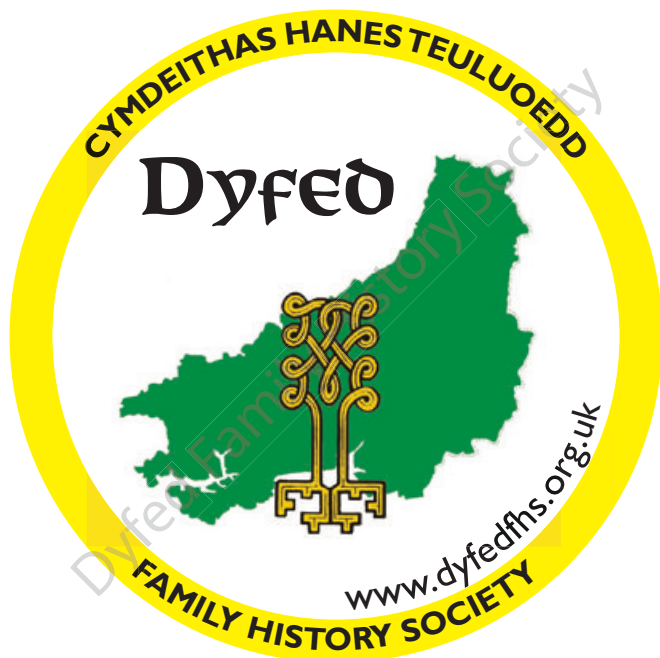


CYLCHGRAWN HANES TEULUOEDD DYFED

Cyfrwl 15 Rhif 5
Ebrill 2025



DYFED FAMILY HISTORY JOURNAL

Volume 15 Number 5
April 2025

Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluoedd Dyfed Family History Society

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 513347

President **Rt. Revd. Dorrien Davies, Bishop of St Davids**
Llywydd

Chairman **Position vacant (tba)**
Cadeirydd

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cardigan **Mr. Phil Davies*** (5741)
Aberteifi

Carmarthen **Janet Slate** (6020)
Caerfyrddin

Haverfordwest **Mr. Geraint Davies*** (4553)
Hwlfordd

Llanelli **Mrs. Linda Martin*** (5468)

Upper Towy Valley **Mrs. Davina Price*** (2773)
Cwm Tywi Uchaf

London **Mrs. Anna Brueton*** (1806)
Representative

General Secretary **Mr. Colin Potter*** (5576) secretary@dyfedfhs.org.uk
Ysgrifennydd 25 Milton Meadows, Milton, Tenby, Pembs SA70 8PL

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Ysgrifennydd Cofnodion

Projects Co-ordinator **Mrs. Janice Hughes*** (4750)

Trefnydd Cywaith

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Social Media/ **Situation Vacant**

Publicity Officer **publicity@dyfedfhs.org.uk**

Swyddog Cyhoeddusrwydd

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Carmarthen County Archivist

Carmarthenshire Archives, c/o Carmarthen Library,
9 St Peter's Street, Carmarthen. SA31 1LN

Ceredigion County Archivist

Ceredigion Archives, Old Town Hall, Queen's Square,
Aberystwyth. SY23 2EB

Pembrokeshire County Archivist

Pembrokeshire Archives, Prendergast, Haverfordwest.
Pembrokeshire, SA61 2PE.

The Representative of the NLW

National Library of Wales, Penglais, Aberystwyth. SY23 3BU

NON-COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Dyfed Probate **Mrs. Beti M Griffiths** (3566)

Index Researcher **bettygriffiths.geryfelin@sky.com**

Journal **Rosaleen Boardman** (6495)

Indexing Project

Independent **Caroline Wheeler**

External Examiner **Bevan Buckland, Pembroke**

* TRUSTEES

In accordance with the Charity Commission's regulations
all of the elected Officers are the Trustees of the Society.

Please quote your membership number in any correspondence.

Work on the **August Journal** will begin as soon as this one
finishes but the deadline for copy is **15 June 2025.**

WELCOME TO THE FIRST 2025 issue of the journal and yes, I am still here as your Editor! We are still in need of someone to take over but in all good conscience I could not let the journal cease to exist as it is an integral part of the Society. In this issue you will find the necessary details and documents for the AGM in April which we hope you will attend if you are local to the area or join via Zoom from further afield.

Have you changed your postal/email address recently? If you have, please let us know so that you do not miss out on reminders about your subscriptions and your copy of the journal.

Sadly, we lost our good friend Bill Griffiths from Pembroke, in December, I know many members had contact with Bill over the years and were impressed with his knowledge of Pembroke families. We are pleased to confirm that he has left all his research to the Pembrokeshire Archives. His library of research books was donated to the Society, and we have listed them all, along with his comprehensive list of Pembrokeshire censuses on the Society's Spotlight page if anyone wants any of them. They are free except for any postage charges or you can collect them from the Haverfordwest branch meeting if you give me sufficient notice, they are on a first come first serve basis.

I must, as usual, remind you that I need your support in the form of articles for the journal – the next issue is in August and the deadline is 15 June. Short articles are welcome as well as the longer research items. I remind you that a Birth Brief (Family Tree) with a small covering piece about the family would be very welcome too. If you only cover a few generations that would be fine, you never know if another member is related to you further up the tree!

We will be reviewing the overseas subscription rates and will confirm those in the next journal, our thanks to those members who agreed that this was unfortunately a necessary action.

Editor

Volume 15 Number 5

April 2025

2	Editorial
4	Branch Meetings and Other Events
6	Annual General Meeting – Draft Agenda
7	General Secretary's report
8	Treasurer's reports and accounts
10	Membership Secretary's report
11	Highway Robbery near Haverfordwest
12	Letters to the Editor/Mormon Emigration
13	Carmarthenshire Archives
14	From Pontardawe to raising a family of Cowboy's in the Mid-West of the USA
20	James Jones, 1835–1912
23	A few Causeways More – Martin Davies
24	The Push and Pull of Immigration/Emigration – from Caldey Island to Dowlais
27	Pobl yn y Tirwedd – Blaenau Tywi – People in the Landscape
29	Patronymics, surnames and alternative family names: a brief study
34	A name on a page: my search for Charles Harry Roberts
37	Genealogical insights gleaned from a murder investigation
42	Thomas Edwards of Betws Ifan
43	Tracing London Convicts in Britain & Australia 1780–1925
44	Changes for Research in the USA
46	Collapse of a Gas Holder – Singular Experience
48	Help Needed
53	Members Interests
54	Around the Branches
62	New Members
64	Obituary
Inside back cover	Branch Meetings
Outside back cover	Contacts

The Society does not accept any responsibility for the views and opinions expressed by individual authors.

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Branch Meetings and Other Events

(The venues for branch events are listed inside the back cover, unless otherwise stated)

Cardigan Branch

7 Apr	Glen Johnson – A Snapshot of Cardigan (TBC)
12 May	Emyr Phillips: Ffynnone Mansion
2 Jun	Huw Thomas: Maps – a useful tool for family history
7 Jul	No Meeting
4 Aug	No Meeting

Carmarthen Branch (now at 2.00pm at Spilman Hotel)

30 Apr	TBC
28 May	TBC
24 Jun	TBC
29 Jul	TBC

Haverfordwest Branch

9 Apr	Angela Probert-Jones – Gumfreston Church, People of the parish
14 May	David Llewellyn – Home Guard – the true story
11 Jun	Archives Afternoon
9 Jul	TBC - outing

Llanelli Branch (now back in Llanelly House)

21 Apr	(Easter Monday) check with branch
19 May	TBC
16 Jun	TBC
21 Jul	TBC

Upper Towy Valley Branch

23 Apr	Evening with Mary Thorley
21 May	TBC
18 Jun	TBC
July	Transcription of MIs at Tabernacle Chapel, Ffairfach

London Branch

Dates and times of meetings to be confirmed

3–10 Aug Annual visit to NLW

Sep Online meeting via Zoom – Speaker and topic to be confirmed

Nov Online meeting via Zoom – Speaker and topic to be confirmed

Online Discussion Group (online@dyfedfhs.org.uk)

28 Apr TBC

26 May (BH) TBC

30 Jun TBC

28 Jul TBC

20–21 Sep **Llandovery Sheep Festival.**

Website <https://llandoverysheepfestival.com>

Where to find out about other Genealogical Events:

Family History Federation

<https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/events>

GENEVA (**GEN**ealogical **E**vents and **A**ctivities –
run on behalf of GENUKI and the FHF)

<http://www.geneva.weald.org.uk/doku.php>

Dyfed Family History Society Annual General Meeting Saturday 12 April 2025

In person and via Zoom 12.15 pm – 2 pm

Speaker: Mary Thorley from 11 am – 11.45 am

Title of Talk: "I bet you're sorry you asked!"

