridgend. They had 14 children all born in Coity.

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

editor@glamfhs.org.uk

ERRORS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies are due to **Chris Caswill**, the author of 'The Life and Death of a Caswill Coal Miner' which has been featured in the previous editions this year, as his name in the last journal was spelt Caswell on the Contents page, and not Caswill. Chris says this change of spelling often happened during his family's history, but Caswill it most definitely should be!

Apologies are also due to **Barrie Jones**, as his name appeared as the author of the last journal's article on the 1921 census. Barrie HAS written an article on this census, which appears in this edition, and I am looking for the person who submitted the last journal's article, so please contact me and I will make sure you are acknowledged.



Rhestr o Enwau Lleodedd Hanesyddol
List of Historic Place Names

historicplacenames.rcahmw.gov.uk

Our Speaker at the AGM will be **James January-McCann**, the project manager of the groundbreaking project to record hundreds of thousands of place names across Wales. Using a wide range of sources, some dating back to the 2nd century AD, in various languages, including Breton, Latin and Low German, the website will protect and ensure the continuing use of Welsh place names. These give an invaluable insight into topographical features and land usage which can add detail to family research.

The project organisers are keen to add more details about the historical county of Glamorgan and this will be a useful introduction to the project and how members of the GFHS can get involved in recording their local areas.

AGM TALK : POSTPONED FROM MARCH 2025

NEWS FROM GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES

July-September 2025

Access and Community Engagement

- Our talk in July was again fully booked. Stephen K Jones spoke on 'Barry Railway: Coal's Last Burst' as part of this year's Railway 200 celebrations.
- On 27 September we held another successful Open Doors event, with four fully booked tours behind the scenes. A big thank you to members of GFHS who attended with a stand and gave two talks on the day.
- Our events continue on 3 November at 2pm with a talk on the Rhondda Tunnel, and on 24 November with another railway talk, this time engineer George Overton and his links to Dowlais. On 27 January I Moger will be returning to the Archives with a talk on 'The Welsh National Memorial Association: An NHS Forerunner'.
- School visits started again in September. St Paul's Church in Wales Primary, Grangetown, visited for a workshop on Coal and the Docks. And two classes from Creigiau Primary attended our Second World War workshop.
- Members of the Bridgend Branch of GFHS visited in July for a tour in the morning, followed by an afternoon of research in the searchroom.
- Members of GFHS Cardiff & Vale Branch visited the Archives for their July meeting which included a tour behind the scenes and guidance on searching our catalogue. The September meeting focussed on records of shops and shopping.
- We have worked in partnership with the Library Service in Rhondda Cynon Taff to deliver talks at branch libraries on our coal collections. These will continue through the Autumn. A talk was also given at Y Nyth in Bryngarw Country Park as part of Ogwr Heritage Month organised by the Awen Library Service in Bridgend.
- Members of Cardiff People First took over the Archives for a week in July. As part of the takeover, they gathered together records at their office suitable for deposit and brought them to the office, working with staff on the accessioning and cataloguing process.
- We hosted a workshop organised by the Divergent Minds in the Archive project. Attendance was open to neurodivergent and neurotypical archive staff and researchers, with the aim of looking at ways of improving access to archive services.
- The latest issue of the Glamorgan Archives newsletter was circulated at the start of September. The email can be found on our blog and, if you subscribe to follow the blog, you'll receive the newsletter directly by email.

- Articles on our blog have featured the Cardiff Exhibition of 1896 and, for Sporting Heritage Day, women's cricket in Penarth at the start of the 20th century.
- We continue to offer monthly 'Ask the Experts' family history sessions in the searchroom. Thank you to GFHS volunteers for their support in delivering these sessions.
- Glamorgan Archives was used as a location for filming for a fortnight over the summer. Office areas, the conservation studio and the strongrooms were used as sets for a children's drama to be shown on S4C.

