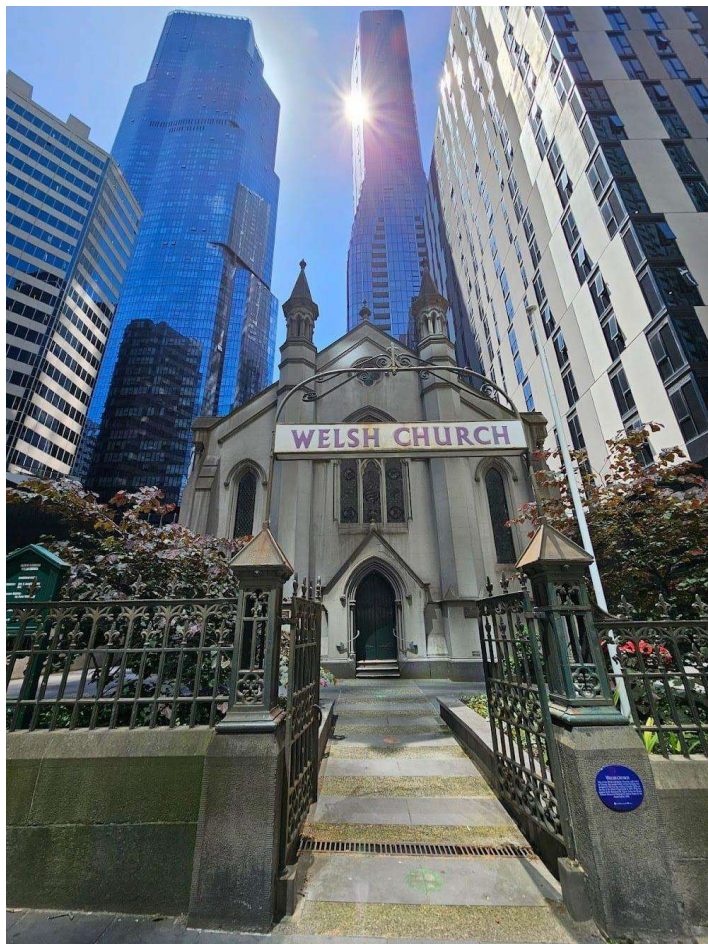




Glamorgan Family History Society Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluol Morgannwg



The Welsh Church in Melbourne, Australia

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Congratulations to our new President: Diane Brook and Vice President Nick Davey

Diane is a founder member of the Society from 1974.

Nick is also an early member. Both will be familiar to many over the years sharing their expertise and providing help and guidance at local and national events.

Diane and Nick have held a range of Society roles including Branch and Society Chairman and can be seen below with the Cardiff Mayor at our Open Day in Cardiff City Hall in 2005.



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Society's Objectives

The Glamorgan Family History Society is a registered charity. Its main objectives are to: encourage and stimulate research into genealogy and allied subjects with particular reference to the historic county of Glamorgan; to assist members in their private research; encourage the transcription and preservation of records of family history and the deposit of original documents of value in approved repositories; publish papers of genealogical value and interests; establish, to mutual advantage, relations with other organisations interested in genealogy and allied subjects; maintain a library and regularly publish a journal. The journal is the official publication of the Glamorgan Family History Society. Articles appearing in the journal may not be reproduced without the written permission of the editor. Views expressed in articles and letters are not necessarily those of the GFHS.

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Janet Neilson

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

EDITORIAL

Croeso, to the 162nd edition of our Journal. There is an Australian influence to this, our 162nd journal, as on my recent trip to Melbourne I found out more about the large numbers of our intrepid Glamorgan ancestors who gave up everything in Wales to venture into the unknown life ahead of them at the other side of the world, into the gold mines, the coal mines, the shops and businesses that helped build Australia.

The covers depict the Welsh church in Melbourne, which is still so active in its Welsh endeavours, unlike many of our chapels and churches here sadly.

To contribute to the theme of emigration Enid Lewis has sent the second part of her family's expedition to Sydney, with Welsh translation for some of the paragraphs, and Thomas Preece writes of his family's journey and settlement with the Mormons in Utah, USA.

Away from emigration, Janet Neilson writes of her work on the records of the girls' school in Swansea's Hafod, and Gail du Pisanie tells a riveting story of John Williams, a forgotten hero. Diane Brook continues her research into her two bibles, sharing her problems with the common surnames!

Of interest to quite a number of members, if my correspondence is anything to go by, is how easy or difficult it is to get your family tree and stories into print, whether for public or private readership - Tony Hughes tells us of his experiences in doing just that and gives us some helpful hints.

Our first article is by Terry Leyshon, all about Welsh steam coal - many of us who live in the Valleys think we know all about coal as it is what Glamorgan is famous for, along with steel of course, but there are still many facts we may not be aware of, and Terry does much to make these clear.

The Letters page contains an item by Creighton Sims, who wrote about a photograph he had seen previously, and how he was able to identify his grandmother in it. This made me think that there must be many more incidences like this - people catching sight of a picture they knew nothing about but were subsequently finding they could recognise someone close to them. If you have anything like this happening to you, please let us know.

I have had several articles for publication that have regrettably not made it into this edition, as space and printing costs and other admin notices have to be considered, but please be assured that they will all be placed as soon as possible and I will inform you as and when they will appear!

Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy a good read with these articles, and I wish you a sunny Summer. Hwyl Fawr!

Jean Fowlds, editor@glamfhs.org.uk

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Society held its AGM via Zoom on Saturday 21st March. It is a shame that we cannot all meet up in person but a Zoom meeting has the distinct advantage of allowing a wider geographical audience to attend. The turn-out was excellent with 26 members attending the formal business of the day and a further 15 joining for the talk. The Society's financial situation is very positive and full details of the reports are available on the Society website. Thanks to Guy Bevan for his careful and diligent work as Treasurer and for chairing the AGM. Thanks to the Admin team of Jan Mulreany, Jane Graves and Anouska Osborne for dealing with all the tricky issues of allowing people into the meeting and vote counting.

Thanks also to our new President, Diane Brook and Vice President, Nick Davey for taking on these Honorary roles.

The second, less formal business of the AGM was an excellent talk by Dr James January-McCann about the on-going project to record place names across Wales. The project is available for anyone to access and to add names at <https://rcahmw.gov.uk/discover/list-of-historic-place-names/> and it is hoped that a joint project with other local history societies can be set up across the county to add as many Glamorgan names as possible to the growing database. The talk was very well received and since the AGM several members have independently contacted RCAHMW with names and information from their research in their local area which is very encouraging.

We are waiting to hear from the Aberkenfig Welfare Hall Committee regarding the new lease on the ARC. This should be a 5 year lease with only a reasonable increase in the 'rent'.

Penny Williams, secretary2@glamfhs.org.uk

For up to date news and links to useful online resources -
don't forget to join our **Facebook** group.
www.facebook.com/groups/glamorganfhs.

IMAGES - FRONT COVER

The front cover photograph was donated by Melbourne resident Claudio Tine, and shows the active Church's central position as a Victorian building standing amongst the skyscrapers of modern Melbourne.

Inside Back Cover:

The banners (bottom left) are placed in the entrance lobby, and the photograph of its interior (middle right) was taken on a recent visit when Clive Davies, a regular contributor to the journal, arranged for it to be opened especially for my arrival. The site was originally donated by the Crown for a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist following, with the first service held in December 1852. It was rebuilt in 1871.

The blue plaque commemorates the time when the Church's adjoining hall was used as a dispensary which later became the Victoria Hospital for Women and Children, the precursor to the Queen Victoria Hospital.

Pioneering female doctor, Constance Stone, was married to the Church's early pastor Dr David Egryn Jones. She became Australia's first female doctor.

The offices of the genealogical society of Victoria, (GSV) are based in the centre of Melbourne, and they would welcome any enquiries: for contact and more information or help the address is <https://www.gsv.org.au/people/meg-bate>.

The St David's Day poster (bottom right) advertising concerts at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne with 6 male voice choirs, guest conductor Robat Arwyn and soloist Erin Fflur.

On the back cover is the parish magazine with details of weekly services (fortnightly in Welsh), the ministers past and present, current contacts and weekly activities, along with the usual quizzes and cookery tips.

The eisteddfodau, St David's Day and Cymanfa Ganu concerts held every year are widely advertised and very popular, people having to book up well in advance.

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

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Website: website@glamfhs.org.uk

Projects: projects@glamfhs.org.uk

Aberkenfig Resource Centre: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

Also the following roles:

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Membership Secretary and Minutes Secretary

There is also a Trustee vacancy - please contact Secretary Penny Williams for details.

Capeli Cymru Project

Many of you will be members of or have an interest in our local chapels. If so, you may be interested in a census from the Royal Commission which is currently open. The Commission is gathering survey data on all of the non-conformist chapels in Wales, whether they are currently in use or not.

The webpage detailing the census and project is:

<https://rcahmw.gov.uk/projects/capeli-cymru/capeli-cymru-census/>

The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and will greatly add to the knowledge about these important community and historic institutions.

About Purple Plaques / Ynglŷn â'r Placiau Porffor



Purple Plaques was launched on International Women's Day 2017, by a group of volunteers who felt the need for more recognition for the contribution women make to Welsh life.

The campaign aims to shine a light on women's achievements by improving the recognition of remarkable women in Wales. The award of a Purple Plaque will showcase and honour women across Wales. These Welsh

women will have made an impact in Wales or beyond and may previously have gone uncelebrated or have been left out of the history books entirely. There are currently an estimated 250 mainly blue plaques commemorating notable figures in Wales, and only a few of these are female. Purple Plaques aims to address this inequality and give women a prominent place in history.

The Purple Plaques Wales Committee is an independent group of volunteers, currently intending to seek funding, and working together with communities and the public to carry out our aims. It is hoped that people all over Wales will see this as an opportunity to remember and honour our remarkable women. We invite the public to propose remarkable Welsh women for consideration of a Purple Plaque.

One of these plaques is shortly to be laid to commemorate Beatrice Lewis, who was the first woman elected as a councillor in Barry, and a high achiever with an interesting life. The ceremony will be held in Barry on 1st May and a report will be made in due course.

If you want to know more about Purple Plaques, please see:

Purple Plaques - Celebrating Remarkable Women in Wales.

www.purpleplaques.wales

WELSH STEAM COAL

#3388 Terry Leyshon

Welsh Steam Coal was the product that made Cardiff famous. In the early days of steam, Admiralty trials took suitable Royal Navy warships and installed a steam power pack with a removable propellor on them¹. Sails remained the principal means of movement because the vessels could not carry sufficient coal to cruise a lengthy voyage, so steam was used as an auxiliary means for windless days and battle manoeuvrability. The trials with these hybrids proved the concept and the Crimean War confirmed the actuality, but it took until the launch in 1871 of *HMS Devastation* before steam was made the sole power source. Without sails the warship's guns could then be in turrets, not on decks.

Initially, the fuel used to raise steam was from Newcastle because it was plentiful and cheap. By experience it was found that this produced soot-laden smoke from the ship's funnel which heavily coated sails and running gear. This reduced the efficiency of the canvas sails and its continual removal was an additional chore for hard-pressed matelots some of whom suffered soot induced disabling skin complaints. Because of its geological make-up Newcastle coal did not combust thoroughly in the furnace, leaving residual ash to clog the firebox which required raking out and dumping overboard. From an intelligence perspective the plume of black smoke over the horizon foretold of a warship's arrival and the floating trail of ash on the surface indicated its direction of travel for an opponent to pursue or avoid.