(please note the change of format, the speaker will be prior to the AGM Meeting)

Meeting Room 2, Carmarthen Library, St Peters Street, Carmarthen SA31 1LN

The Agenda, Minutes of the 2024 AGM and Financial statement for 2024
are available on the DFHS website

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 12 April 2025 at 12.15 pm

Carmarthen Library, St Peter's Street, Carmarthen
And online via Zoom.

Draft Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To sign as a proper and accurate record of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 27 April 2024.
3. Matters arising.
4. Resolutions (if any received by 22 March 2025).
5. To receive the Secretary's report for 2024.
6. To receive the Treasurer's report and accounts for 2024.
7. To receive the Membership Secretary's report for 2024.
8. To elect designated officers for 2025 (The names of the nominated officers are shown below (not including Branch Chairs who are elected by their Branch members, or other committee members who are appointed as required)).

Officers nominated for election
by members of the Society at the AGM 2025

Chairman:	Vacant
General Secretary:	Mr Colin Potter
Treasurer:	Mr Gareth Wyn Jones
Membership Secretary:	Mr David Skyrme

9. The appointment of **Independent External Examiner** – Caroline Wheeler (Bevan Buckland LLP) for the year 2025.

General Secretary's report

WE HAD PLANNED many additions and changes to our website in 2024 but have not been successful. It has been very frustrating for all, but we will persevere in 2025.

Our membership numbers have reduced, we had hoped that improving our website would see more members continuing after their first year, but unfortunately this has not happened.

Our standout success has been our Online Discussion Group, we have had speakers and members joining from all over the UK and from the USA. We regularly get around 40 members joining in to hear the speaker and all attendees are encouraged to introduce themselves and tell us the area that they are researching. I'd like to thank the organisers Rosaleen and Gareth for all their work to make it a success.

Our two hubs in Cardigan and Llandovery are once again proving successful, many thanks to the volunteers at both, for their time and effort. Llanelli, Carmarthen and Haverfordwest branches are still suffering from lack of support at their meetings.

Colin Potter (5576)

Treasurer's report 2024/ Adroddiad y Trysorydd 2024

The higher deficit figure was mainly due to increased funds being transferred to our branches and not to more external expenditure. An increased number of old BMD fiche records were digitised during the year resulting in much higher costs for this project. Subscriptions and Gift Aid receipts fell but total income was boosted by increased credit interest.

Achoswyd y diffyg ariannol uwch yn bennaf oherwydd bod mwy o arian yn cael ei drosglwyddo i'n canghennau ac nid oherwydd gwariant mwy allanol. Cafodd nifer cynyddol o hen gofnodion microfiche Genedigaethau, Priodasau a Marwolaethau eu digido yn ystod y flwyddyn, gan arwain at gostau llawer uwch ar gyfer y prosiect hwn. Cafwyd llai o danysgrifiadau a derbynebau Cymorth Rhodd, ond rhoddwyd hwb i'r incwm gan gynydd yn y llog credyd.

DYFED FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2024 Registered Charity Number 513347

INCOME	2024	2023	EXPENDITURE	2024	2023
Membership			Capital Expenditure	£494.40	£50.00
Subscriptions & donations	£10,826.00	£11,094.07	General Expenditure		
Gift Aid	£1,715.60	£2,205.69	Journals including postage	£8,214.73	£8,148.30
Total	£12,541.60	£13,299.76	Website maintenance & support	£829.59	£904.39
			Store room rent	£1,440.00	£1,440.00
Sundry Income			Trustees insurance	£287.85	£276.76
C&C Bank interest	£2,488.08	£1,263.95	Transferred to branches	£3,250.00	£900.00
Reserve account interest	£15.32	£40.66	Events & publicity		£47.95
Sales		£23.05	Total	£14,022.17	£11,717.40
Online sales	£342.00	£447.00	Administration costs		
Total	£2,845.40	£1,774.66	Traveling expenses	£881.44	£1,161.05
			Accommodation	£299.00	£357.00
Five Branch Current Accounts			Subscriptions to other bodies	£697.66	£394.42
Total change	£1,162.04	£-1,099.05	PayPal fees: Subs & donations	£162.34	£167.64
			PayPal fees: Online shop	£11.33	£14.49
			Meeting room hire	£242.00	£212.00
			Mailchimp and Postage	£317.50	£44.33
			Zoom licences	£287.76	
			Refunds to members	£11.00	
			Printing and stationery	£16.99	£24.49
			Total	£2,927.02	£2,375.42
			Projects		
			Website development	£96.00	£295.40
			Monumental inscriptions	£327.90	£410.05
			Store room audit & clearance	£23.00	£62.75
			Digitisation of BMD records	£1,186.38	£36.00
			Total	£1,633.28	£804.20
Total Income	£16,549.04	£13,975.37	Total Expenditure	£19,076.87	£14,947.02
			Surplus/Deficit	£-2,527.83	£-971.65
				£16,549.04	£13,975.37
Balances brought forward	01-Jan-24	01-Jan-23	Balances to carry forward	31-Dec-24	31-Dec-23
31 day notice account	£61,391.58	£56,577.63	31 day notice account	£59,179.66	£61,391.58
Reserve account	£1,461.36	£5,200.70	Reserve account	£544.54	£1,461.36
Current account	£546.94	£2,043.27	Current account	£114.67	£546.94
Five Branch current a/cs	£1,979.84	£3,078.89	Five Branch bank current a/cs	£3,141.88	£1,979.84
PayPal	£595.64	£46.52	PayPal	£466.78	£595.64
Total	£65,975.36	£66,947.01			
Deficit	£-2,527.83	£-971.65			
Total of closing balances	£63,447.53	£65,975.36	Total of closing balances	£63,447.53	£65,975.36

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Accounts of the Dyfed Family History Society for the year ended 31st December 2024 and have verified the balances at NatWest Bank, Cambridge & Counties Bank, PayPal and the five Branch Bank Current Accounts. In my opinion these Income and Expenditure Accounts are in accordance with the books and vouchers of the Society and give a true statement of the affairs of the Society. The Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission. Full details of the composition of all figures in the Accounts are available from the Treasurer, if required.