Collections

- Our next collections week will take place from 17-21 November. The searchroom will be closed to allow staff to concentrate on behind the scenes work on the collection. We will reopen as usual from Tuesday 25 November.
- Notable accessions received recently include:

Hengoed Baptist Chapel Records (DBAP53)

This accession was an addition to an existing collection. Hengoed Baptist Chapel had previously deposited registers of births and registers of members in 1990s. The Chapel is now closed, and recent deposits have come from the Welsh Baptist Union, who took ownership of the records when the chapel closed. This latest deposit includes marriage registers from 1899-1989, minutes of church meetings 1877-1978 and Sunday School Register 1937-1949.

Bethesda United Reformed Church, Tongwynlais, Records (D2144)

Established as a branch church by Bethlehem Welsh Congregational Church, Gwaelod-y-Garth during the 1850s, Bethesda Church opened in June 1861. It was largely rebuilt during the late twentieth century, including an improved vestry which opened in 1960. The church closed at the end of 2024. Records, dating from 1875-1999, include minutes, accounts, membership registers, Band of Hope registers, baptism register and communion attendance registers.

Annie Powell, Teacher and Local Politician, of Rhondda, Papers (D2135)

Glamorgan Archives was pleased to receive photographs and other papers relating to Annie Powell in the year a blue plaque was dedicated to her at Penygraig Community and Family Hub, Soar Chapel. Annie Powell became the first Communist elected mayor in Wales and female Communist mayor in the UK when she was elected as Mayor of Rhondda in 1979. The collection includes photographs of her as Mayor of Rhondda and papers relating to the application for the blue plaque.

Parc Colliery, Cwmparc, Treorchy, Accident book (D2136)

This accident book records deaths and accidents that happened between 1898-1900 and is the only one held for Parc Colliery. It complements the other records we hold for the colliery, which are mainly plans and photographs. The book includes reports on injuries of children and deaths caused by colliery accidents, in addition to the common injuries that were sustained in mining.

Ivor Works, Dowlais, Slides (D2142)

The Ivor Works, Dowlais, were originally opened in 1839 as an extension of the Dowlais Ironworks, initially with four blast furnaces. A series of black and white slides have been received from the son of a former worker. They are primarily of the Bottom Foundry and may have been created for induction/training of new workers in the 1970s. They complement other records we hold relating to the works held within the collections of the Dowlais Iron Company and Mid Glamorgan County Council.

Rhian Diggins, 6 October 2025

HOT off the PRESS:

Neath Antiquarian Society are engaged in a project involving transcribing Resiants Lists (an archaic form of 'residents'), which covers parts of Neath in the 1700s.

Anyone researching ancestors who lived in Neath at this time would be able to access the transcript at Neath Mechanics Institute.

Mari Llwyd

The Grey Mare, a pre-Christian tradition, is still acted out in parts of Wales today. If a real horse was not available, a horse's skull, (or in recent times a polystyrene or cardboard construction), would be placed onto a broom handle and a sheet covered the neck to the ground. On visiting friends and neighbours door to door, the jawbone would be clacked against the skull, or broom handle, as you wished everyone a merry Christmas. In older times the verbal exchange was more likely to be a challenge of rhyming insults.



SOCIETY NEWS & REPORTS

ABERDARE/CYNON VALLEY BRANCH

Our AGM was held in September, and the Branch Committee members were re-voted to the same positions they held last year:

Mervyn Pugh - Chair

Robert Lake - Vice Chair

Treasurer - Pat Rees

Secretary - Pat Rees

Projects - Pat Rees, who was also voted as

Branch representative on the Executive Committee.

We agreed to start research sessions in Mountain Ash Library on a trial basis for a couple of months. I have felt for a long time that we need to reach out to the lower end of the valley; Mountain Ash is easily accessible to places like Miskin, Penrhiwceiber, Ynysboeth & Abercynon, as the train station is directly behind the High St where the library is situated. These meetings will be held on the 2nd Monday of each month from 1-3pm. They will run alongside our regular meetings in Cynon Valley Museum which are on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

All project work is on stop due to ongoing ill health of members: we wish the members concerned a speedy recovery.