When replenishing bunkers at home or abroad, captains of these steam vessels sought to avoid this Newcastle product and happened upon coal from collieries in the Cynon and Rhondda Valleys, which was more suitable to the Navy's need but more expensive. Voices were raised in Parliament about the unsuitability of the cheap coal and the Treasury were unhappy about the increased cost of using alternatives. The House of Commons required the Museum of Practical Geology to investigate '*Coals Suited to the Steam Navy*'.

On 5 January 1848 Sir Henry Thomas De La Beche, Director General of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom, and Dr Lyon Playfair, professor of chemistry at Edinburgh University, published their first report.

¹ The propellor had to be out of the water when under sail because of the amount of drag it induced.

Selected collieries were to provide free of charge, a minimum of a cubic foot of coal to a nominated local scientist for analysis. Nineteen Welsh collieries, five Scottish, two English (Northumberland and Forest of Dean) and one Irish colliery (Slievardagh, Tipperary) provided samples, plus samples of foreign coals from Formosa (now Taiwan) and Labuan (an island off Borneo). All but one were from bituminous coal seams, plus anthracite from James & Aubrey's colliery at Cwmllynfell. In addition, three manufacturers of patent fuels gave samples. Some patent fuels were manufactured by crushing large coal, but most used the small coals and screenings for which the mine owners refused to pay the colliers but did sell to the manufacturers. The patent fuel briquettes, 9 x 6 x 5 inches, were made by compressing coal with pitch as the binding agent. Because mine owners were eager to gain potentially lucrative Admiralty coaling contracts, the cost of providing samples was not an issue. The report made no recommendations but tabulated the particularities of the chemical composition of each sample together with detailed results from testing its combustion and steam raising properties.

The six criteria by which the samples were assessed were: easily ignited and burn quickly with minimal residue (ash); high evaporative power to turn water into steam with minimum fuel (ie burn hot), but not so hot that the iron firebars and furnace walls oxidate and waste away; not so bituminous that smoke is generated; not so easily crumbled that the weight of coal stored reduces that beneath to dust and yet still retain caking cohesion; possess such a dense structure that a given mass of coal occupies a minimum space (ie the weight of a cubic foot sample) the heavier the better, yet possess minimum sulphur/pyrites content to counter spontaneous combustion. When exposed to moist air coal decays and that chemical process generates heat, the presence of sulphur acts as a catalyst to maximise the effect, and this is styled 'non-flame burning'.

When the Captain orders 'Full Steam Ahead' the furnace should respond quickly. When the ship rolls, the furnace fire floor should maintain its integrity and resist traversing with the roll. To quote from the report: 'it never happens that all these conditions are united in one coal'. Anthracite was excellent in many respects but difficulty in igniting reduced the speed of response and the ferocity of its burn forced frequent replacing of firebars and, as an availability issue, frequently taking a warship out of service for boiler refurbishing was unacceptable.

The report also analysed various type of boiler and grate settings. Comparative tables produced a huge volume of data on the various coals and means of raising steam, however, the principal conclusion appeared to be that more work was required and more coals scrutinised. Hence on 24

May 1849 a second House of Commons report was published and because of the prospect of Admiralty contracts collieries were volunteering their products. For this report supplies were provided from nine Welsh collieries; twelve were from Lancashire, thirteen from Newcastle, two from Scotland, one from Derbyshire, ten from abroad plus Lyon's Patent Fuel. The foreign seams were from Chile, Patagonia, Australia, Canada and Panama. The same processes as the first report were followed and the data published.

As collieries continued to submit samples for consideration, on 2 April 1851 a third report was published. This time the minute chemical analysis of each sample was not done but the same practical testing was tabulated. The samples were 103 UK coals, 6 Patent Fuels plus an additional 10 foreign coals, 9 from Tasmania and lignite from Trinidad. In general, all the foreign samples were below the average assessed attributes of the others. None of the reports made recommendations but provided the tabulated results for the Admiralty to determine how the characteristics and attributes met their needs. Top of the Admiralty's list was the 'Aberdare Four Foot Seam' running from the Hirwaun area down the Cynon valley.

However, being practical the Admiralty also requested the captains of their steam vessels to report on their experiences of the fuel they were using. These empirical comments covered items such as sea miles covered per ton of coal under various conditions, the amount of smoke, the volume of ash generated etc. All grist to the mill for deciding the most appropriate coal for the 'working' navy without cost being a factor. Geographically, the net result of all these deliberations, both theoretical and practical, promoted collieries in the Rhondda and Cynon valleys. This seam of Welsh Steam Coal extended from Hirwaun and Treherbert down to Pontypridd. Because there were seams of other types of coal at different strata in the same area, many collieries mined more than one type of coal. The Admiralty then scrutinised the individual steam coal collieries and created an Approved List of 35.

The Royal Navy's steam coal estimates for the coming year were put out to tender each October to the collieries on the Admiralty Approved List. The rate of delivery was stipulated as one twelfth of the annual total per month with a 20% variation to allow for Fleet exigencies. '*To rule the waves*' was Admiralty policy to make Britannia's Royal Navy larger than the next two navies combined, just in case Britain fought a war on two fronts. Therefore, the volumes of coal required were substantial. Contracts were then awarded to about 25 collieries for amounts that reflected their capacity

to deliver and the Navy's need for security of supply². The Admiralty was wary of a colliery's quoting for a delivery more than its capacity to produce, and because of potential labour unrest at a mine, it needed to have a variety of producers to spread the risk of disruption. The Admiralty, the largest customer for Welsh Steam Coal, had its contracts priced as 'Free on Board' (FoB) Cardiff, in other words shipping costs to destinations assumed the vessels departed from Cardiff. To require colliery quotations, the volume of coal desired at specific locations must have been stated, and the destination was needed in order to calculate the shipping costs to be added to the colliery price per ton. The information contained in the coaling estimates was necessary for a quotation, and invaluable to any foreign power and to any trading business. Knowing, for instance, that the Admiralty was intending to pre-position huge stocks of coal at some obscure Indian Ocean port spoke loudly of British future aspirations in that region. Commercially, advance knowledge of future shipping needs and their destinations would excite businesses involved in any aspect of funding, making or hiring ships, traders seeking new markets, and entrepreneurs seeking new ventures. With a destination port possibly needing to expand its facilities an astute buyer could acquire cheap land in advance. Quoting delivery 'FoB Cardiff' provided an enormous boost to Cardiff's trade and encouraged coal owners to become ship owners as well, and shippers to invest in mines.

Don't miss the 'Cut-Off Dates'

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

March Issue	20 Jan	June Issue	20 April
September issue	20 July	December Issue	20 October

² In Monmouthshire, the Sirhowy seam of steam coal was deep below the profitable house-coal strata and Newport's docks were serviced by the equally profitable horse powered Monmouthshire Canal and tramroad. Local businessmen appeared disinclined to invest in digging deeper shafts or laying rail tracks for steam locomotives. Newport's infrastructure was decades behind Cardiff's.

HAFOD COPPERWORKS GIRLS' SCHOOL, SWANSEA

#8289 Janet Neilson

One of the “tasks” that volunteers, in all branches of the GFHS, have undertaken, over many years, is transcribing records, eg school admission registers, school logbooks, MIs in cemeteries and graveyards and chapel records.

Recently, two of us, in Swansea, have been transcribing school admission registers. This led me to start investigating the district of Hafod in Swansea, at the time the school opened in the late 1800s.

Hafod, when translated into English means a “summer dwelling place”. Hardly the Hafod we know today, that is if you are familiar with Swansea’s Hafod!

Before 1846, education in Hafod was mainly in the hands of private individuals. This is obvious when looking at the new admissions. The last column of the register includes “Previous School Attended”.

Dame Schools, being one example, were established in private houses by an individual. Dame Schools were small, private elementary schools often run by a woman (“a dame”). Standards varied significantly, with some functioning as little more than childcare centres, whilst others provided a basic education in the 3Rs. They satisfied, as far as they were able, a great want and did noble work under adverse circumstances. There was one dame school near the entrance to Hafod Copper Works in a house named “The Barracks”. They gradually disappeared after the introduction of free, compulsory education in the late 19th century.

Unfortunately, as far as can be ascertained, no records for such schools survive for the Hafod area of Swansea.

As well as Dame Schools, education was also provided by religious communities to give the working classes the opportunities of the advantage of education. Hafod was certainly a working-class area at this time.

In the 1840s it was seen that education must be dealt with in a far more advantageous way and that greater facilities must be given to the children of an advancing community.

In 1846, Mr John Henry VIVIAN, built a mixed school (boys and girls) on the site of St John’s parish hall, which later became the Hafod Community

Centre. Mr James HALL taught the boys and Miss Jane Hall (his sister) taught the girls. The building was built with a wooden partition down the centre. The girls were taught on one side and the boys on the other. One can only imagine the noise as tables were recited by rote on one side and English was being taught on the other. Or did silence reign, and only the teachers' voices could be heard?

In 1847, the school became crowded, so a boys' department was built, leaving the mixed school for girls and infants. The three departments became distinct.

As well as building the school the Vivian family also paid for the building of St John the Baptist Anglican Church (see Map 2).



Tithe map 1843

The earliest map we have of Hafod and the surrounding area is the Tithe Map of the 1840s. The tithe map has numbers on it (eg 11 is a field named Cae Lucy), which, when you look at the apportionments, tell you what each number represents, eg **12a** is Hafod Farm House, which was the other side of the rail tracks from Villiers Street. The apportionments also list who owns the land and if there is a tenant(s) renting that land, or some of it. Hafod Farmhouse stands on land owned by the Earl of Jersey and the tenants were William PADLEY and David THOMAS. Numbers **19** and **20** were the Hafod Copper Works, owned by the Vivian family. **21a** is the Swansea Canal and the River Tawe owned by the Canal Company. You can also see that the main roads “run out” and become tracks.

“The schools were built on a hill, amid waving cornfields and flower decked meadows” as well as fields, farms and cottages with thatched roofs. Hedgerows with fields on either side bordered the road, except where a few houses had been built. It is hard to imagine that today!

The area with thatched roofed cottages was The Pentre, “an isolated village. When they were demolished, a number of snakes were found to have infested them”.



Smith's Arms, were the villas of a fashionable suburb.

These, together with the row that faces the Club House and Hafod Inn, were the only lines of houses in the neighbourhood, surrounded by field after field.

The children leaving school at the end of the day saw a valley, bordered on each side by fields, belonging to several farms. There were no coal tips at this time. Trewyddfa Castle (Morris Tower) was nearby and occupied by tenants who worked for Sir John Morris (the first block of tenements in the UK, if not the world). It overlooked the thatched cottages and fields.

Pathways led in many directions from and to the school, and hedges stretched to Landore. It is less than one mile from Hafod to Landore and would take, today, about 15 minutes, walking alongside a busy main road.

But imagine the joys, after a day in the classroom, under a strict regime, of walking alongside hedgerows or through meadows in summertime. Perhaps not such an idyll in winter. This may explain, as children could cut across country, why they attended the school from as far afield as Llangyfelach, Birchgrove, Sketty, Cockett and Pontarddulais. That may sound extraordinary to older readers, but it also happens today. However, today children arrive by car, whereas in the 1800s it would seem that most children walked, or could they have arrived by horse and cart, picking up other children on the way?