Signed:

Caroline Wheeler

Independent External Examiner Date: 6 February 2025

Signed:

Gareth Wyn Jones

Treasurer

Date: 26 January 2025

CYFRIFON INCWM A GWARIANT CYMDEITHAS HANES TEULUOEDD DYFED
AM Y FLWYDDYN A DDAETH I BEN AR 31ain RHAGFYR 2024 Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig 513347

INCWM	2024	2023	GWARIANT	2024	2023
Aelodaeth			Gwariant Cyfalafol	£494.40	£50.00
Tanysgriadau a rhoddion	£10,826.00	£11,094.07	Gwariant Cyffredinol		
Cymorth Rhodd	£1,715.60	£2,205.69	Cylchgronau a phostio	£8,214.73	£8,148.30
Cyfanswm	£12,541.60	£13,299.76	Gwefan: cynnal a chefnogi	£829.59	£904.39
			Rhent storio	£1,440.00	£1,440.00
Incwm Arall			Yswiriant ymddiriedolwyr	£287.85	£276.76
Llog Banc C&C	£2,488.08	£1,263.95	Trosglwyddiadau i ganghennau	£3,250.00	£900.00
Llog cyfrif wrth gefn	£15.32	£40.66	Digwyddiadau a chyhoeddurswydd		£47.95
Gwerthiannau		£23.05	Cyfanswm	£14,022.17	£11,717.40
Gwerthiannau ar-lein	£342.00	£447.00	Costau Gweinyddol		
Cyfanswm	£2,845.40	£1,774.66	Costau telthio	£881.44	£1,161.05
			Llety	£299.00	£357.00
Pum Cyfrif Cyfredol Cangen Banc			Tanysgriadau i gyrff eraill	£697.66	£394.42
Cyfanswm y newid	£1,162.04	-£1,099.05	Ffioedd PayPal:Tanysgriadau a Rhoddion	£162.34	£167.64
			Ffioedd Paypal:Slop ar-lein	£11.33	£14.49
			Llogi ystafell gyfarfod	£242.00	£212.00
			Mailchimp a Phost	£317.50	£44.33
			Trwyddedau Zoom	£287.76	
			Ad-daliadau i aelodau	£11.00	
			Argraffu a deunydd swyddfa	£16.99	£24.49
			Cyfanswm	£2,927.02	£2,375.42
			Prosiectau		
			Datblygiad y wefan	£96.00	£295.40
			Arysgrifau Coffa	£327.90	£410.05
			Archwilio a chlirio'r storfa	£23.00	£62.75
			Digido cofnodion GPM	£1,186.38	£36.00
			Cyfanswm	£1,633.28	£804.20
Cyfanswm Incwm	£16,549.04	£13,975.37	Cyfanswm Gwariant	£19,076.87	£14,947.02
			Gwarged/Diffyg	-£2,527.83	-£971.65
				£16,549.04	£13,975.37
Balansau a ddygwyd ymlaen	01-Ion-24	01-Ion-23	Balansau a ddygir ymlaen	31 Rha-24	31 Rha-23
Cyfrif rhybudd 31 diwrnod	£61,391.58	£56,577.63	Cyfrif rhybudd 31 diwrnod	£59,179.66	£61,391.58
Cyfrif wrth gefn	£1,461.36	£5,200.70	Cyfrif wrth gefn	£544.54	£1,461.36
Cyfrif cyfredol	£546.94	£2,043.27	Cyfrif cyfredol	£114.67	£546.94
Pum cyfrif cyfredol cangen banc	£1,979.84	£3,078.89	Pum cyfrif cyfredol cangen banc	£3,141.88	£1,979.84
PayPal	£595.64	£46.52	PayPal	£466.78	£595.64
Cyfanswm	£65,975.36	£66,947.01			
Diffyg	-£2,527.83	-£971.65			
Cyfanswm y Balansau Terfynol	£63,447.53	£65,975.36	Cyfanswm y balansau terfynol	£63,447.53	£65,975.36

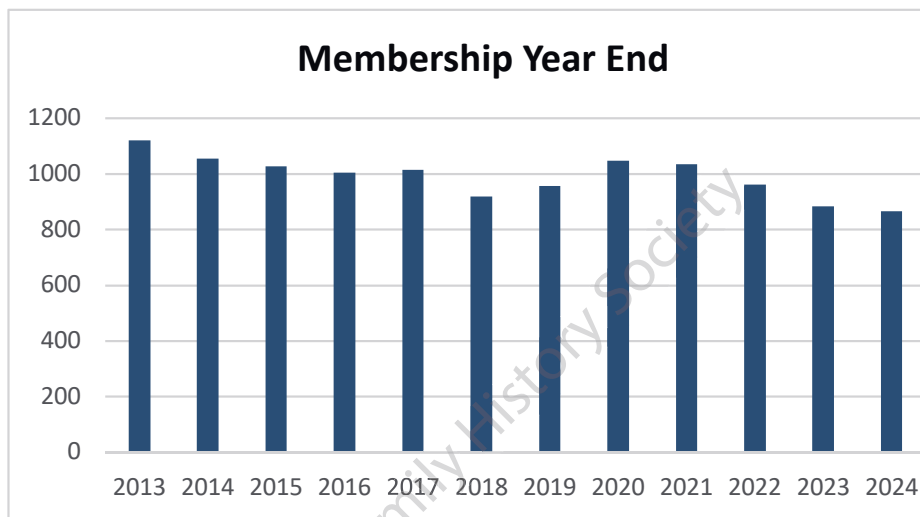
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Gareth Wyn Jones

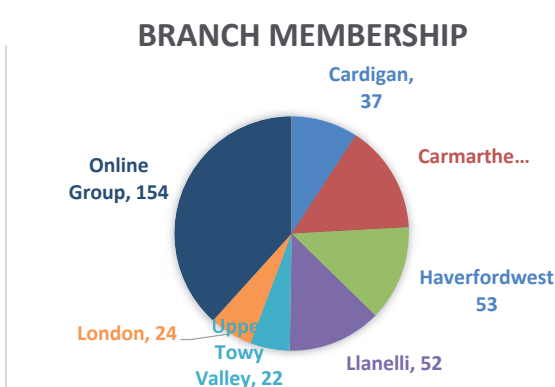
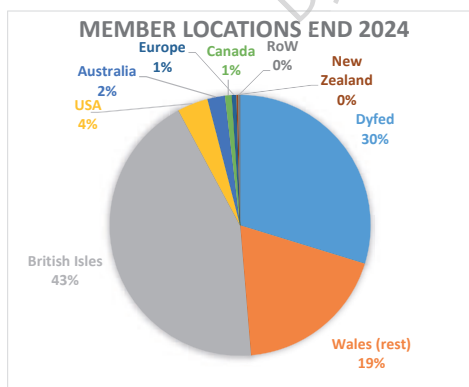
Trysorydd Dyddiad: 1 Ionawr 26 Ionawr 2025

Membership Secretary's report

AT THE END OF 2024 we had 867 members, down from 884 at the beginning of the year. This means that we are losing around two members a month. However, this is an improvement over the previous year when we were losing seven every month.



The charts below show where our 867 members live and the 229 members who have joined a specific branch. For every branch the percentage of those who live outside the branch area is well over half, 86% in the case of Carmarthen members.



Our biggest membership problem is that of those who join us, over half leave after the end of their first year. However, 61% have been members for more than five years, and 14% (123 members) more than thirty years! 97% of new members pay online compared with 314 members (35%) who renew by standing order. Although this requires manual updating of membership records, this is guaranteed income.

Generally our membership system has run smoothly, though every month several members whose subscription lapsed say that they never received reminders, though they do get the email that says they have lapsed! Our system monitoring confirms that they are sent out, but it seems that they get trapped as spam either in the member's email or the server of their email provider. Members are reminded to check the renewal date on the address slip that comes with the journal. We have several members whose renewal is not until 2026 or 2027 since they have paid more frequently than needed – so do please check.