It was agreed that we would undertake another tour of People of Interest buried in Aberdare Cemetery. Once the research has been completed a date will be announced.

Pat Rees, aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

BRIDGEND

We are having more success in attracting speakers. In September one of our members, Ian Black, gave an excellent talk on Herbert Armstrong, the Hay-on-Wye solicitor executed for poisoning his wife. A relative of Ian's was a member of the Armstrong household at the time of the 'murder' and the criminal case.

In October we heard about the Aberfan disaster from someone whose family was directly involved in the events at Pantglas School. Jeanette Keane gave a moving account of her experiences during that dreadful time, particularly poignant as it was the 59th anniversary of the event. (see back cover for the meeting in the ARC).

In November we will have a talk by one of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission volunteers who regularly gives tours of Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery in Barry. Having heard one of his tours – I know it will be an excellent event. This will tie in with our on-going War Memorial project and a guided walk around Llantwit Fawr Cemetery in the Spring.

The Branch's War memorials project is ongoing with several branch members looking into the lesser-known memorials in their area. Newspapers are a very useful resource for researching casualties and service personnel who returned to their families, sometimes providing photos as well. A recent acquisition by the Maesteg History Centre from a chapel in the town is a perfect example of the smaller memorials in many towns.

The Branch is planning a trip to the Family History Centre in Cardiff before Christmas and there are longer-term plans to visit Aberystwyth. The Family Search on-line resources are extensive and members should be making greater use of them. Hopefully our visit and on-going plans to become an Affiliated Member will introduce members to this useful resource.

Three Branch members attended the Kempton Park Genealogy Fair to promote the Society and to 'net-work' with other Groups - see back cover for photographs.

Penny Williams, bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

CARDIFF & VALE

Our September meeting at Glamorgan Archives was entitled "Shopping and Trade Directories. The oldest item on view was Elizabeth Martin of Vervill's account book from 1763-4, which listed items of purchase for her household. From the nineteenth century we had fascinating contracts of employment and individual customers' accounts book from David Morgan Ltd, a register for Cardiff Market and a printed notice giving details about the employment of boys as porters from the Havannah Ship Training School 1863. From the early twentieth century we saw a ledger from T Howells & Son of Bridgend, showing orders from individuals, a baker's deliveries in Canton and invoices for fitting carpets and curtains. There were photographs of Seccombes Dept Store and Charles Sadler and Sons, Penarth, books about James Howell & Co and David Morgan, and rent books and wages books from Cardiff High St Arcade and Cardiff Market, respectively. The Goad insurance plans of Cardiff 1909-1961 were pored over by those present and caused much prompting of memories and discussions, the coloured plans showing the different building materials in use. The Trade directories from 1895 and 1949 which we were shown are also useful aids in tracking down names and addresses relevant to researching

family history. Many thanks go to Rhian Diggins, senior archivist for giving us a very interesting afternoon.

On 7th October the AGM of the branch was held online. The relevant documents are on the Society's website. Stephen Fairhurst was re-elected as Treasurer of the Branch and Trustee of the Society, Karen Prior and Tracey Simms as committee members, and Nick Davey agreed to be coopted on again. Many thanks to Sue Hamer and Jane Graves for facilitating the meeting for the Branch.

The AGM was followed by a talk open to all on the J Barry Davies Collection by Diane Brook. This Collection is of great interest for Glamorganshire genealogy and is to be the subject of a special project of which further details will follow.

If members are interested in holding evening online branch meetings, please come forward and make yourselves known to us as volunteers will be needed.

The next session at Glamorgan Archives in November will be "Personal research in the Reading Room." At the January 2026 meeting at Glamorgan Archives we will be introduced to the most recent acquisitions.