In later years, the land surrounding the school, Vivianstown, was divided into potato patches, which helped with the children's physical development as they had some fresh food to eat.

In 1850, the mistress of the Girls' School was Mrs CARRUTHERS. She spent many years in the school and retired in 1883.

The next mistress was Mrs GRIFFITHS. She trained the girls in needlework so well that it was described thus – “And the needlework! That was the great feature”. Some of the girls were chosen, because of their great skill, to work on a piece of linen from Singleton Abbey, the home of the Vivian family.

Visitors to the school included JH Vivian, Mrs JH Vivian, the Hon Odo Vivian, the late Lord Swansea and Lady Swansea, Graham and Dulcie Vivian, the Duchess of Argyll, Lord Aberdare, Lord and Lady Cholmondeley and Earl and Lady Essex. This must have caused anxiety for the teaching staff! Other visitors included school inspectors on a frequent basis.

On Singleton Day all the children were invited to Singleton Abbey (now part of Swansea University) where they played games, including races, sang songs and where they were given tea. This must have been a real treat for them and a gave them a glimpse into “how the other half live.”

Looking through the admission registers there were, of course, “sad” entries, eg mother was a widow, unusual names to decipher, as well as the head teacher's handwriting!

Many children joined the Junior School from schools nearby. Others left and then sometime later were re-admitted. Unfortunately, the reason for leaving and then returning were not noted, which means an important part of the social history of Hafod is missing. One can only assume that the family moved because the head of the household (usually a man) had found a better job.

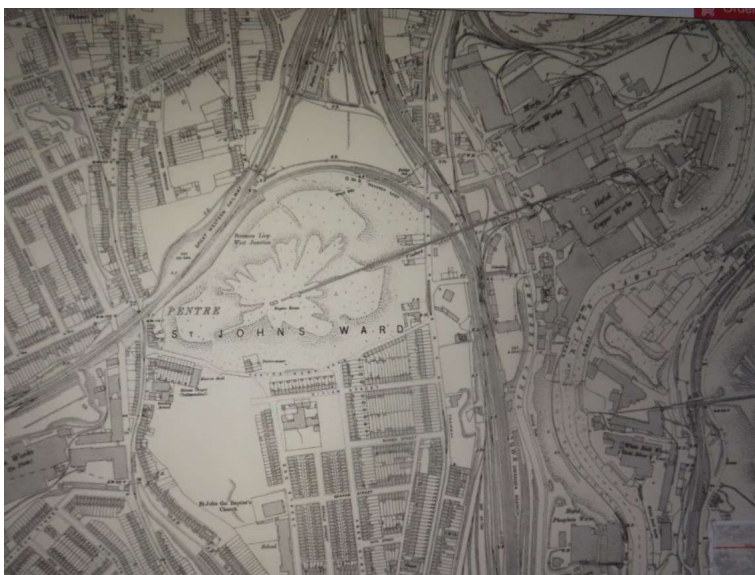
In 1870 the Elementary Education Act (Forster's Act) was a landmark UK law, establishing a national framework for elementary education in England and Wales, creating locally elected "school boards" to build schools (Board Schools) in underserved areas, alongside existing voluntary church schools, funded by local rates. By this time, Hafod School had already completed 24 years of its history.

The Hafod schools were built to suit a system known as the Lancaster System, which though new in England, at the time, had been elaborated by the great teacher, Pestalozzi in 1798. Scholars were chosen to teach their less gifted friends. Also the schools were built with a sloping floor and high platform so that the teacher could see all the children in the room.

A newer and later system paid more attention to the training of proper persons to teach the young. They became known as Pupil Teachers. Only those who decided to teach after the end of the course were chosen. An example of this method enabled (John) Charles SAMPSON (born 1862), who lived on Neath Road, to become a Pupil Teacher in Hafod. In the 1911 census he is described as an assistant teacher in an elementary school and in the 1921 census he is an assistant school master, employed by Swansea Education Authority.

The main occupations listed in the register in 1891 include working in Hafod Copper Works: Hafod Spelter; Tin and Silver Works: colliers; labourers; brickmakers; masons; carpenters and a policeman.

MAP 2



On this map you can see, just below the centre of the map, Hafod Copperworks Girls' School. To the north west is the Mission Hall (mentioned later in article), another school at the south of the map, which became Hafod Secondary Modern School and the vast area covered by Hafod Copper Works (today in the area of Swansea City football ground and an out of town shopping area). Other industries included Middle Bank Copper Works, White Rock works, phosphate, nickel and copper works as well as quarrying and coal mining.

This is the time when Hafod, and the surrounding districts were beginning to become industrialised, which, eventually led to the destruction, degradation and degeneration of the Swansea Valley.

By 1902, when the register ends, occupations are more varied, and include, as well as metal workers (as in 1876), dock workers, railway workers, brewer, publican, bargeman, hawkers, undertaker, preacher and oil workers.

The second part of my article describes the variety of names and places the pupils came from, and the difficulties experienced when deciphering bad handwriting in the records.

There will also be details of the sources used in my research.

Printed Family Trees and Charts

Do you want your Family Tree printed for you on one sheet of paper? We can print your tree from your own computer genealogy program files no matter what program you use.

FREE tree design service, FREE colour printing. FREE preview service.

See your tree before you buy or pay a penny. Every customer previews their tree on their own dedicated website before deciding to buy or pay a penny. Prices start from as little as £25 for a 500 person tree. We also produce a wide range of other Family History charts, books and gifts for the genealogist. FULL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE if you are not satisfied with any of our products.

Please visit our website for further details or e-mail us your phone number and we'll call you to answer any questions you may have, you don't even pay for the call.

email: info@genealogyprinters.com

JOHN WILLIAMS (1827-1905) – LIFELONG FARMER AND QUIET HERO

#10902 Gail du Pisanie

John Williams the farmer

John Williams was born into a farming family in 1827. At the time of his birth his family were tenants holding Haregrove Farm, in the parish of Tythegston. His forefathers had farmed in the surrounding areas for at least three generations, holding tenancies of farms belonging to Margam estate. John grew up at Llangewydd Court and was about 19 when his family moved to Morfa Mawr Farm, a farm of about 190 acres, not far from Margam Park.

With the death of his parents and the marriage of most of his siblings, by 1859 John was himself tenant of Morfa Mawr. One of his unmarried sisters, Mary, remained on the farm with him. The farm Morfa Mawr lay on the landward side of the Margam Burrows which fringed Margam Sands. It lay in direct line between Margam Park and the shore. In the 20th century it was swallowed up by the Margam Steelworks.

John Williams the hero

Margam Sands lies on the Bristol Channel, a busy and often treacherous shipping route for many centuries. The coastline, with numerous hazards, was the scene of frequent shipwrecks, many with tragic consequences. A booklet, *Shipwrecks of Porthcawl*, devised by Steve Maitland THOMAS and edited by Ceri JOSEPH, is available at the Porthcawl Museum. It contains detailed information about the fate of ships in the area across the centuries.

On Monday, 31 October 1859, the 369 ton barque Sunda was making its way from its home port of Jersey to Swansea to pick up cargo for Caldera, Chile. It was captained by Jean LE BAS, and the 15 on board included the captain's wife and a pilot from Bristol. The weather it encountered off the Mumbles was particularly bad. On Thursday, 3 November 1859, *The St James's Chronicle* printed a lengthy list of vessels affected under the heading "DISASTERS AT SEA – ANOTHER TERRIFIC GALE IN THE CHANNEL". The Sunda was one of the disasters, wrecked off the Margam Sands.

Newspapers in the following days and over the next couple of months gave details of the disaster that played out. The following description includes details gleaned from these reports:

The Sunda let go both anchors in mountainous seas. One anchor chain parted and the vessel rode on the other, the crew cutting the masts away. The other anchor chain parted about midday the following day and she drifted towards the shore.

Among those who observed the drifting boat was Christopher Rice Mansel TALBOT, MP, Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan and owner of the Margam Estate, who saw it from his Margam Park residence. He summoned help throughout the neighbourhood and hastened to Margam Sands. Mr Talbot was Vice Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron at the time, having been elected a member in 1823. Despite his long maritime connection, he could not swim.

As the Sunda began to founder the first boat, carrying the captain, his wife and five other persons, was lowered in the lee of the barque and made it safely to shore. The remaining seven people cast off in the second boat despite Talbot's warnings. It capsized. One man managed to regain the Sunda.

Talbot tried to wade through the waves in an attempt to establish a line connecting the Sunda to the shore, but was unsuccessful. John Williams then rode into the waves on horseback but he too was driven back.

Talbot organised a line of men with linked hands into the breakers. They managed to rescue four men from the water. By this time the Port Talbot steam tug along with a Port Talbot pilot had arrived on the scene. With Mr Talbot's guidance and the expertise of the master of the tug and the pilot, the tug was able to get a line to the Sunda and rescue the remaining man on board. The second mate, Charles HUBERT, drowned.

According to reports, the men rescued from the sea were found 'insensible' but gradually recovered consciousness. Mr Talbot ensured that the shipwrecked men received assistance. They were aided by Mr SUTTON of Somersetshire House, a public house in Taibach, with shelter and dry clothing, while Mrs Jean [Le Bas], the wife of the captain of the Sunda, "half-dressed, was most kindly treated by Miss WILLIAMS, Morfa Mawr Farm".

It must be noted that newspapers varied in the details reported.

Representations were made to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for recognition to be given to the bravery of those assisting the shipwrecked of

the Sunda. This recognition was given, with *The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* reporting on 7 January 1860 that the following awards had been made:

- To Mr Talbot, a silver medal and copy of the institution's vote on parchment of his intrepid services by wading into the surf with others at much risk of life, and rescuing several men.
- To Mr Williams a farmer, [who] had courageously followed the example of Mr Talbot, by rushing into the sea on horseback to attempt to save some of the poor fellows, a silver medal.
- To four other men, who had creditably exerted themselves on the occasion, £3.

It is noteworthy that at this time moves were being made towards the establishment of a lifeboat station at Porthcawl. Press reports show appeals underway in October 1859, with the first lifeboat being delivered in April 1860. Mr Talbot was a supporter of this effort.

John Williams the quiet farmer

With his sister, Mary's, departure to join her brother at Parc Newydd Farm, John remained on Morfa Mawr. In December 1862 he married Catherine/Kate POWELL, daughter of William and Catherine Powell, a farmer of Merthyr Mawr. They were married in the Parish Church of Merthyr Mawr. Witnesses to their marriage were Kate's sister, Elizabeth, and Theodore Mansel Talbot, son of CRM Talbot, owner of the Margam Estate. They were still on Morfa Mawr Farm in the 1871 census but by about the middle of that decade they had moved to Merthyr Mawr and settled on The Home Farm, Merthyr Mawr, a farm of about 130 acres.

John and Kate had no children. The large family Bible presented to them on or about their marriage bears only their names, dates and places of birth, and the date and place of their marriage. They were, however, close to Kate's family, and to Kate's niece, Kate Cecile Leyshon Williams, in particular. John established a name throughout the county for the breeding and showing of shire and cart horses. His horses were regularly in competition at shows throughout the region and he was the recipient of many awards and medals.

John's health was failing in early 1905 and Kate was an invalid. They reluctantly gave up the Home Farm with the horses sold in March of that year. They moved to a house in Coity Road, Bridgend. John died on 12 July 1905. The following obituary appeared in the *Glamorgan Gazette* on 14 July:

DEATH OF MR. JOHN WILLIAMS

We regret to announce the death of Mr John Williams, late of the Home Farm, Merthyr Mawr, which sad event occurred at his residence, 6 Coity-road, Bridgend, on Wednesday night. The deceased gentleman was well-known throughout the county of Glamorgan as a successful breeder of horses, and as a good all-round agriculturalist. He was 78 years of age, and leaves a widow, who is an invalid.