David J Skyrme

Membership Secretary

Highway Robbery near Haverfordwest

Item from the *Pembrokeshire Herald* – 18 January 1901

THE OTHER DAY Mr Bertram Kirkland, son of the Rev. William Kirkland of Upper Market Street, the Moravia Minister, had an experience of the perils of the road. He had been cycling to Fishguard and on his way back had got about two miles out of the town when he had noticed his tyres were slacking. He dismounted, leaned his machine against a gate and was busy pumping up when he was suddenly approached from behind, his legs were pulled from under him and was thrown down upon his face. There were two assailants and whilst one sat on his legs the other on his head thus rendering him quite helpless while his pockets were carefully searched. Fortunately, Mr Kirkland was wearing two waistcoats, and he had taken the precaution of putting his money in the pockets of the inside one, so that it was not found. The only plunder the thieves obtained was his watch. They left him on the ground and ran away without Mr Kirkland ever having the opportunity of seeing their faces.

(submitted by Idris Thomas)

Letters to the Editor

MY NAME IS Roy Folland, aged 93 years in May. I have written a book concerning from the day I was born 25/05/1932 – and brought up at Hook.

What maybe of interest is that I lived through the Second World War covering the ration of food and ration books period which I thought may be of interest to those who would not be aware of this happenings during that time. The printing of the book I paid for myself and all proceeds will be donated to Tŷ Hafan, The Children's Hospice for Wales.

On my first opportunity I will forward a copy to yourself. I hope it will be found to be of interest and worthy of a mention in your Society Journal. Should anyone be interested in the book please contact the editor who will pass on the contact details.

COLIN AND CATE, Happy New Year! I just want to weigh in on the question of membership dues being raised for international members, due to postage fees. I agree and am willing to pay more. Your communications are priceless, but I know costs have skyrocketed over here too. Please do what is best for all. It is worth a great deal to be connected to you all both through the journal as well as the zoom meetings. I am often not on the meetings, but I listen to all of them as recorded. It means a lot to me! I wish you very well and continue to appreciate this connection. Diolch yn fawr.

Mary France McKay (6477)

Mormon Emigration

I have taken delivery of 6 Volumes of the Welsh magazine *The Red Dragon*, whose editor was Mr Charles Wilkins. Mr Wilkins was a prominent author based here in Merthyr Tydfil. Having a quick read through the indexes I noticed the title "Mormon Emigration". This was submitted, by "Hwlffordd" based in Tenby. "Hwlffordd" is the Welsh name for Haverfordwest.

Terry Jones

EDITOR – this is a four-page article which Terry has copied to me, so if anyone would like a copy please let me know.

Carmarthenshire Archives

YOU MIGHT REMEMBER that in the last Journal we reported that a representative from Ancestry was due to visit us to start digitizing the Carmarthenshire Electoral Registers? Well, we are pleased to announce that the scanning part of the project is now complete, and work will soon begin on indexing before the images go live on Ancestry. We will keep you posted! Work has now begun on digitizing the school admission registers. I will provide a progress report in the next Journal.

A reminder for anyone with an interest in crime and punishment, that the Carmarthen Prison Registers are also available to view on Ancestry. The nominal registers for men cover the period, 1879–1922 and for women, 1893–1908. The easiest way to find the records is to search for “Swansea Gaol” in the keyword search under “New Collections”. Select “Swansea and Surrounding Area, Wales, Gaol Records, 1877–1922” then select “Nominal Registers” from the drop-down menu on the right-hand side. Scroll until you find Carmarthen Prison. The original registers are deposited with West Glamorgan Archives. For earlier records, you can search the Felons Register for free online here: <https://welshlegalhistory.org/felons-register-search.php> This volume covers the 1850s–1870s and even includes mugshots of some of the felons! You can of course view the original in our Searchroom.

In other news, we have catalogued our crew agreements. At the moment, this list consists of the name of ship and the year of voyage, but we are looking for possible indexing projects to make the collection more user friendly. Work also continues on making our catalogues available online, as does cataloguing new accessions.

Remember that we welcome group visits for a tour of the facilities. If you are interested, please get in touch: archives@carmarthenshire.gov.uk For those that are unable to visit us in person we also offer a research service. Please contact us via email to find out more.

As ever details of where to find us and our opening hours can be found on our website: www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/libraries-archives/carmarthenshire-archives

Katie Millien

Archivist Carmarthen Archives

From Pontardawe to raising a family of Cowboy's in the Mid-West of the USA

THE FOLLOWING detail originated from a 5th cousin DNA match, although, in this case there is no family connection to Dyfed.

A 5th cousin, living in North Dakota, USA, had listed in the family tree Rachel Ann Mann b.1865 Wales. Father John Lewis Williams b.1824 'Llanguicke' [Llangwig], Glamorgan, Wales. Fortunately, as part of my family tree, for this match I had already expanded my tree to include the Llangwig Williams family. The tree contained the details of a Rachel Williams b.1865, her Father John Lewis Williams b. 1824, both of Llangwig parish, Pontardawe.

Rachels' father, John Lewis Williams was the brother of my 3x great grandmother, Elizabeth Williams b.1819 Llangyfelach. Initially, I had only census detail on Rachel Williams, up to 1881.

This Williams family, living around the Ynysmeudw area of Pontardawe, were associated with working on the Swansea Valley canal. Rachel in 1881, at the age of 15, is listed as a boatwoman, her father aged 56 is listed as a boatman, along with her brother Lewis. In the 1851 census, my 3x great grandmother, aged 29, is listed as a boatwoman, including her mother.

Rachel's life story is remarkable. She started her working life as a child assisting her family in transporting barges up and down the Swansea valley canal from the age of 10. The barges were pulled by a horse guided by a handler, a daily round trip of 20 miles from the rural surroundings of Pontardawe to the busy port of Swansea, where here ocean-going ships are docked. These ships would take coal or tinplate out and copper/iron ore or goods back, to and from distant world destinations.



South Wales Daily Post, 25th Sep. 1885, page 1

Rachel worked on the canal for 12 years before she emigrated, alone, to Canada in 1885 at the age of 22. In 1885 a new passenger service was started from Swansea to Halifax Canada, at cost of £3.3.0 in steerage (3rd class). It's quite probable that this gave Rachel the opportunity to travel to the places she had learnt of on her

visits to Swansea docks, working long hours helping to financially support the family, having had very little education and life opportunities.

In 1888 Rachel married Austin Wilbert Mann, in Glenwood, Manitoba. From there they moved to Montana, USA.

Fortunately, after further research, I came across an obituary of Rachel, which gave details of her remarkable life story in North America.

The following is a story of her life in North America as detailed in a Death Notice and Obituary printed in the *Sidney Herald Montana*, Thursday 4th May 1950:

THE PROGRESS OF THE PORT OF SWANSEA.

New Line of Steamers Between Swansea and Canada.

As briefly announced in the *South Wales Daily News* on Tuesday, a new line of steamers has been established to run between Swansea and North America. The first steamer sailed from Swansea on Wednesday evening with tin-plates and a general cargo. Her name is the *Damara*; she is the pioneer steamer of the Halifax Steam Navigation Company, and is under the command of Captain McMullen. The line has been established under a subsidy from the Canadian Government to provide means of direct shipment between Canada and France. The absence of a

South Wales Echo, 19th March 1885, page 4

National Library of Wales Newspapers

MARRIAGE DETAILS	
Place of Marriage: GLENWOOD	
Date of Marriage: 06/06/1888	

PERSONAL DETAILS	
GROOM	BRIDE
Last Name: MANN	Last Name: WILLIAMS
Given Names: AUSTIN W	Given Names: RACHEL A

DEATH NOTICE

Sidney Herald (Montana) Thursday May 4th, 1950

Rachael Mann, Pioneer, Passes On

‘Rachael Ann Williams Mann was born on the 16th day of December in the year 1865 in South Wales) England. At the age of 22 she came to Canada, settling at Sourts, Manitoba. It was there that she met Austin Mann, and they were united in marriage on June 6, 1888. To their union eleven children were born. Mr Mann and three of the children preceded Mrs Mann in death. They came to the United States in 1894 and settled near Lanark, Montana. They lived there until 1900 at which time they moved to Buford, North Dakota. The following year they moved to Dore, North Dakota, at which place Mrs Mann lived until recent years when her health did not permit her to stay at Dore. Death came on Sunday morning, April 23, 1950, at Williston, North Dakota where Mrs Mann was a patient in the hospital. She had reached the age of 84 years, 4 months and 6 days.