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 and does not have a meeting in August. In September Lisa Powell gave an interesting talk about public health in Merthyr Tydfil in the middle of the nineteenth century. Life expectancy was low in a town which was so unhealthy that it was similar in infant mortality to Liverpool and had a whole chapter in the book 'King Cholera' dedicated to it. It has been argued that the large Mormon population here survived because even they drank beer and not water from wells in Merthyr Tydfil.

Our AGM was in October and there are no changes in our committee to report. A vote at the meeting decided that we should have a December Christmas buffet again in Soar as we did last year. There was also an interesting talk in October on the Jews of South Wales and the anti-Jewish riots of 1912, focusing mainly on Tredegar but the riots did spread elsewhere. The talk was ably given by Janet Karn, the former local studies librarian in Tredegar and an expert on local history.

In September six members of our Branch started an excellent 6 week University of Wales course on Welsh history and have increased our knowledge greatly.

Carolyn Jacob, merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA

We continue to meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Pontypridd Museum and always welcome guests as well as members to our meetings.

During the summer months, the Museum hosted weekly lunchtime talks on different aspects of local and Welsh history. Several members attended these very informative and enjoyable sessions. Hopefully, some of the speakers will come and talk at our society meetings during next year, giving those who missed the summer sessions an opportunity to hear them.

Our first meeting after the summer break was on 16th September when Creighton Sims shared with us part of his extensive collection of photographs of old Pontypridd and Rhondda, with an illuminating commentary and examples of 'now' and 'then'. Many of us were able to remember both! Creighton presented the second part of his collection after our AGM on 21st October.

The following officers were elected at the AGM:

Chairman: Meic Jones

Secretary: Eleanor Aubrey

Treasurer: Creighton Sims

Committee: Deborah Cooke, Jan Johnson, Eira Morgan, John Phillips, Angela Hughes, John Roberts

Jane Jones has served as Secretary for many years but has decided to step down from this role due to health issues. We would like to thank Jane for her years of hard work and dedication in this capacity. She will be a hard act to follow!

Eleanor Aubrey, rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

Saturday 21 March 2026

Online

Annual General Meeting at 1pm

Followed by Talk at 2pm

Place Names of Wales Project

James January-McCann

Book via Eventbrite

SWANSEA BRANCH REPORT

2026 - by the beginning of 2026 we hope the West Glamorgan Archives will be up and running in Y Storfa, (the old BHS store in the centre of Swansea), and by then it will include archives of the Miners' library together with the main library. Before this the archives in the Civic Centre will stay open whilst all the archives are moved. If you wish to order records this will mean going to the Civic Centre to complete the form with the identity code of the record which you wish to study. These will then be taken to the new archives, where the records can be studied. It sounds complicated, so let's hope it works.

Because of this huge change, the Swansea Branch will be unable to arrange any meetings at the moment.

We wish everyone a **Happy Christmas** and fruitful research in 2026.

Janet Neilson , swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

ONLINE (AR LEIN)

The Online Branch resumed meetings in September. Twenty six people attended the September meeting when Darris Williams from Family Search introduced us to the new 'full text search' on the Family Search website. Previously documents had been indexed at filming or digitization usually just using the surname and first name of the individual involved. The new 'full text search' allows a search for anything contained in the document so allows a search for placenames including, for example, farm names, which is especially useful when dealing with common Welsh surnames. Documents currently available include early court records and other legal documents. Witnesses names in legal proceedings, such as Settlement Examinations can provide information about them such as occupation. abode etc.

In September the branch facilitated the Cardiff & Vale Branch AGM followed by a talk by Diane Brook. It is planned to provide additional opportunities for Cardiff Branch members to meet online to discuss whether to return to evening face to face meetings and decide on a location for the bi-monthly meetings between the Tuesday afternoon meetings at Glamorgan Archives.

Sue Hamer, news@glamfhs.org.uk

ABERKENFIG RESOURCE CENTRE

Len Evans Centre, Hope Avenue,
Aberkenfig, CF32 9PR

(Please note this is our location NOT our postal address)

The ARC has seen a rather slow summer and while the Tuesday openings are working well, visitor numbers remain on the low side. 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.