Mr Williams, who was a native of Pyle, was the son of one of the most successful farmers in the county at that time. Nearly half a century ago he succeeded his father as the tenant of Morfa Mawr Farm on the Margam Moors, a portion of the Margam Estate.

He successfully managed the Morfa Mawr Farm until his removal to the Home Farm, Merthymawr, over twenty years later, where he has resided since. He married the daughter of the late Mr Wm. Powell, who resided in the Home Farm for many years. Mr Williams had gained the reputation of being one of the most successful breeders of horses – especially shire horses – in the county, and his exhibits frequently took first prizes at leading shows. Unfortunately his health had not been robust for some years, and a few months ago he was obliged to retire from farming. The sale of horses, which took place on March 16th, was one of the most important held in the district for some years, and purchasers were attracted from all parts of South Wales and Monmouthshire. Unhappily the hopes of his many friends, expressed at the luncheon prior to the sale, that he would have a long life in retirement, have not been fulfilled. When a young man he took an active interest in politics, and was a strong supporter of the Liberal cause, when Mr C. R. M. Talbot of Margam, was the representative of the county in Parliament. An ardent Churchman, he had discharged the duties of Churchwarden at Merthymawr for many years. Mr Williams took a great interest in matters nautical. Whilst watching a stormy sea from the tower at Margam many years ago he saw a ship wrecked off the coast. He gathered together some farm men, mounted a horse belonging to the late Mr Talbot, and by riding into the rough sea was able to take a rope to the sailors clinging to the wreck. This deed of bravery was the means of saving the lives of several mariners. Deceased's brother, Mr Rees Williams, New Park, Pyle, who is three years his senior, is also a successful farmer. His only sister living is Mrs Morgans of Sker Farm, Kenfig.

Sadly, Kate died 2 days later, on 16 July 1905. The Evening Express reported on 17 July:

Husband and Wife Die.

PATHETIC CASE AT BRIDGEND - The death occurred at Bridgend on Wednesday night of Mr John Williams, late of the Home Farm, Merthyr Mawr, a well-known breeder of shire horses. The funeral was to have taken place to-day. Late on Sunday night the death took place of Mrs Williams, the widow, who had been an invalid for some years. Mr Williams was 78 years of age and Mrs Williams a little younger. This is the third case recently of an aged couple dying within a few days of each other in the district of Bridgend.

John and Kate were buried in the graveyard of the parish church of Merthyr Mawr on the 17th and 20th of July 1905 respectively.

John Williams remembered

There was little mention of John's heroism in the later decades of the century. However,

- A lengthy account appeared in a column headed 'Wales Day by Day' in the *Western Mail* on 20 July 1899, 6 years before John's death. His heroism had not been forgotten, although many of the details had been misremembered and/or exaggerated. I wonder what John made of the account?
- At the time of writing, a short account of the wreck and the medals awarded to Talbot and Williams may be found on the Swansea and Port Talbot Docks website:
- <http://www.swanseadocks.co.uk/docksnewsite/contribron2.html>
- Also at the time of writing, the website
- <https://rnli.org/find-my-nearest/lifeboat-stations/porthcawl-lifeboat-station/station-history-porthcawl> includes mention of the silver medals awarded to Talbot and Williams in 1860.

NOW AVAILABLE, FREE ONLINE:

The Irish 1926 census. This was postponed from 1921 due to the War of Independence and the Irish Civil War, but available now it should be a great addition to Irish records especially at the founding years of the Irish Free State.

www.nationalarchives.ie

TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE, PART 2

#2 Diane Brook

In the first part of this article I explained how I came to possess two large family bibles, one in Welsh filled with Thomases which I hoped would prove to be my distant family relatives, and the other in English, featuring an Eaton family. The Thomas link unfortunately proved not to have any connection with my family, but nevertheless the detailed family links made for some fascinating research, outlined in part 1. Here I pick up the Thomas story, and their links with the Eatons, at the end of the nineteenth century with Henry Eaton Thomas and his wife Mary, before writing of the Eaton family and their bible in part 3.

Henry Eaton Thomas, born 1866, was an Anglican clergyman, serving in Wrexham and Oswestry. He married Lucy Margaret James of Llangollen in 1902 and they had two children, Herbert George Eaton Thomas, born 1903 and Myfanwy Eaton Thomas, born 1904. Henry died suddenly at church one Sunday in 1915, aged only 48. One of the obituaries said he was 'an old Llandovery boy' which made me wonder if there was another Henry Eaton Thomas and I had the wrong one. The 1881 census showed Henry was at school in Llandovery but born in Llannon, Carmarthenshire. Again, Llannon and not Llanedi, where 'my' Thomas's were from but Henry's baptism confirmed the link; baptised in Llannon church, parents Lewis and Anne Thomas of Pantydwr, Llanedi. Both of Henry's children married but all checks show that neither had children.

Mary, the only other child of Lewis and Anne Thomas, born 1869, was at home with her parents in the census through 1891 but did not appear after that. Ancestry offered no hints so either she died before 1901, or, even with Artificial Intelligence being employed by Ancestry, no easy link to any marriage for such a common name was found. FreeBMD lists 85 Mary Thomas marriages in Llanelly district alone 1891-1901, including those with additional forenames. (Llanelly until 1974, then Llanelli thereafter.) But, first, to eliminate any early deaths: three Mary Thomas's died at the correct approximate ages between 1891 and 1901 in Llanelly district as found by searching FreeBMD. The first two were wives of men surnamed Thomas although either of these could have been our Mary, having married another Thomas. The last one, in 1899, closes the story:

Fourth June 1899, Red Cow, Hendy, Llanedy RD, Mary Thomas, Female, 30 years, Daughter of Lewis Thomas Innkeeper, Suppressed Rheumatism Hyperpyrexia, Temp 110, Certified by WC Griffiths LRCP, Evan Jones

Present at the Death Hendy Llanedy [registered] Tenth June 1899 John Davies Registrar.

Oh, poor Mary! 110 degrees Fahrenheit is 43 Celsius.

No descendants, then, of Lewis Thomas and his wife Anne. Next to look into were Lewis's and Anne's parents and siblings.

Lewis Thomas's wife Ann was born Anne Thomas, daughter of Thomas Thomas, as shown on their marriage entry, at Llannon, 11 October 1864. Both their fathers were dead by then. Lewis was from Pantydwr while Anne was from Tyisha (properly Ty Isaf, 'Lower House' in Welsh but many colloquial spellings in the records). They married by banns, both signed, and the witnesses were Thos Thomas and David Thomas. Ann said she was 26 at marriage, so born about 1838, just within civil registration. She was baptised in 1849 with a note in the parish register that she was 13 years old, mother's forename Elizabeth.

I do not have early Welsh family myself so working on two interrelated Thomas families at once has given me a good insight into the issues around tracing families with such common surnames and forenames. The key to linking individuals turned out to be, in this case, the farm names associated with each Thomas family. As these appear in addresses in parish registers after 1813, civil records, and gravestones, they tie records together that otherwise would be too anonymous to be certain of.

Thomas of Pantydwr

Lewis Thomas of the Red Cow Inn was the last child of Henry Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth, nee Lewis.

The various records give the family structure:

Henry Thomas, dead by 1841, living 1837-8. Will dated 6 Sep 1840, probate 9 Mar 1841. Farmer, Pantydwr, Llanedy. Death Sep quarter 1840, Llanelly district, age 43, therefore born about 1797. Buried at Llandeilo Talybont, 11 Sep 1840, Henry Thomas, 43 yrs, Pantydwr, Llanedy.

Elizabeth, born about 1807 in Llandeilo Talybont. Children born about 1827 to 1838-39, first one, Mary, not born in Carmarthenshire, rest born in Llanedy. Only Lewis born after July 1837, civil record June quarter, 1838. Marriage of Henry Thomas and Elizabeth Lewis:

Henry Thomas of Llangyfelach and Elizabeth Lewis of this parish by banns 21st March 1826 at Llandeilo Talybont, both signed, witnesses Lewis Lewis, Thos Thomas.

Thus, both parties were from Glamorgan parishes, not Carmarthenshire.



Llandeilo Talybont parish church has been removed and rebuilt at the National History Museum at St Fagans, Cardiff, with restored and added late medieval wall paintings. The font is the original, where Elizabeth was baptised in 1805. Photo by David Brook.

Their children, the Pantydwr Thomas's:

1. Mary, born about 1827, not born in Carmarthenshire. Not traced further.
2. Elizabeth, born about 1830 [possibly the same as Mary as Elizabeth does not appear on the 1841 census, but, the ages are very different]
3. Anne, born about 1830/31, married Henry Thomas of Ty Isaf in 1873. No children but adopted Eleanor Jane Thomas, born 1882, daughter of Lewis Thomas of Pantydwr and his wife Anne, originally of Ty Isaf.
4. David, born about 1834. Censuses show him unmarried up to age 36 in 1871. Not found thereafter.
5. Sarah, born about 1836. Living with her brother Lewis Thomas at the Red Cow Inn in 1891, unmarried, aged 55. Not traced further.
6. Lewis, born 1838. No descendants, as above.

Thus it is just possible there are descendants of either Mary or David or both but not Anne, Sarah or Lewis. This Thomas family seemed determined not to reproduce.

Thomas of Tyissa

The Thomas family of Ty Isaf was closely linked to the Thomas's of Pantydwr. Perhaps they left descendants. We begin with the marriage of the parents of Anne Thomas, later wife of Lewis Thomas of Pantydwr and the Red Cow Inn.

Thomas Thomas of the parish of Bishopstone married Elizabeth Eaton of this Parish on 18 October 1823 at Llanrhidian by Licence. Both signed. Witnesses Griffith Eaton, John Attwood. The places are on the Gower peninsula in Glamorgan so the Eaton Bible is for a Glamorgan family.

The couple moved to Tyisha or Tyissa in Llannon parish, Carmarthenshire.

The censuses shows the family over time with their six children. It turns out the father, Thomas Thomas, was from Carmarthenshire and presumably had been working on the Gower peninsula when he met and married Elizabeth Eaton of Llanrhidian.

Thomas Thomas and Elizabeth's children:

1. George, baptised George Eaton Thomas, 1823, single in all censuses found, up to 1901, died 1905.
2. Henry, born 1827. Married Ann Thomas of Pantydwr as shown in the Bible, adopted their niece, Eleanor Jane, but no children of their own.
3. Richard, born 1829, married, two children, no grandchildren.
4. Mary, born 1832, married Thomas Evans, lived in Llangennech. Eight children, just possibly some descendants.
5. Griffith, born about 1834-5. Not found on 1861 census and later, probably died.
6. Anne, born 1836, married Lewis Thomas, Pantydwr. No living descendants.

Thus there are no likely lines of descent for the six Thomas children of Ty Isaf either, with perhaps the exception of an Evans line.

In Part 3 I will write about the Eaton Family from the Eaton Bible.

EXCHANGE JOURNALS

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www.glamfhs.org.uk/exchange-journals

ANOTHER WELSH MORMON FAMILY STORY

#20704 Thomas Preece

I enjoyed reading the series on Welsh Mormons by Martin Owen in last year's Journals. I also have 19th-century Mormon cousins that moved from South Wales to Utah — mine emigrated in 1854, and became quite prominent in Utah society.