Remaining to sorrow because of her passing are 5 sons. Wilbert of Skaar, North Dakota; David of Savage Montana; Yank of White Sulphur Springs, Montana; Oliver of Sidney Montana; and Ted of Columbia Falls, Montana; 3 daughters: Mrs Pearl Forsyth of Dore, North Dakota; Mrs Joe Hart of Savage Montana; and Mrs Clarence Hartle of Sidney, Montana; 20 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. A brother and a sister are still living In Wales’.

The siblings mentioned, lived in Rhos, Pontardawe. The brother, William Williams, living in Rhos Pontardawe. His grandson lived on the same road as I did in Alltwen, he was amazed when I gave him the information of Rachel of whom he had no knowledge of.

DEATH NOTICE

Sidney Herald (Montana) Thursday May 8th, 1950

RACHAEL WILLIAMS OBITUARY

‘MOTHER MANN’

About one mile north of Dore, North Dakota stands what is left at a five-room log house one drives by this old house and sees nothing inspiring about it. Today no one lives there. Today it claims no voices, today there is no laughter of children, no patter at feet, no mother or father to scold remonstrate or correct a family of robust children. Today strangers pass by on the highway, look at the house and pass on.

Until the year 1900 these logs only duty was to adorn the valley on the banks of the muddy Yellowstone. It was in this year that Austin and Rachael Mann and eight children moved into the valley. It was then that these logs were put to a new use, Austin and sons cut and hewed them, every swing of the axe inspired by hope and dreams of a permanent home. These logs now meant more than just beauty. They now meant security, protection, and comfort. The task of construction over, the building now must be lived in to be a home. Rachael (or Mother Mann as she is so popularly known by many) accepted gladly the responsibility of making this house a home. Three more children were born to this couple in this home. A large dining table was placed in this home to accommodate this large family. The family itself was only a small part of the number of people who ate from this table – no one ever went from Mother Mann’s place hungry. Cowboys, trading salesman, freight

hauler's (hauling commodities up the river) made this place a place to eat and enjoy hospitality. One man recently made the remark that he would be ashamed to enumerate the meals that he had eaten from Mother Mann's table without giving anything in return. Mother Mann believed in the biblical story of the loaves and fishes and her faith never let anyone down. It was in this home and around this table that her children and her friends and their children were told of the stories of enduring faith in times of hardship while the family was moving by covered wagon from Canada to Culbertson, thence to Buford, again to Culbertson and Lanark on Shell Creek. These moves all being made in the space of about six years and a great portion of the time living in the covered wagon. While living on Shell Creek she had a sod house that leaked when it rained and dripped for many days after. It was here that the only close neighbours were Indians. They loved Mrs Mann for several reasons: the main one was because of her good food. While Mr Mann was away earning a livelihood Mother Mann would have to milk the cows. While she milked the Indians stole the milk, causing her some concern and fear. Another family of white people who lived 60 miles away heard of the Mann family and the lady rode 60 miles on horseback to see Mrs Mann. It would be six months at a time that Mother Mann saw no one but Indians and her family. The Indians harassed Mr Mann in the manner described until the newly found neighbour told her to tie a red rag round the kiddies' neck and one around her own and cough and they would stay away. Mother Mann was also confronted by other fearful experiences. One day in Mr Mann's absence a mountain lion lay on the corner of their barn all day. She tells of the terrible winter and the struggle to survive them. When she opened the house door one morning a steer fell into the doorway, he had frozen to death leaning against the door. These instances of hardship could be multiplied by numbers, and may we insert here the more timid hearted would have given up but not the pioneer, loving, stout hearted Mother Mann. They made her more determined to be amongst the survival of the fittest. Many of the stories told around the big table in the permanent home in the valley were humorous as well as serious. Her work never slackened in the new log home. In the development of the irrigation system in the valley she cooked for 23 men besides the family with no help except the children, her service to her fellowman also increased as the valley became more populated.

A man well known in the valley attributes his life and a good pair of legs today to Mother Mann's ability to revive a frozen person.

In the early days the only telephone in the lower end of the valley was in the Mann home. An urgent message came to Mrs Mann by telegram for a neighbor. There being only the children to carry the message. Mother Mann walked about three miles in a blizzard to deliver the message. There are a whole generation of people in and around Dore and scattered elsewhere that owe their existence today to Mother Mann acting a doctor, midwife and nurse at the time of their birth into this life. She never spared herself, and many is the time that she has gone – by saddlehorse to save a life or to minister to the needy; she believed that the greatest possession “is one that can be divided without diminishing of that possession.”

She practiced her belief. So, to those who knew Mother Mann, the old log house stands a memory of love kindness and sacrifice. Fifty years the old house has withstood the elements of the weather. Now weather-beaten, lifeless and cold, it holds hundreds of stories that if they could be told would warm the heart of any listener, because they were made and impanelled by a warm-hearted woman of 84 years the indomitable spirit of Mother Mann.’



**Rachel's son John Lewis Martin
Llewellyn Mann 1889–1932**

John Lewis Martin Llewellyn Mann

Birth 12 Apr 1889 • Souris, Manitoba,
Canada

Death 8 Nov 1932 • Sidney, Richland
County, Montana, United States

Grover Findley Mann

Birth 12 Nov 1894 • Minot, North
Dakota, United States

Death 26 Jan 1969 • Sidney, Richland
County, Montana, United States



**Rachel's son Grover Findley Mann
1894–1969**

Grover Mann was a member of the US army in the WW1.

In 1924 he came to the UK in a rodeo team that competed at Wembley, where he earned a prize of \$50:

“First International Rodeo Cowboy Championships, June 14th to 28th, 1924
Twice Daily, 2:30 & 8:30, In the Stadium, at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, London.

During Grover's time in the UK, he would probably have visited his Uncle and Aunt in Pontardawe.

The rodeo event is recorded on Ancestry as a large group of family trees, each separate tree detailing the individuals who took part or were responsible in the organisation of the event. The tree lists all the details of individuals their family members, including their parents.

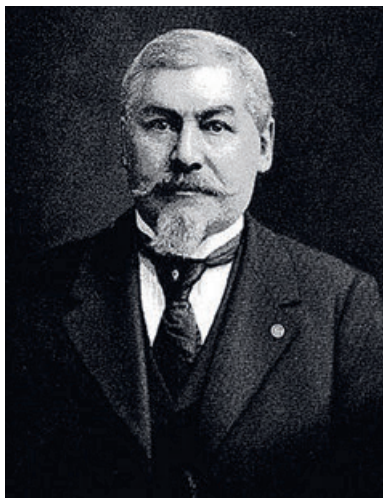
The Ancestry tree is titled “Cowboys and girls of the Wembley International Rodeo 1924” it's the creation of Beverly Smith Idaho, USA. Open to public view.

Wyn John (5699)

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James Jones, 1835–1912



James Jones

JAMES WAS born on Gellygynnar Farm, Pentrecagal, Newcastle Emlyn, Carmarthenshire on the 6 May 1835 to Samuel Jones (1786–1849) and Rachel Jones (1788–1864). He was one of 12 children.

Following the tragic, untimely, death of his father on the 9 March 1849 the farm of approximately 125 acres was split between James's two brothers, Henry (1820–1902) getting 60 acres and John (1823–1891) getting 65 acres. Another brother Rees (1832–1911) was a blacksmith, and James could well have helped in that business.