Now the winter months are upon us we are calling for volunteers to help with a number of projects. To avoid disrupting the ARC Open days there will be set "Volunteer Days". It is hoped that volunteers will be able to come and help either lead a specific project, giving a sense of ownership and fulfilment when progress can be seen, or help with the growing number of projects that the ARC has to offer. 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 is holding a "Flash Sale" of CDs - See list of Sale Items on Page 48.

Society volunteers attended the "*Discover Your Ancestors*" Family History show in October 2025 at Kempton Park. There were several excellent talks and we may approach some of these speakers to provide talks for The Society. Nancy was net-working like a pro and we collected lots of ideas for resources and events. More than 35 people stopped to chat to use many with specific queries re lost Welshies. Anouska refused to take 'I don't have any Welsh ancestor' as an excuse and we pointed people to a number of on-line resources. We were the only Welsh society there and several people mentioned it was nice to see a Welsh county.

This was a very interesting show, where we were able to secure TWO discount codes for our members – SEE NEXT PAGE.

Contact us on: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

MEMBERS' OFFERS

1] The Genealogist:

Discount Code: TG40GFHS

Diamond Package & a Year's online subscription to *Discover Your Ancestors*
- £40 off

A comprehensive research and family records package to aid family history research.

*Recommended by Who do you think you are? as having:
Clear images, flexible search options and easy to use*

2] Pharos Tutors:

Discount Code: 10GLAM

The offer is a **10%** discount on **Anytime & Non-Assessed courses**

Pharos Tutors offers short topic-based online courses on a variety of genealogy-related subjects. Topics range from genealogical sources, like wills and Chancery records, to courses on one-name and one-place studies, Scottish and Irish research, DNA and the popular "Professional Genealogist" course. Our tutors are professional genealogists, archives professionals and subject experts and have often written books on the subjects they teach. We have twenty tutors and over fifty courses, with more courses in development.

Our Tutor-led courses are our most popular and usually last between 3 and 6 weeks. The format of each is the same. Students are delivered lesson notes at the start of each week. These are in pdf format so that they can be downloaded and kept forever. Each lesson contains activities for students to complete and these are posted in the online course forum area. Students can see each other's work, comment and collaborate where appropriate. Every week the students have the opportunity to attend a weekly online chat session with their tutor and fellow students. This is a great opportunity for students to ask their tutor questions.

Pharos also have two certificate (ASSESSED) programmes in genealogy, which are combinations of Tutor-led courses, but with the added benefit of formal assessment. These were developed in partnership with the Society of Genealogists, and our Advanced Certificate is recognised by AGRA (the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives) as a route to professional genealogy.

Visit the Pharos website at: www.pharostutors.com

Social media: Follow us on X, Facebook, LinkedIn and Threads at @PharosTutors. On Bluesky we are @pharostutors.bsky.social.

Publication focus this journal is.....

CD S1911 GORSEINON - KINGSBRIDGE CEMETERY BURIAL REGISTERS

Kingsbridge is near an area called Gorseinon in Swansea. There is no record of this cemetery's opening, but the earliest memorial is 4th September 1895, which is for a Charles BAKER aged 36 years however many of these early records were lost in a fire, so the records date from 1903-1958. There is a local story that the first burial here was that of a gypsy girl, possibly inspired by the fact that there is a separate section in this cemetery for the travelling community. Opened by the Swansea Rural District Council and later became part of the City & County of Swansea. All surviving records are held by the Cemeteries & Cremation Division of the Environment Department, City & County of Swansea, registers being available in the archive searchroom of West Glamorgan Archives.