My fifth great-grandparents, Lewis and Hannah PREES, had six children. Lewis was an official of the ecclesiastical court at Llandaff, although I haven't been able to find a huge amount of detail about his life. Lewis and Hannah's second daughter, Amelia, was baptised at Llandaff Cathedral in 1783, and married Edmund LEWIS there on 9th August 1808. Their third son, John Lewis, was baptised on 1st January 1815 and is the subject of this story. The Welsh Saints Project website has a biography of John, written in March 1927 by his granddaughter Priscilla Lewis SWENSON, and a series of books by Kate B CARTER contains information about him in an article focussing on one of his sons, Frederick. Many of the facts in these biographies can be confirmed using primary sources, but they naturally capture much more narrative detail than would otherwise be available — although as they were written long after his death, they are probably best interpreted as rough sketches rather than as precise facts. All information not otherwise sourced in this story comes from either or both of these biographies.

John was educated as a Wesleyan minister, and his first child, Ann, was baptised at the Ebenezer Wesleyan Chapel in Cardiff in 1836. John did not, however, go into ministry as a full-time occupation, instead becoming a master mason who worked on the building of the Cardiff Docks. He and his family discovered the Mormon faith in 1851, were baptised into that religion at Newport in 1853, and set off for America in January 1854, travelling with twenty-one members of the Cardiff branch on the sailing ship *Golconda* from Liverpool to New Orleans, proceeded by river to St Louis and then overland with the Darwin Richards Company, and arrived at Salt Lake City on 30th September. John, who appears to have been quite wealthy, having owned and leased twelve houses and engaged private tutors and a governess for his children while in Cardiff, paid for all twenty-one fellow travellers' passage.

As a mason, John's skills were naturally in great demand in the young city in the desert. He was engaged to work on the building of the Salt Lake Temple block, remaining there for about a year. One day, he was approached by BRIGHAM YOUNG, president of the Mormon Church, who

handed him four peach stones and commissioned him to start an orchard in Brigham City, some 60 miles north of Salt Lake. Brigham City is now renowned for its peaches, and since 1904 has held an annual festival to celebrate the harvest — all because of what my cousin began some fifty years earlier.

The Lewis family only stayed in Brigham City for a few years, moving south to Spanish Fork by the time of the 1860 Census, where they settled and remained for the rest of John's life. John died on 4th November 1887, and was buried at the Spanish Fork Cemetery, along with his second wife Priscilla, who predeceased him by about four months. His gravestone is inscribed "John A Lewis"; while he wasn't given a middle name at birth, it seems likely that he adopted this initial after his conversion to the Mormon faith, as it was (and still is) common for Mormons with common names to use a middle initial.

John had seven children by his first wife Ann, all born in Wales, and two by Priscilla: Amelia Priscilla, born in Cardiff in 1852, and John Samuel, born in Nebraska in 1854, presumably while en route to Utah. Aside from three children who died in infancy, the whole family migrated to Utah together.

If you have Mormon cousins, you will doubtless find them very easy to find through your research. Genealogy is seen as a religious requirement, due to the Mormon belief in performing ceremonies in their Temples on behalf of dead ancestors. It is well worth making good use of the resources provided through the Mormon Church's genealogical arm, Family Search, as the majority of them are freely accessible. John Lewis's family had been researched fairly extensively by Mormon genealogists in the 20th century, and I was able to access their notes on the family, including on my ancestors Lewis and Hannah Prees.

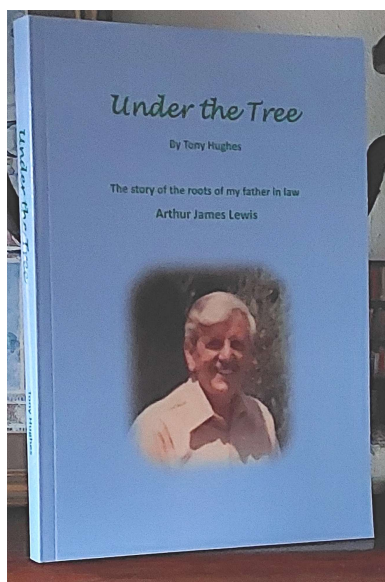
As with any other genealogist's work, however, care should always be taken to verify the information found. There seems to have been a conclusion made that Hannah's maiden surname was DAVID, but no information is given as to how this information was arrived at! As there is no marriage record for Lewis and Hannah, and their children were born long before the GRO Birth Index and its record of the mother's maiden name, the only evidence appears to be that there is a baptism of a Hannah, daughter of Francis David, in exactly the right birth year implied by her age at death and that one of the witnesses to her daughter Amelia's marriage to Edmund Lewis was called John David and is thus plausibly a relative. Unfortunately, however, none of this is proof, and so Hannah remains with an unknown surname in my tree.

TURNING FAMILY TREE STORIES INTO PRINT

#9907 Antony Hughes

This article describes my experiences on deciding to put my family history into book form for my family and friends. I hope that some of you readers will find it useful should you decide to do the same with your family research.

If someone started writing with the intention of producing a book, then I think that it would be very desirable to look into printing options and costs first. Then they could produce text etc in the format required from the



outset. They could also decide at the outset whether their goal was to produce a book for open publication, or (like ours) privately produced for family members, friends, research collaborators and special others (like some members of GFHS for example, who had played an important part in helping with the research).

In my case it was a bit like the old adage 'I wouldn't start from here'. I had started writing what became the chapters partly to make some of the stories readable for family members, and partly as a coherent record distilled out of my copious and rather complicated handwritten and computer-based notes. It was only once most chapters had been written on my PC in

Word A4 that the idea of putting it all together in a book arose, requiring some re-writing and re-formatting.

I'm not sure anyway if we would have gone for an open publication with an ISBN number that could have been put out by the publisher for sale, but from where I was it would have involved a lot of checking of permissions for copyright of pictures, and to make sure that people were happy to be named in the book and to have information quoted that had been passed to me in e-mails. So our intention was to produce a book that was, as it were, 'not for open publication'.

Our family research, unlike that of many constructors of family trees, has focussed on the fairly recent past. Hardly anything before the early 1800s has been involved. This is because the focus has been on trying to find

the natural parentage of my father-in-law, Arthur James LEWIS, who was born in 1915 in Cardiff with the surname PAYNE and brought up from the age of about one by his adoptive Lewis parents.

We started searching in 2010 and quickly found out a lot about Arthur's adoptive family members. Importantly, by the end of 2010 we had identified his natural mother, Florence Payne, and within another year or so had learned a lot about her life and times.

By about 2015 I had written up our researches in a series of draft chapters, but it took a lot longer, until 2020, to find Arthur's natural father, Thomas Morgan JONES, with the aid of DNA. Some loose ends remained, but at the beginning of 2025 a rather crucial one, finding out when and where Thomas Morgan Jones died, was tied up.

So about a year ago I decided it was time to tidy up all the chapters and put them together as a book, in time for Christmas 2025, not for publication, but for family and friends.

The first thing of course was to go through all the draft chapters, updating and re-writing them as necessary and making sure that the text and all the pictures were consistent in style. Going back over material written for the most part ten years ago, and asking opinions from my wife, Margaret, about following some of the rather complicated relationships, led to the conclusion that the book should have a summary that explained what each chapter was about. It was also suggested that a final chapter about Arthur's descendants would also be good to have. Family members presented with the book would then be able to read about themselves and hopefully feel some connection with all the other branches of the tree. So some more writing was needed.

Then I realised that a book would be A5 in size, whereas all my chapters were Word files with A4 pages and embedded pictures. Everything then was changed to A5 with pictures re-arranged to fit the pagination. I suppose the message in hindsight is to start with A5 pages, and possibly put the pictures at the end of each chapter, rather than embedded within the text, so that the pagination of the text and the size of the pictures do not need modification by editorial changes. Once this was done I had a complete set of the 17 chapters, individually as Word and PDF files, and could also assemble them into a single file of the whole book, with page numbers and blank pages to ensure that chapters always started on the right hand page of a printed book.

The next step was how to get it all printed as a book. I knew that as well as printers who could produce a book from text submitted in any format, there were printing firms who would work directly from a submitted PDF file, including a PDF of the intended cover. The local printing firm that I

intended to consult had recently gone out of business, but I did have a dialogue with another printer as well as getting an indicative quote from a firm that would work from a PDF file with no further editing.

The printing firm were very helpful, but it became clear that even though we did not want an open publication, the firm would want to do copy editing to ensure that the product met their style and standards, and consequently the cost would be relatively high. They offered a free sample of their copy editing on a short example of my text. Their proposed changes were reasonable, but I could see that they would probably want to make quite a lot of changes to my writing. The chapters did vary in style, having been written at different times, but they were my style, for better or worse, reflecting the thousands of pages and hundreds of papers I had written over my professional career and for my voluntary work.

The firm that would produce directly from my submitted PDF file, and would produce a proof copy for checking and then do the print run from a corrected PDF file, were also very helpful, but nothing like as expensive. The limited numbers (75) that we wanted would work out at under £10 per copy for softback and a bit more for hardback. The firm made good suggestions for things like the quality of paper and the binding.

So that was the route we followed. The proof reading was arduous as it always is, but once corrections were made to the master PDF file the books were produced within a few weeks, and well packaged for delivery. If we ever want extra copies they can be ordered and printed from the archived file, at around the same price per copy as the original print run.

What is there to learn from this, especially for people who have not done it before? There must be many Journal readers who have produced books for publication, so this will be old hat for them. Novices at the process might though find it more useful. For us the use of a printing firm that would reproduce directly from our submitted files was ideal. Provided one is prepared to do the assembly into a single PDF file that looks exactly like the intended book, and do the proof reading and corrections, this for our purposes was a good way to have a well-produced book describing all the ins and outs of our family research.

Editor's note: *Having looked at the very attractive book, it seems an excellent way to bring together the results of family history research for family members and others to read, and for future reference on their bookshelves. If anyone wants any more information on the process, then please contact the editor who will put you in touch with the author.*

A JOURNEY FROM YNYSMEUDWY TO SYDNEY

Part 2

#20932 Enid Lewis

In part 1 of this account of the Bevan family's journey to Australia I wrote of their sadness at leaving their home near Ystalyfera to live in Sydney. The accounts were made, in English and Welsh, from contemporary newspaper reports and from the diaries kept by the emigrants. Here is more of their journey, with some of the entries in both languages:

"JOURNEY FROM YNYSMEUDWY, CWMTAWE TO SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA." Sydney, New South Wales. July 29th, 1884.

April 5th - The ship starts its voyage at six o'clock. Everyone on their feet this morning watching the ship launch into the ocean. Beautiful morning. Losing sight of the old country (but not the country of Wales after all) at half past seven on Saturday night. Seasickness pays me an early morning visit. Clinging tightly to the side of the ship. Saw a big fish at three, my brother Thomas said; but it was not possible for me to see much.

Ebrill 6fed - Codi am pump. Y mae yn fore hyfryd heddiw, ond y mae y llong fel *rocking chair* ond ei bod yn siglo o'i hochr. Yn canfod llawer o longau heddiw yn 'marchog tonau'r eigion'. Dim gwasanaeth crefyddol yn cael ei gynnal heddiw am fod clefyd y mor yn teynasu mor gyffredinol rhwng ystlysau y llong. Y mae heddiw yn ddydd Sul; ond O! mor annhebyg i'r Sul yn Nghymru. Y mae rhyw barch cysegredig yn ein meddiannu, ac atgofion melys ac hiraethus am y Saboth Gristnogol yn ngwlad ein genedigaeth. Yr oedd myfyrdodau ein calonnau heddiw yn Bethesda, Ynysmeudwy, am ddeg, dau, a chwech o'r gloch.