The exact reasons for James Jones's emigration to America in 1858 are unknown. However, his early life in Wales coincided with difficult times. Poor harvests plagued West Wales in the late 1830s and early 1840s, and the region also experienced social unrest due to the Rebecca Riots, a series of protests against the introduction of tollgates. Given his later success in life, it's possible he had little interest in farming.

Although Welsh was the dominant language in the region, it is likely that English was also taught in schools, implying that James might have been bilingual. As early as 1798, children were discouraged from using Welsh at school.

After arriving in New York, James immediately headed West. He first tried to find work in Cumberland, Maryland, but was unsuccessful. He then travelled to Frostburg, another Maryland mountain town on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad but couldn't find suitable employment there either. He briefly resided in Mt. Savage, Maryland, before continuing his westward journey towards his ultimate destination: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

James initially worked as a blacksmith in Pittsburgh, but driven by a desire for more rewarding work, he moved to Elizabeth, Pennsylvania, where he gained his first experience in the mining industry, albeit in its early, rudimentary form. Subsequently, he found employment at a mine on Pittsburgh's South Side, a position he held until the Civil War erupted.

Despite his recent citizenship, James enlisted in Troop D of the Sixth Regiment of the United States Cavalry, serving under the command of Generals Winfield S. Scott and George McClellan. He exhibited exceptional bravery in service to his adopted nation. His surviving comrades remembered him as a man of remarkable strength and admirable character. His strong will inspired others, and his unwavering belief in ultimate victory uplifted his fellow soldiers, regardless of the battlefield's ebb and flow.

Upon returning from the war, James married Ann Agnes Ivill (1845–1895), a native of Farnworth, Lancashire, England. Together, they aspired to a better life, driven by a shared belief in their ability to achieve it. Ann was his guiding star, unwavering in her support, a devoted and loving Christian wife. They were blessed with 13 children, though sadly, three passed away in infancy.

His first introduction into the coal business occurred in the year 1878, when he formed the Osceola Coal Company, which he operated for two years, aided by his eldest son, John Henry Jones (1866–1959), whose remarkable business intuition was here given its first opportunity to develop and assert itself. During these times he was brought into association with Judge Thomas Mellon (1813–1908) who with his sons opened the T Mellon & Sons' Bank and Congressman W. L. Scott (1828–1891). Both were wealthy and influential men.

James disposed of his interests in the Osceola Company in 1880 and leased the Grant Mines at Carnegie, which he likewise sold out and two years later purchased the Ivill Mine near Monongahela City, named after his wife. During these years his transactions gradually grew larger and more important, as he was laying the foundation for the vast interests he would soon after control. His prominence as a coal operator on a large scale was now felt in the market and in 1889 he became the dominant factor in the Catsburg Coal Company Ltd and a year later organized and controlled the Rostraver Coal Company. In these organizations his son, John H. Jones, who proved an able lieutenant and wise counsellor, always assisted him. Like President Roosevelt, James Jones was not only an enemy to race suicide but also an exponent of the strenuous life.¹

¹ PittBuff.com website. "Race Suicide" was a eugenicist theory in America at the turn of the twentieth century which Theodore Roosevelt espoused. Essentially, it was the duty of all American men and women to have children. "The Strenuous Life" was the title of a speech made and published by Roosevelt in 1899 arguing for effort and hard work to be embraced by Americans for the betterment of the nation.

In 1896 five of the Jones boys had proved their fitness for a business career and after judging them by the high standard of his own capacity and integrity, he decided to associate them with himself in the coal business, and the firm of James Jones and Sons was formed. The local river business and flats of the T. M. Jenkins Company, together with the river business, steamers, retail yards etc of John H. Jones the elder son, were purchased making the Jones' interests "One of the largest among the shippers of coal in the Pittsburg district."

The formation of the Monongahela River Coal and Coke Company in 1899 witnessed the transfer of the Jones' holdings to the Big River Company to which James Jones and Sons subscribed one million dollars in stocks and bonds.

The Pittsburg Buffalo Company was formed in 1900 and incorporated December 30, 1903 with assets of 7.2 million dollars. The Company records showed over 30,000 acres of unmined coal and could produce 4 million tons of coal annually and was known before that as James Jones and Sons. Their assets in today's market would have a value of over 153 million dollars. Not bad for a farmer's son who left Wales virtually penniless.

James married Margaret Anna Thompson (1853–1927), an Illinois native, in March 1900. After retiring, James purchased a substantial parcel of land in Hazelwood. He devoted a portion of his time to constructing homes for those who worked hard but struggled to find affordable housing. By the time he passed away, in 1912, he had become one of the most significant owners of smaller residential properties within the city of Pittsburgh. He frequently returned home, and several of his relatives moved to America to work for the company. James always remained deeply connected to his roots.

This article is based mainly on information collated by one of his descendants, Jay Hosling, and can be further explored at PittBuff.com

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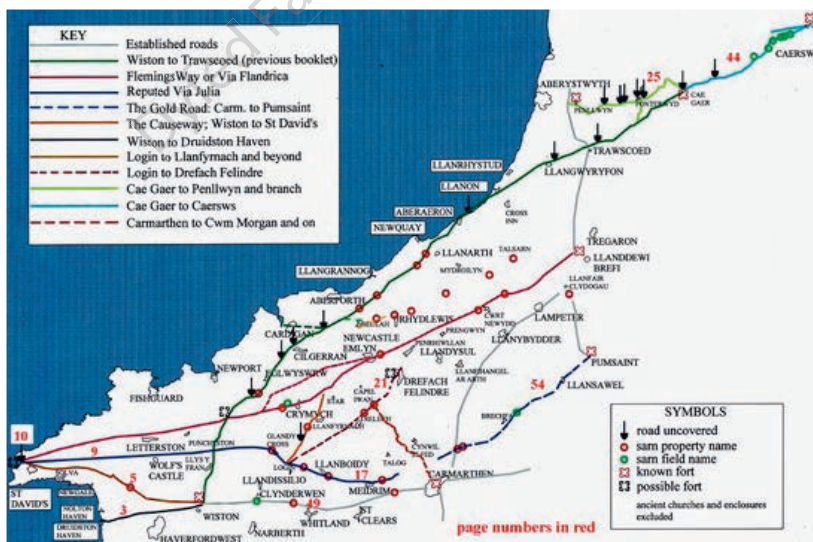
Jones Mausoleum

A few Causeways more – Martin Davies

I published a booklet in 2017 called *Ancient Causeways Uncovered* on a proposed Roman route from Wiston to Trawscoed and beyond. I have now published a second booklet and the map shows all the proposed routes covered.

There are 55 pages with over 100 illustrations showing aerial views, Lidar, road cross sections and various sites. There are 11 road uncoverings featured. [The book sells for £10 and any profit from sales will go to the Paul Sartori foundation in Haverfordwest.

There are copies in Narberth Museum, Victoria bookshop Haverfordwest, St Davids bookshop, Oriel Y Parc, St Davids, Seaways Fishguard, Newport Pems PO, Awen Teifi Cardigan, Castell Henllys, Aeron booksellers, Ponterwyd garage and hopefully, Goldstones Carmarthen from next week. I would be very grateful if you could inform Dyfed Family History members because I am contacting those most likely to be interested in the first instance and I am hoping to sell predominantly to local people.



The Push and Pull of Immigration/Emigration – from Caldey Island to Dowlais

‘Migration involves the permanent or semi-permanent movement of individuals, families or groups from one place to another’¹

Migration usually occurs at specific times in a life cycle. It could be at school leaving age or on a marriage, retirement, or even fleeing from a family dispute. While researching my own family history many of these reasons were applicable but for the purpose of this article, I have chosen to consider the reasons why members of the ‘Oriell’ family left their childhood home on Caldey Island and sought employment elsewhere.