NO.	SURNAME	RANK/PROF.	PLACE OF DEATH	BUR.D	DATE	YEAR	CEREMONY BY	PARISH
1	MORRIS	MAR. WOMAN	JONES ST. GOWERTON	01-Jul	1903		E. GRIFFITHS	GOWERTON
2	CLARK	STILLBORN	MASONS RD. GORSEINON	12-Jan	1904		-	LOUGHOR
3	DAVIES	CHILD	LANDILO TALYBONT	12-Apr	1904		R.D REES	LANDEILO TALYBONT
4	JONES	FIREMAN	GORSEINON	27-Apr	1904		REV. W. MORGAN, VICAR	LANDEILO TALYBONT
5	THOMAS	CHILD	GOWERTON	09-Jun	1904		-	GOWERTON
6	SMITH	CHILD	GARNGOCH COMMON	02-Jul	1904		-	GOWERTON
7	FRANCIS	SHOP ASST.	PENCLAWDD RD. GOWERTON	26-Jul	1904		REV. D.O. DAVIES	GOWERTON
8	HARRIS	STILLBORN	ELBA ST. GOWERTON	23-Aug	1904		-	GOWERTON

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.

Membership: membership@glamfhs.org.uk

Finance: finance@glamfhs.org.uk

Online Branch/Events: arlein@glamfhs.org.uk

Website: website@glamfhs.org.uk

Projects: projects@glamfhs.org.uk

Aberkenfig Resource Centre: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

NEW DOWNLOADS

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

- C0333 Llanishen St Isan MIs £5.00
- L0601 Llandeilo Talybont Old St Teilo MIs £5.00
- L0701 Llandewi St David MIs £5.00
- L1203 Llanfabon Craigberthlywd St Cynon MIs £5.00
- L1703 Llangiwig Godre'r Graig Cemetery MIs £5.00
- L2402 Llanmadoc St Madoc MIs £5.00
- L2702 Llansamlet Llwynbrwydrau Ebenezer MIs £5.00
- L2802 Llansannor St Senwyr MIs £5.00
- L2903 Llantrisant Castellau & Ty Cwrdd MIs £5.00
- L2904 Llantrisant Penuel Calvinistic Methodist MIs £5.00
- L2905 Llantrisant SS Ilityd, Gwynno & Dyfodwg MIs £10.00
- L3001 Llantrithyd St Ilityd MIs £5.00
- L3102 Llantwit Fardre Bryntirion MIs £5.00
- L3103 Llantwit Fardre St Ilityd MIs £5.00
- L3204 Llantwit Major Bethel, Ebenezer & Tabernacle MIs £5.00
- L0102 Laleston St David MIs £5.00
- L0103 Laleston Bethel W.B MIs £5.00
- L0202 Leckwith St James & Michaelston-le-Pit St Michael's MIs £5.00
- L0402 Llanblethian St Bleddian & St John MIs £10.00
- P1507 Hopkinstown St David's MIs £5.00
- L1204 Nelson Ebenezer Calvinistic Methodist MIs £5.00
- L3203 Llantwit Major Borough Cemetery MIs £10.00
- L3501 Llysworney St Tydfil MIs £5.00
- L3601 Lougher St Michael MIs £10
- M0402 Marcross Holy Trinity MIs £5.00
- M0719 Merthyr Tydfil St Tydfil MIs £5.00
- M1001 Monknash St Mary Magdalene MIs £5.00
- N0104 Neath Quaker, Zoar & Maes-yr-Haf MIs £5.00
- N0301 Newton Nottage St John MIs £15.00
- O0202 Oystermouth All Saints MIs £5.00

CD “FLASH SALE”

We are holding a **“FLASH SALE”** for the month of December only. Payment should be made via the Donations Button on the Contact Us page on our website **but contact us first to ensure that the items are still in stock.** Please quote the Reference number shown below.