April 6th - Get up at five. It is a beautiful morning today, but the ship is like a rocking chair except that it is rocking from side to side. Saw many ships today 'riding the ocean waves'. No religious service is being held today because seasickness reigns so universally between the sides of the ship. Today is Sunday; but Oh! so unlike Sunday in Wales. A certain sacred respect possesses us, and sweet and longing memories of the Christian Sabbath in the land of our birth. The reflections of our hearts were today in Bethesda, Ynysmeudwy, at ten, two, and six o'clock.

April 7th - Up at four. Saw Portugal in the distance, and it appears to be a very rocky country. Lose sight of this country again at half past ten in the morning. Thomas gets seasick for the first time. Saw ships in the distance. A rainbow appears at four o'clock. This is a beautiful and poetic scene — the arc of the cloud hanging over the sea. We wanted our close friend Onllwyn

Brace to have a look at this scene. Go into rain. Raining all night, the wind against us.

April 8th - A very wet and cloudy morning. It became fair around midday, with the wind on our side to a degree. Thomas remains ill today again. Sails hoisted at twenty past three. Feeling convinced today that the earth is round while seeing so many ships with their masts coming into view in front of the ship's hull. Travelled 246 miles today.

April 9th - Fine morning. The sun is very hot. The sea is very smooth, and so is the ship. Waited from ten to two until ten past three to get up steam. The wind against us the rest of the day. A concert is held in the evening. Travelled 276 miles.

April 10th — Fine morning. Everything is pleasant. The sea like glass, and the ship like a child who has not learned to walk. Lots of small and large fish and birds appearing. A ship can be seen in the distance. Serviah feels unwell today. Travelled 212 miles.

Ebrill 11eg — Yn aros y bore hwn o fewn ychydig bellter i Tenneriffe er cael glo. Y mae Tenneriffe yn ymddangos yn lle tlws a rhamantus iawn. Mae y bencydd yn uchel, ac O! mor grand y maent wedi eu cyfleu gan Awdwr natur. Ar ochrau y brynau y mae gerddi prydferth a ffrwythlon yn cynhyrchu oranges, Bananas, grapes, lemons, pine apples, &c. Mae y tai yn go isel, ond er hynny yn brydferth. Y mae bron yr oll o'r tai wadi eu gwyngalchu, y to yn isel ac heb simneiau i'w canfod yn un man. Dyma'r lle y gwelais y 'rhod wynt' gyntaf. Yr oeddynt i'w canfod drwy'r wlad yn mhob man. Spaniards yw mwyafrif y trigolion. Y mae yn gynhaeaf yma yn awr. Yr ydym heddiw yn cael pob math o ffrwythau. *Cigars* yn rhad. Diwrnod braf heddiw, ond y môr erbyn nos yn aflonydd, ac yn parhau felly drwy y nos ond wedi'r cyfan, yr oedd yn braf iawn ar y dec, a'r lleuad yn ymddangos yn hynod o dlws. Deuai llinellau Gwallter Mechain i'n cof - *'Yr haul yn ngwely'r heli, A'r lloer yn ariannu'r lli'* Yr ydym yn cychwyn o'r lle hwn am chwech yn yr hwyr. Cynnal cyfarfod gweddi am haner awr wedi saith.

April 11th — Waiting this morning within a short distance of Tenneriffe to get coal. Tenneriffe appears to be a very pretty and romantic place. The hills are high, and Oh! how grandly they have been conveyed by the Author of nature. On the sides of the hills there are beautiful and fertile gardens producing oranges, bananas, grapes, lemons, pineapples, &c. The houses are quite low, but beautiful nonetheless. Almost all of the houses have been whitewashed, the roof low and no chimneys to be found anywhere. This is where I saw the first 'windmill'. They were to be found all over the country. The majority of residents are Spaniards. It is harvest here now. Today we get all kinds of fruit. Cigars are cheap. A fine day today, but the sea was restless by nightfall,

and continued like that throughout the night, but after all, it was very nice on deck, and the moon seemed very pretty. The lines of Gwallter Mechain came to mind - *'The sun in the bed of brine, The moon silvering the water'*
We start from this place at six in the evening. Hold a prayer meeting at half past seven.

April 12th - Get up early. The sky is clear, and the sea is calm. Holding a prayer meeting at half past seven tonight again. Travelled 181 miles today

April 13th - Pleasant Sunday morning. A Church of England service was held at half past ten. Got to talk to Serviah, my sister, at three o'clock, and thereby got a chat with some of the girls. Saw a flying fish at seven. A signal raised to some ship at 7.40. A prayer meeting held at eight. Travelled 275 miles.

April 14th - Get up at six. A very pleasant morning. Find out today that the bag of one of the passengers has been opened, and learnt a lesson from that to take care of our goods. Go to rest early tonight. Travelled 282 miles.

Ebrill 15fed - Codi am bedwar. Bore hyfryd heddiw eto, y môr heb wrych ar ei wyneb, a'r llong yn mordwyo fel 'alarch ar laslyn,' y wybren yn glir a digymylau, a'r haul yn cryfhau yn ei wres bob dydd. Llong yn ein hymyl yn pasio. Un arall i'w chanfod yn y pellter. Cael ein boxes i fyny i'r dec heddiw. Dysgu gwers, os bydd ei hangen eto - y bara wedi spoilio — y nwyddau eraill a llwydni arnynt, ond fel cig moch hallt, yn dda tu fewn. Gofaled teithwyr i beidio rhoi sebon yn eu boxes. Yr oedd y boxes hynny ag yr oedd sebon ynddynt yn waeth na'r lleill gyda phawb ohonom. Yr haul yn machlud yn fawreddog heno. Teithio heddiw 285 o filltiroedd.

April 15th - Get up at four. A beautiful morning today again, the sea without a ripple on its surface, and the ship navigating like a 'swan on a blue lake', the sky clear and cloudless, and the sun increasing in warmth every day. A ship beside us goes past. Another to be found in the distance. Get our boxes up to the deck today. Learnt a lesson, if needed again - the bread had spoiled - the other goods with mould on them, but like salted bacon, alright inside. Travellers should take care not to put soap in their boxes. Those boxes with soap in them were worse than the others with all of us. The sun sets majestically tonight. Travelled 285 miles today.

April 16th — Up at five. A very muggy night for sleeping last night. Ate Wm. Jones and D Lewis' cakes for breakfast today. The sun is very unrelenting. See hundreds of fish of all sizes and shapes. It has been fiercely hot all day. Had pudding today for the first time on board. Too hot to sleep in our bunks tonight - slept out on deck.

Ebrill 17eg—Cedi heddyw o'n gwelyau ar y dec. Nid oes genyf waith gwisgo am danaf, ond yr haul yn fy ngorfodi i godi. Nid oes eisieu gwaith arnom.

Ysmocio yn ormod o orchwyl, a bwyta yn waith go galed. Myned i'r gwlaw am haner wedi deg. Yr oeddem yn nghysgod y badau bychain ar y dec, ac yn rhy ddiog i godi o'r fan hono, ond cyn pen pum' mynyd, bu raid i ni ystwytho oddiyno. Deuai y cenllys a'r gwlaw i lawr yn rhaiadrau. Ni welais y fath olygfa erioed yn Nghymru. Rhedai rhai ohonom drwy y gwlaw a'n gwelyau dan ein ceseiliau, gan feddwl eu cadw yn sychach; ond dim perygl-yr oeddem ni a'n gwelyau mor wlybion, fel nad allem gael edefyn sych mewn un man. Ni chredwch gymaint a rwgnachasom y diwrnod hwn; yr oeddem cynddrwg, os nad gwaeth, na'r Israeliaid gynt yn yr anialwch.

April 17th — Rise today from our beds on deck. I have no need to dress myself, but the sun forces me to rise. We don't want to work. Smoking is too much of a task, and eating is quite hard work. Go into rain at half past ten. We were in the shadow of the small boats on the deck, and were too lazy to get up from there, but before five minutes had gone, we had to get moving. The hail and rain came down in waterfalls. I had never seen such a sight in Wales. Some of us ran through the rain with our beds under our armpits, thinking to keep them drier; but no chance - we and our beds were so wet, that we couldn't find a dry thread anywhere. You will not believe how much we grumbled this day; we were as bad, if not worse, than the former Israelites in the desert.

Ebrill 18fed - Boreu campus, ond fod yr haul yn danbeidiol iawn. Buom yn cysgo allan ar y dec neithiwr drachefn, ond yr oeddem yn ofni'r gwlaw. Canfod cwmwl am ddeg o'r gloch, a'r gwlaw yn dechreu disgyn. Myned i fewn a'n gwelyau am y cyntaf; ond ni ddaeth fawr o'r gwlaw i lawr - cadwodd oddiwrthym; ac os cawsoch chwi ef yn Nghymru, os oedd yn gyffelyb i'r cwmwl a dorodd ar ein penau ni ddoe, yr wyf yn sicr na fu y fath beth yna erioed o'r blaen; ond y mae yn dra thobyg fod y cwmwl wedi dadlwytho ei faich cyn dyfod atoch chwi. Y mae yn ddiwrnod ardderchog heddyw ar y cyfan - y gwres wedi lleddfu llawer wedi y gwlaw trwm ddoe. Mwynhau *plum pudding* heddyw, ac O! yr oedd yn bwyta yn dda, oblegyd mai myfi a'i gwnaeth. (I'w barhau).

April 18th — A sensational morning, but the sun was most unrelenting. We slept out on the deck last night again, but we were afraid of the rain. Spotted a cloud at ten o'clock, and the rain began to fall. Raced to be first to get our beds inside; but not much rain came down - it stayed away; and if you had it in Wales, if it was similar to the cloud that broke over our heads yesterday, I am certain that there had never been such a thing before; but it is very likely that the cloud had unloaded its burden before coming to you. It is an excellent day today on the whole - the heat has eased a lot after the heavy rain yesterday. Enjoying plum pudding today, and Oh! eating it was so good, because I had made it.

To be continued in next journal.