In 1838 Benjamin Oriell, his wife, Elizabeth and their two children, Mary and William left their home in Crunwre in Pembrokeshire and moved to Caldey Island. Benjamin was employed as a carpenter to Thomas Kynaston who had bought the Island in 1798 from the Earl of Warwick. Over the years eight more children were born to Benjamin and Elizabeth (known now as Betsy):

John b.1839

Elizabeth b.1843

Benjamin b.1849

David b.1840

Jane b.1845

Sarah b.1852.

Anne b.1841

Thomas b.1848

These children spent their childhood on this beautiful island while attending the Island’s small school. A report on the state of Education in Wales in 1847, (page 62 *Caldey* by Roscoe Howells states that there were 39 children on the island, 27 of them between the ages of 5 and 15 years.

From an article published in a newspaper following their father’s death we discover that Benjamin ‘*taught the children to read and write, conducted Sunday School and Services and was looked up to by all as a kind of temporal as well as spiritual father. He gained the high regard of Mr Kynaston by moral character and integrity that never stooped to deceit or sham*’.²

As they were nearing the end of their childhood each child would have thoughts and ideas about the path they would like to follow with their own specific skills. But what opportunities were there on Caldey Island itself?

¹ p.5 *Studying Family and Community History 19th & 20th Centuries* volume 2, Cambridge University Press in association with the Open University.

² p.110, *Caldey* by Roscoe Howells – Gomer Press 1984.

Of course, there was the estate where their father Benjamin worked. One son, David, showed an interest in his father's work and under his father's tutelage he eventually became Farm Bailiff on Caldey. Together with his wife, Martha, also an islander, he remained on the Island for many years and by 1891 together they were running a boarding house mainly for farm labourers. Another son, William, began his career as a carpenter on Caldey working alongside his father and, having married a local girl, Ann Phillips he began using his carpentry skills on the island. But with limited opportunities there they eventually set up a very successful business in Tenby.

Benjamin's daughters would have spent much of their childhood helping their mother with domestic duties. Both Elizabeth and Jane left Caldey to work in The Hope and Anchor Public House in Tenby.

The other place on Caldey in which their father was heavily involved was the school, which of course they all attended. From the census for 1871 we know that daughter Sarah, was teaching the children in the small school, housed in the church with a screen positioned in the middle making two classrooms. In her spare time Sarah also ran reading and writing classes for adults.

As there was limited employment both on Caldey Island and locally there was no alternative, particularly for the sons, but to seek employment further afield. In 1861, aged 22, son John was employed as a tailor and living with John and Mary Jenkins in Charlotte Street, Merthyr Tydfil-a long way from Caldey Island!

So, what attracted John Oriel to Merthyr Tydfil? The 'pull' would have been an area where there would be plenty of work. During the mid-eighteenth century, due to the proximity of coal supplies and a river system there were four Iron Works in the area. These workers required many services, including clothes and, for this reason possibly, John Oriel decided to learn the art of tailoring. By 1871 he was running his own tailoring business based at Berry Street, Dowlais. His success in the art of tailoring enabled John to help other members of his family to 'migrate' from Pembrokeshire including his younger brother Benjamin.

In 1891 Benjamin was living at this address as a Journeyman/shoemaker but eventually became an apprentice tailor. Benjamin did not continue with the tailoring as in 1895 he was ordained as a Baptist Minister in Bath. It was thanks to his brother, John, that he was given the opportunity to make his own way in the world.

Over the years John Oriel provided accommodation and apprenticeships for other family members including a cousin William Oriel and two nephews James Williams, son of his sister Anne and Thomas Oriel.

This industrial area of South Wales became a magnet for the children of Benjamin and Betsy Oriel. By 1891 their daughter Sarah who began her working life at the school on Caldey was also living in Dowlais with her husband John King and their children. Sarah had met John King when he came to the island with James Hawkesley, the new owner of Caldey, in 1867. In order to earn enough money to support his family John and Sarah also relocated to Dowlais where John obtained work as coal Weigher Manager in the local colliery.

Another of Benjamin and Betsy's children to move from Caldey Island was their daughter, Anne, my great grandmother. Anne often visited her relations on the mainland and at 19 years of age, the census tells us that she was living and working as a general servant with her brother William, a carpenter and his family in Norton, Tenby. However soon after this Anne must have sought work elsewhere as three years later, she married Thomas Williams, who had left his home in Somerset to seek work in the Vale of Glamorgan. I am unsure where they actually met but I have been led to believe that Anne had come to the area and was working in a Public House belonging to a relation where Thomas delivered coal!

After their marriage they continued to live in the Vale of Glamorgan eventually setting up a small shop in Llanblethian where they '*catered well for the needs of the village*'.³ In addition, Thomas became a coal dealer (own account). Although they were not living in the industrial areas of Wales, they were still providing a service for families of men who might have left the Vale to seek work in the industrial areas of Glamorgan.

*The decision to migrate is not normally taken by an individual in isolation usually it involves other members of the family.*⁴

I think we can rightly maintain that the migration of the Oriel Family from Caldey Island to Dowlais falls into this category.

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References

1. Ancestry.com

³ *Llanblethian in 1895 – A Boyhood Walk* by Alderman Robert Thomas.

⁴ p.32 *From Family History to Community History* edited by W.T.R. Pryce.

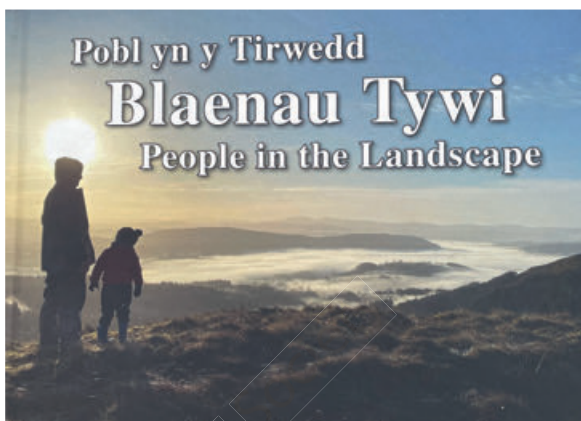
Pobl yn y Tirwedd – Blaenau Tywi – People in the Landscape

A new book highlights the stories of the people who lived and worked in Blaenau Tywi, in the area around Cil-y-cwm, Siloh, Rhandir-mwyn and Porth-y-rhyd, mainly during the period 1841 to 1939. (For the sake of consistency, the place is spelled Cil-y-cwm throughout.) Hopefully

this book will assist family researchers in finding their roots and understanding what life was like a century or two ago. The book continues the research that was published in 2014 – “Blaenau Tywi – Names in the Landscape” which captures details of fields, farms and houses which were being forgotten. This new book focuses on the people who lived here and records the highlights of their lives, the good and the bad, from the peasant and the pauper to the squire and the gentry

Blaenau Tywi encompasses the land on both sides of the river Tywi below Llyn Brianne, reaching very nearly to the town of Llandovery. It includes the whole parish of Cil-y-cwm together with Rhandir Abbot (a district of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn), parts of the old district of Llandingat Without (merged with Cil-y-cwm in 1977) and two farms which were previously in Llanddewi Brefi but were added to Cil-y-cwm parish.

The book gives a fascinating insight into the lives of hundreds of former inhabitants of the area for those turbulent years. The authors have drawn together information from the censuses, newspapers, church and chapel records and wills as well as the family history research of many whose families left the area looking for better lives in America and Australia. There are over 300 pages of stories and nearly 100 photographs based on 500 farms and cottages. There are over 300 names of people that left for America. Another table lists the Industrial Schoolboys who came to work in the area at the turn of the century, when the local farmers were struggling to find workers for the farms.