If you are lucky we may be able to help you add to your loved one’s Christmas Stocking. **Contact:** arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

Code	Title: CDs only ex P&P	Sale £
C0336CD	CARDIFF - ROATH. ST GERMAN'S CHURCH	£7.00
L1906CD	MAESTEG - LLANGYNWYD MARRIAGES 1	£3.00
M0749CD	MERTHYR TYDFIL. DOWLAIS, IVOR ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MEMBERS 1878-1928	£3.00
M0751CD	MERTHYR TYDFIL OBITUARIES 1900 - 1909 CD 1	£7.00
O0203CD	SWANSEA - OYSTERMOUTH CEMETERY BURIAL INDEX	£5.00
S1910CD	SWANSEA TOWN SURVEYS 1837/1839	£5.00
S1911CD	GORSEINON - KINGSBRIDGE CEMETERY BURIAL REGISTERS	£5.00
S1913CD	SWANSEA - BISHOP GORE SCHOOL - ADMISSION REGISTERS	£5.00
S1923CD	SWANSEA - CHRISTCHURCH PARISHONERS	£5.00
Z005CD	1891 CENSUS - CARDIFF	£3.00
Z006CD	1891 CENSUS - CWM RHONDDA	£3.00
Z007CD	1891 CENSUS - EAST GLAMORGAN PARISHES	£3.00
Z024CD	GLAMORGAN QUARTER SESSIONS JUVENILE CONVICTIONS 1847-1880	£7.00
C0359CD	CARDIFF WORKHOUSE ADMISSIONS & DISCHARGE REGISTER 1846-1847	£5.00
M0748CD	MERTHYR TYDFIL SCHOOL REGISTERS	£7.00
M1108CD	MOUNTAIN ASH - NAZARETH ENGLISH BAPTIST CHURCH	£5.00
Z022CD	GLAMORGAN MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS MASTER INDEX	£7.00

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ABERDARE/CYNON VALLEY

aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

December: no meeting (Xmas lunch)

8 Jan 2026: Battle of Arnhem: Stuart Davies

12 Feb: Research Session. (See Aberdare report for venue details)

March - TBC

BRIDGEND BRANCH

bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

Len Evans Hall (next to the ARC) at 7.30 pm third Monday each month

December - No Meeting

19 January

16 February

16 March

CARDIFF & VALE BRANCH

cardiffandvale@glamfhs.org.uk

2 pm at Glamorgan Archives

Next Meetings at Glamorgan Archives:

6 January 2026 – New Acquisitions

MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH

merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

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

December – no meeting. Nadolig Llawen i bawb!

20 January 2026

Meic Jones 'You Must Remember This' – a film about the work of entertainers during the war years

17 February 2026

Ron Keats 'Hidden History (Glamorganshire Canal, Pontypridd)'

17 March 2026

Darren Macey 'No Pasaran: Welsh Volunteers and the International Brigade' (postponed from June 2025)

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA BRANCH

rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

3rd Tuesday 7 pm at Pontypridd Museum
December - No Meeting
20 January
17 February
17 March

SWANSEA BRANCH

swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

West Glamorgan Archives are currently moving premises
so no meetings possible until further notice.

ONLINE BRANCH (Ar Lein)

arlein@glamfhs.org.uk

See www.glamfhs.org.uk/events for details

For more information and to register for our online events on Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/glamorgan-family-history-society>

Further updates on Branch Meetings and Events
are posted on our website and our Facebook Page

www.glamfhs.org.uk/events

www.facebook.com/groups/glamorganfhs

AN OLD WELSH CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

Plygain

This was the singing that would take place in the dark hours of Christmas Day, before the cock crowed, usually between the hours of 3 and 6 o'clock in the morning. Men (not women), would gather in the rural churches to sing unaccompanied three- or four-part harmony carols in a service that went on for three hours or so. This tradition is still carried out in parts of mid-Wales today.



ARC OPENING DATES 2026

2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month, 10am-2pm

Other days/times available by appointment

January 13 and 27th

February 10 and 24th

March 10 and 24th

April 14 and 28th

May 12 and 26th

June 9 and 23rd

July 14 and 28th

August 11 and 25th

September 8 and 22nd

October 13 and 27th

November 10 and 24th

December 8th- closed on 22nd

NADOLIG LLAWEN

Contact: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk www.glamfhs.org.uk

Jeanette Keane talking to members about her Aberfan experiences



Volunteers at Kempton Park Family History Fair in September