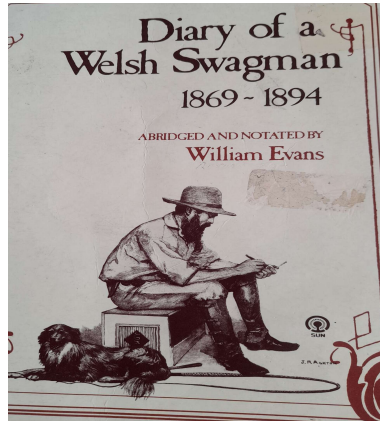
HERE ARE THE LATEST MEMORIAL INSCRIPTION (MI) BOOKLETS ON SALE ON GENFAIR

www.genfair.co.uk

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- P1502 Pontypridd Rhydyfelin, Carmel, Penuel & Ebenezer MIs £5
- P1509 Pontypridd Treforest, Saron MIs £5
- P1602 Port Eynon, St Cattwg MIs £5
- P2002 Pyle, Capel-y-Pil Calvinistic Methodist MIs £5
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- S1603 St Mellons, St Mellon MIs £10
- S1702 St Nicholas, St Nicholas MIs £5
- S1908 Swansea, Crug Glas MIs £5
- S1901 Swansea Cwmbwrla, Babell & Calvinistic Methodist MIs £10
- T0101 Taffs Well, Glandwr Taf, Tabor & Ainon Tongwynlais MIs £5
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- T0302 Tonyrefail, Capel-y-Ton MIs £5
- Y0304 Ystradyfodwg, St John MIs £5
- C0356 Whitchurch, St Mary Old Yard MIs £5
- P1701 Port Talbot, Holy Cross MIs (5 bks) £35
- S1002 St Fagans, St Mary MIs £5
- T0102 Taffs Well, Ty Rhiw Cemetery MIs £10
- W0402 Wick, Baptist MIs £5
- W0403 Wick, St James MIs £5
- Y0101 Ystrad Mynach, Bethania MIs £10

BOOK REVIEWS

Joseph Jenkins, the Welsh Swagman of the title of this book, has been mentioned before in past journals, but it was only recently on a visit to Melbourne in Australia that I actually obtained a copy, given to me by Clive Davies, one of our regular contributors living in Melbourne. The book is an abridged and notated set of the diaries that Joseph made over his 25 years in Australia, working on farms between Ballarat and Castlemaine. William Evans, who worked on these diaries, is Joseph's grandson and still lives in the farm that he remembers when as a three-year-old he played with his grandfather. The diaries laid untouched for 70 years in the farm's attic, and cover the 25 years of his travels around Victoria being employed on short-term jobs, often in poor health and circumstances, and yet his optimism and love of his fellow-man shine through. He is a complex character, not always likeable (he left his family at the age of 51 to their own devices, although they had resources, when he left for Australia), but always admirable in his ability to get through the vicissitudes of his daily work.



His life was one of distinction before he left for Australia: he was a keen educationalist and founded a Cultural Society in his nearby town of Trecafel and was in demand as a counsellor in various matters, drawing up wills and agreements. He was also a poet of distinction and won many bardic prizes before and during his 25 years in Australia, where he competed at Ballarat in their annual eisteddfod on 13 consecutive occasions, winning prizes.

A truly remarkable man: these diaries provide a unique insight into Australia's early settlement history, and are often included in the syllabus of the country's secondary schools.

The book is available from Amazon and ebay, and some independent bookshops, at prices between £11 and £15 - cheaper if second hand.
ISBN 0 7251 0246

Jean Fowlds

LETTERS/EMAILS to the EDITOR

Creighton Sims (6682) has written to give 'The Story Behind the Picture':

On the back of the Glamorgan Family History membership subscriptions form there are two photographs one on the left showing a street scene of a group buying bread from a cart and the other showing a group of three men in uniforms. Mostly when we see untitled photographs on literature we do not know where or when they were taken or what the significance was of the scene. I know nothing about the photograph on the right of the form. On the left photograph however, I know an awful lot.



The photograph was taken in Glannant Street, Pen-y-graig, Rhondda Valley, during the 1921 coal strike. The man standing by the cart selling the bread was from the Pontrhydyfen Bakery on Tylacelyn hill. So named because that was where the owners came from. The Notice on back of the cart says *"Important Notice to Strikers. We give one of our large 8lb Shilling loaves of our well known Farm House Bread for 10 pence which will satisfy a family for a week. This offer will stand good for as long as the strike lasts"*.

The woman holding the bread and a pail is my grandmother, Hannah Nicholas (1875–1955). The head of her mother, Rachel Davies, (1856–1924) can just be seen behind her standing on the doorstep of number 11 Glannant Street, where they both lived. In the background can be seen a large building, the

back of where the Co-operative store is today, with a smaller building in the lane. At the time of the photograph the premises was occupied by Richards Emporium, and my grandfather, David Nicholas, (1881–1947) Hannah's husband, worked in the basement there as a tailor. My Grandmother was born in Llansamlet, Swansea in 1876 and moved with her parents, David Hopkin Davies (1852–1916) and her mother, Rachel Davies, nee Clement, to Penrhiwfer, Llantrisant, in 1880, when she was two years of age. Her father, my great grandfather, worked as an engine driver in the local colliery. A story passed down in the family was of the day when my grandmother was trapped upstairs in her house when a runaway horse entered the open front-door and got stuck in the passage. A crowd had gathered outside the door and my grandfather and his brother-in-law could not reverse the horse out. My grandmother got so annoyed that to clear the crowd she opened the bedroom window above the front door and poured the contents of a chamber pot over them. It did the trick.

Let us know of any other connections between photos and families:

editor@glamfhs.org.uk



Glamorgan Family History Society

Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluol Morgannwg

.....tracing family history in Glamorgan since 1974

We have six branches that hold monthly meetings in Aberdare, Bridgend, Cardiff, Pontypridd, Merthyr and Swansea.

Our library and resource centre at Aberkenfig (just off the M4 at junction 36) has an extensive collection of local material, as well as copies of our publications. Experienced volunteers are available to help with your brickwalls and can show you how to start tracing your Glamorgan ancestors. The Resource Centre is open on Wednesdays 10.30am to 1pm, except for the last Wednesday in the month and after a bank holiday.

Members receive a quarterly journal and access to our ever-growing collection of resources in the 'Members' Only' area of our website. These include our burials, memorial inscriptions, pre-1837 marriages and baptisms 'master' indexes, as well as our Journal Archive and copies of Exchange Journals.

Society members help with various ongoing projects dealing with the transcription and indexing of relevant Glamorgan documents and records.

Benefits of Membership: Help & guidance with your brickwalls, local and online resources.




www.glamfhs.org.uk
Twitter: @GlamorganFHS

NEWS FROM GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES

January-March 2026

Staff

- It is with sadness that I have to report the death of MICHAEL HODGSON, Assistant Conservator, on 29 December. Mike had been living with cancer for some time. He had been a member of staff at the Archives for over 30 years, having joined the team in 1994. He will be greatly missed by the staff and volunteers who worked with him.
- Corporate Trainee, ANNA WATSON, left the Archives in February. She has secured employment locally on a new heritage project.

Access and Community Engagement

- Our January talk by Keith Moger on the Welsh National Memorial Association, and our February talk by Roger Gilbert on George Sibbering, both sold out.
- Our events programme for 2026 is now in place. On 25 March we will welcome Dr James January-McCann of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales for a talk in Welsh on place names. This event is already sold out.
- On 28 April Tony Moon returns with a talk on Barry Railway, and on 21 May we welcome Sara Huws from Cardiff University Special Collections and Archives.
- School visits have continued to prove popular, with classes from Willowbrook Primary, Tonysguboriau Primary, Ysgol Coed-y-Gof, Hywel Dda Primary and Ysgol Treganna attending for workshops at the Archives.
- We also welcomed visits by creative writing students from Cardiff Met University and students from the Welsh School of Architecture.
- Members of GFHS Cardiff and Vale Branch met at the Archives in January and March. In January we looked at new accessions received during 2025, and in March the theme was pubs and hotels.
- Articles on our blog include 'From the Rhondda to Australia: The Papers of Thomas D Morgan and Family', which looks at letters charting emigration to Australia during the gold rush, and an article on the Cardiff Corinthians football team.
- Thank you as always to volunteers from GFHS for supporting our 'Ask the Experts' family history sessions.
- Glamorgan Archives was used as a location for filming for a new pilot series for S4C set in a library.

Collections

- A successful Collections Week was held in February, focusing on records of Associated British Ports. A significant amount of progress was made, with hundreds of plans catalogued. Only a small amount of work remains outstanding on this collection.
- Our next collections weeks will be held from 15-19 June and from 16-20 November.

Recent notable accessions include:

Llwynypia Ecclesiastical Parish Records (P189CW)

Llwynypia Ecclesiastical Parish was formed out of Ystradyfodwg Parish in 1879. The church, dedicated to St Andrew, was erected in 1876. This accession is the first we have received for the parish and includes the first registers of baptisms and marriages and an account of the laying of the foundation stone of the church. The church is now in the process of closing.

Llandaff 50 Plus Records (D2187)

In 2008 the Insole Court 50+ Group was launched as a member of the Cardiff Council 50+ information and support network for older people. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a newsletter was produced titled 'Virus News', designed to entertain, inform and reassure over 50s in Llandaff and the surrounding area.

Indenture between Jane Portrey and John Deere for a messuage and garden in Cowbridge (D2190). Dating from the reign of James II, this deed came to us from a private donor and relates to the transfer of property in the eastern end of Cowbridge, containing half one burgage of land. The property transferred ownership for £11 5s. The deed also names several witnesses, providing a potential source for those tracing families back to the late seventeenth century in Cowbridge.

Hywel Walters of Bridgend, Collection (D2191)

Hywel Walters was Secretary/Treasurer of the Bridgend Music Society. This small collection shows that in the 1960s the Society organised classical music concerts featuring international stars including Alfredo Campoli (violin), Peter Katin (piano), Julius Katchen (piano), Dartington String Quartet, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, The Beaux Arts Trio, Guiseppe Campora, Mirka Pokorna, Henryk Szeryng, Jean Madeira and the Prague Chamber Orchestra. The concerts were held at Bridgend Technical College and the Embassy Cinema in Bridgend.

Rhian Diggins

SOCIETY NEWS & REPORTS

ABERKENFIG RESOURCE CENTRE

The ARC has continued to open on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays with both visitors and volunteers being welcomed. The new access to the Family Search Affiliate site is proving useful and the volunteers are slowly exploring the additional resource material provided.

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.

We are in the process of reorganising the library and reviewing stock held, this is taking some time but we hope to create more space to enable us to better show off the recent additions such as the J Barry Davies collection. In doing this we are removing duplicate copies of some publications, once completed we may hold a book sale, so watch this space if you are interested in adding to your personal collection.

Other projects that are ongoing:

Indexing our collection of family trees, this is a time consuming project but it is hoped to eventually make a detailed index available, making searching the website for useful links quicker for members.

Scanning of a large collection of index cards which again, once completed, would be available on the website as a searchable database.

We have a few projects that are on hold awaiting volunteers' time. So, if you have some free time, please contact us to explore how you could help us provide access to our wide range of paper resources. Some of these do not have a set deadline so can be completed at a distance or at your own pace.

Contact us on: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

ARC focus this journal is publication No: **M1104:**
Nazareth English Baptist Chapel, Mountain Ash

If you have links to the area this record, which is part of a larger set of 6 booklets, all available separately, could be the missing link you have been searching for.

Check it on our Genfair page: www.genfair.co.uk

ABERDARE/CYNON VALLEY

Branch Meetings are continuing to be held in the Cynon Valley Museum on the second Thursday of the month 2-4pm.

8th January: We had a change to our scheduled event due to our speaker being unable to attend, we held a research session instead. The weather on this day was stormy, and we had a fall of snow, so there was no surprise at the poor attendance.

12th February: We held our scheduled research session where we continued to help individuals with their brickwalls.

12th March: Mervyn Pugh gave us an excellent talk on Tower Colliery, the last deep coal mine in South Wales, which closed down on 25th January 2005. Mervyn used his personal collection of photographs, which he had taken over a few years, to tell the story.

We continue to hold research sessions in Mountain Ash Library on the second Monday of the Month 1-3pm. These meetings are being well attended. For anyone wishing to attend these meetings, Mountain Ash Library is easily accessible as it is located within the High Street, the train station is directly behind it.

A steady number of requests for help come through via email. We are pleased to help members who are unable to attend branch meetings.

We sadly lost our vice chairman, Robert Lake (Bob), in January. Bob was an active member within the branch in undertaking the transcriptions of the Aberdare Leader obituaries. Bob is greatly missed.

Pat Rees, aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

BRIDGEND

The Branch has been quiet recently. Numbers at monthly meeting continue to be low, which is a bit disheartening! Speakers continue to be difficult to find so we have been doing a research evening to maximise use of the Genealogist and Family Search access. We are planning to hold a book sale at a future meeting to raise some funds for the Society and clear some of the books intended for Fairs. If anyone members wish to call in, they are very welcome. We are also planning a guided walk around the War Graves Commission graves at Llantwit Major once the weather improves (if it ever does!!). Members continue to help out at the ARC regularly, working on projects, orders and sorting the library. Members from several other Branches help out on these days. Members of the Branch continue to attend the regular Ogwr Heritage meeting and are hoping to hold one event in the Heritage Month in September.

Penny Williams, bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

CARDIFF & VALE

We meet at Glamorgan Archives every other month on the first Tuesday, at 2.00pm. We view items from the collection based on a particular theme. In March we looked at records under the heading of Pubs, Hotels and Boarding Houses. Archivist, Katie Finn guided us through these examples:

- PSMLO/17/5: Miskin Lower Petty Sessional Division, Register of Licenses, 1903-1907
- PSMLO/15/1: Miskin Lower Petty Sessional Division, Register of Music and Dancing, 1893-1910
- PSMLO/16/2: Miskin Lower Petty Sessional Division, Register of Clubs, 1921-1926
- BC/C/6/48: Borough of Cardiff, minute book (includes reference to boarding house licenses, Jan 1914)
- BB/C/108: Quarterly report from Chief Inspector of Barry Port Authority to Local Government Committee on seamen's lodging houses, with list, 1899
- DSA/2/74: Sales particulars for the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, 1882
- DSA/3/149: Sales particulars for the Barry Hotel, Barry, 1901
- DCONC/6/41: Cardiff Borough Constabulary, plans of the Discovery Hotel, Lakeside, 1961
- DSA/12/802/2: Plans of the Barry Hotel, 1902-1904
- Trade directory
- DA/107-117: Alehouse recognizances, Cardiff, 1740-1781 (or Q/S/E?)
- DCNS/PH/9/51: Photograph of the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, late-19th century
- D1444: Photographs of public houses in Cardiff, 20th century
- OS map (43/6)
- DSA/12/3161: Inventory of the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, 1897
- DSA/12/246: Inventory of the Barry Hotel, Barry, 1898
- DRB/A/7: Rhymney Brewery, staff records, 1915-1919
- DHAN/23: Hancock's Brewery, register of licences, 1872-1902
- DHAN/235: Hancock's Brewery, newscuttings book, 1924-1939
- DHAN/24: Hancock's Brewery, property ledger, nd
- Guidebooks – Library – 28/14i, 28/24, 28/52, 28/58, 46/2
- D1259/1: Poster for Hancock's Brewery, 1950s
- D1039/1/1: Mary Traynor Collection, sketchbook including sketch of The Big Windsor, Cardiff Pilotage Authority building and Mount Stuart Dry Docks offices (all are now public houses / restaurants)

Karen Prior, cardiffmeetings@glamfhs.org.uk

MERTHYR TYDFIL

In January we started 2026, well with an interesting well illustrated talk by Barrie Jones: 'Cheshunt College, Hertfordshire and the Merthyr Tydfil connection. Historian, Daryl Leeworthy, the author of a number of academic publications, talked to our group in February about his own family history. This was a fascinating account and useful as he discussed his research methods.

Steve Brewer treated us to a 'Merthyr Medley' in March; amusing and entertaining extracts from the Merthyr Express and other papers about Merthyr Tydfil and its nineteenth century inhabitants.

In March many members attended the 'History Day' organised by the Merthyr Tydfil Historical Society on the theme of Wales in the twentieth century.

Carolyn Jacob, merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA

In February, we enjoyed an excellent presentation about the Glamorganshire Canal by Ron Keats from the Pontypridd Canal Conservation Group. The canal played a most important part in the industrial history of Glamorgan, and it was wonderful to see the efforts being made by this group to preserve a part of it.

In a change to our programme for March, our speaker was Rhian Hall who is the Heritage Collections Manager at Rhondda Cynon Taf Heritage Service. Rhian gave us a fascinating insight into the Jewish history of our area.

Our April meeting will have already taken place by the time you read this but we are looking forward to hearing Rob Jones telling us about his research into the Hier family of Pontypridd.

The branch continues to meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Pontypridd Museum. We have maintained a good attendance over the winter months and with a full programme of talks arranged for the rest of the year, we hope to welcome more guests as well as members to our meetings. Please join us if you see a topic of interest to you.

Eleanor Aubrey, rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

SWANSEA BRANCH REPORT

Following our Extraordinary Meeting on 10th February 2026, it was decided that we would continue to meet as a branch.

Officers

Chair – Jeff Harrison

Secretary – Janet Neilson

Treasurer – Julie Edmunds

The meeting decided that we would try to cater for those who are unable to attend meetings during the day. Our plan is have a meeting in person every other month and a Zoom evening meeting in between.

Our meeting on 10th March was held at the new West Glamorgan Archives in Y Storfa, Oxford Street. Andrew Dulley, the head archivist spoke on the topic, “Layers of history beneath our feet”....the history of the building in which we were sitting, and the surrounding area. He began his talk by emphasising that the most significant event in Swansea’s history was the Blitz in 1941. As he showed maps and photographs some people began to reminisce about what they remembered about Swansea just before the war, the scale of destruction in the town centre and the re-building of it. There were only six people at the meeting. This does not seem to bode well for the future. We will continue with our plans until June and then reassess the situation.

The April Zoom meeting will be a presentation about “Symbolism in Gravestone Art” led by Janet Neilson. In June we plan a tea and chat about “Brickwalls”.

On 12th May, at 2pm, we will hold our meeting in the archives with a talk by one of the archivists.

Janet Neilson, swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

WEBSITE REPORT

Work continues on migrating our website to a new hosting provider, based in Wales, where we will have the opportunity to expand data collections and research aids for our members' use. Our primary focus is member satisfaction, with attention to content organization for ease of access by users, maintaining accessibility standards, ensuring current and stable technology, and regulatory compliance. We have been alerted to confusion surrounding renewals on the Website via PayPal and are investigating options aimed at streamlining the process. As always, we invite members to send their comments and suggestions to

Billie McNamara, website@glamfhs.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Please check our website or contact the Branches for up to date information about all meetings.

ABERDARE BRANCH

aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

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

11 June – Research Session

9 July – Research Session

August – No Meeting

BRIDGEND BRANCH

bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

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

15 June

20 July

17 August

Meeting dates and Saturday Library Help Sessions – see website

CARDIFF & VALE BRANCH

cardiffmeetings@glamfhs.org.uk

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

Tuesday 7 July: The Iron and Steel Industries of Glamorgan

Tuesday 1 September: Transport 2 Waterways and Rail records

MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH

merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

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

June Annual Trip TBA (maybe later in the month)

14th July – Researching Military Family History. A Talk and Workshop

August – No Meeting

8th Sept – Using Maps for Family History – Barrie Jones

GLAMORGAN FHS ONLINE

arlein@glamfhs.org.uk

Thursday 9 July Coffee & Chat – Ancestry Thru Lines

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA BRANCH

rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, at Pontypridd Museum

19 May

Ben Price 'Voices of 1842' - The Stories behind Child Labour in Wales

16 June

Jane Pearce 'Sir Geraint Evans in Context' – the life of the renowned opera singer from Cilfynydd

21 July

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

August

Summer Break – no meeting

15 September

Andrew Warmington 'When Whitehall came to Wattstown' – the murder of Rachel Allen in 1947

SWANSEA BRANCH

swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

9th June at 7pm on Zoom – Brickwalls: Jeff Coleman
Contact Janet Neilson for the details.

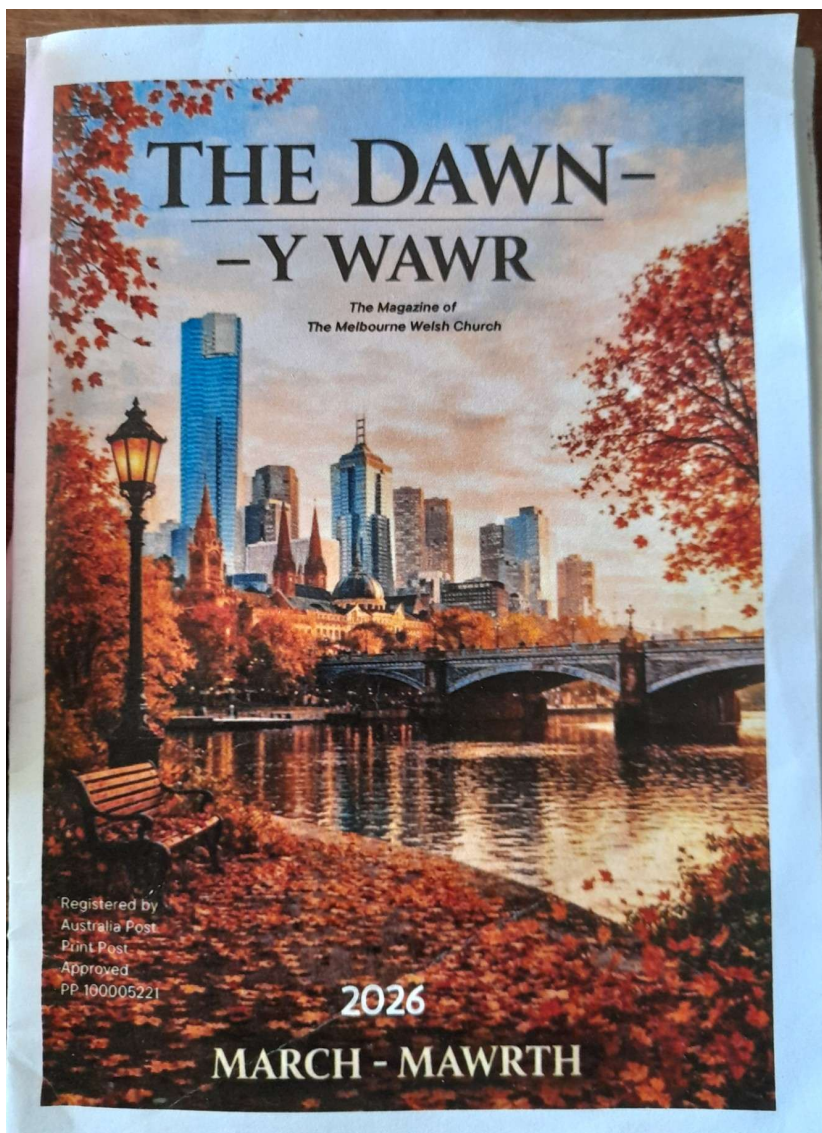
No meetings in July and August, though transcribing will continue during July

If anyone in the Swansea area needs any help we will be in the new
West Glamorgan Archives in Y Storfa, Oxford Street
from 9-noon on Friday July 3rd, 10th and 17th

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 social media www.glamfhs.org.uk/events





If undelivered, please return to :63 Clos Pwll Clai, Tondy, Bridgend, CF32 9BZ