Many people moved to Pennsylvania, swapping lead mining for coal mining. Occasionally, about 700 people who had emigrated from the Llandovery countryside met up for picnics at a park in Wilkes-Barre, when the speeches praised the clever and brave men from the upper Tywi valley (*South Wales Daily Post* 11/7/1899).

One man who travelled to Australia was Daniel Lloyd Jones, born in Penybont Llandovery, but whose mother came from Cefntrenfa. For Christmas in 1881 he gave £100 to help the “poorest of the poor” in Cil-y-cwm and Llandovery, chosen by the vicars of the two parishes. The gift provided 74 pairs of blankets, 80 yards of flannel, 681 pounds of meat, 21 tons of coal, 79 pounds of tea, 69 pounds of sugar and 120 loaves of bread (*South Wales Daily News* 2/1/1882). By 1883 he was considering sending Australian mutton over to Wales to “gladden the hearts of the aged”.

Of those who stayed, one great character was John Rolley, manager of Lord Cawdor’s Lead Mine, Nantymwyn. When news of an impending French invasion reached him in 1797, he and Edward Jones apparently assembled 3000 men armed with their working tools, similar to tomahawks, and started marching towards Fishguard. Lord Dynevor met them about halfway to Carmarthen and persuaded them to turn back on the assurance that the danger had subsided (*Kentish Gazette* 10/3/1797). In 1789, John Rolley’s nephew or brother William drowned whilst returning from Cil-y-cwm Fair as noted in the Llanfair-ar-y-bryn burial records. Such was life in crossing the river Tywi then. In 1843 PC Jonah Davies, living in Lisburne House, Cil-y-cwm was actively involved with capturing the notorious Rebecca rioter, Shoni Sguborfawr in the Gwendraeth valley and received a government reward of £25 equal to around £3000 today (Carmarthenshire Antiquary). Jonah also got his name in the paper when he charged two drovers with driving pigs through the parish on a Sunday. The defendants were each fined 10s with costs (*Welshman* 6/4/1855).

The area was well known for its bards, hymnwriters and its characters. One of these was Thomas Elias – Y Bardd Coch (the Red Bard), born in Brynteg. His name is associated with possibly the most famous of Welsh folk songs namely “Dacw nghariad i lawr yn y berllan”. [In English: There is my sweetheart down in the orchard]

At a meeting of the Carmarthen Bay Fishery District in 1868 a request was made to inspect the Rhandir-mwyn mines after fish were poisoned for about six

or seven miles downstream. Five years later Capt. Mitchell, the mine manager, answered questions regarding pollution from the lead mines entering the river Tywi. He was asked to install catch pits to help take the contamination out of water from the mine. It was said that over *100 men crossed the river Tywi on stilts* going to their work in the lead mines and there was “nothing better for spearing salmon than stilts” – a novel way of poaching (*Welshman* 3/4/1868 and 25/4/1873).

The authors are Dafydd and Meryl Tomos and Kate Arblaster. Copies of the book and more information are available from Dafydd Tomos, 07944 373473.

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Facebook: [Hanes Blaenau Tywi History](#)

Patronymics, surnames and alternative family names: a brief case study

Researchers into Welsh family history will be familiar with the process by which the traditional patronymic naming pattern (e.g. Dafydd ap Thomas ap Morgan ap Huw etc.) was gradually replaced by the use of fixed surnames (with the surname commonly being derived from a modification of the ap/ab prefix to produce names like Price, from ap Rhys/Rees, or Bowen, from ab Owen, or from the addition of a final ‘s’ to a father’s anglicised given name to produce surnames like Williams or Jones). First affecting the Welsh gentry in the sixteenth century, the process spread slowly among the rest of the population until, according to some sources, the end of the eighteenth century. Other sources, however, note the persistence of the traditional system in some rural areas into the following century, and family historians will be aware of the complications arising from survivals of aspects of this, such as the use of alternative surnames for particular individuals in different contexts, or the use of different surnames by different branches of the same family.

What follows is a brief study of such instances in Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire found in the paternal line of my grandfather Rev. William Evans (the poet and Archdruid Wil Ifan), who was born in Cwmbach,

Llanwinio, Carmarthenshire in 1883. Other researchers can no doubt provide similar illustrations of these complications.

To aid clarity, the table below shows the direct line, from Wil Ifan's great-great-grandfather onwards, with the birth and death dates of each member, and the names which I have found to refer to them.

<i>Generation</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Name(s) found</i>
1	c. 1767–1843	Evan Jenkin; Evan Jenkins (E1)
2	1799–1874	Evan Evan Jenkin; Evan E(vn). Jenkin; Evan Jenkin(s); Evan Evans (E2)
3	1823–1890	Evan Jenkins; Evan Evans (E3)
4	1850–1929	Daniel Evans; Daniel Evan Jenkins
5	1883–1968	William Evans (bardic name Wil Ifan)

Wil Ifan's father was the Congregational Minister, radical campaigner and educationalist Rev. Daniel Evans, who was born in 1850 in Llanycrwys. He was baptised, with this name, at the Independent chapel of Ffaldybrenin, with his father's name being given as Evan Evans. Evan himself (E3) was born in Betws Bledrws, in Cardiganshire, in 1823. The surname of Evan's father (E2), however, was not Evans. His full name was Evan Evan Jenkin: while this does not, like the full traditional patronymic, reveal his ancestry for three or even four generations, it does indicate that his own father's name was Evan Jenkin (E1): this is confirmed by E2's baptismal record in 1799 and his parents' marriage record in 1793. This earlier Evan (E1) was born about 1767, lived in Betws Bledrws and the nearby parish of Silian, and was buried in Silian on 9th January 1843 (as Evan Jenkins). Since I have not been able to trace his baptismal record, however, I do not know whether his name derived, in patronymic fashion, from a father called Jenkin or whether Jenkin was already being treated as a fixed surname.

A closer look at Evan Evan Jenkin (E2), who lived from about 1799 to 1874, and was buried in Silian, shows him referred to by various different names in different contexts. Since these contexts include baptismal and other records for his children, details of these children will be provided here, with the dates of their baptisms. As this article subsequently explores ways in which these children were referred to later in their lives, their Christian names (apart from that of E3) will be indicted by an asterisk on each occasion to show that these are the individuals concerned.

Martha:	30 Jan 1820	David:	2 June 1831
John:	5 Aug. 1821	Mary:	7 Oct. 1833
Evan:	15 July 1823 (E3)	Ann:	27 Nov. 1835
Margaret:	6 April 1825	Samuel:	23 July 1837
Rachel:	2 Dec. 1827	Thomas:	12 June 1839
Jane:	6 Aug. 1829		

Evan Evan Jenkin (E2) is referred to by his full name on a number of occasions in the baptismal records of the Cilgwyn Dissenting Protestant chapel in Llangybi. When his daughter Rachel* was baptised on 2nd December 1827, her parents are named as Evan Evan Jenkin (E2) and Ann Zacheus William, with Evan's wife also being given her full name. The names are given in the same form in the baptisms of Mary* (1833) and Thomas* (1839). Shortened forms are used, however, in other baptisms of his children at Cilgwyn: in the records of Evan (E3) (1823) and Margaret* (1825) the father (E2) is 'Evan E. Jenkin'; in those of David* (1831), Ann* (1835) and Samuel* (1837), the second 'Evan' has become 'En.' or 'Evn'. This perhaps suggests that even when the full name was used, this part of the name was seen as less important.

The two eldest children, Martha* and John*, had been baptised in the Parish Church in Betws Bledrws in 1820 and 1821 respectively, and so, for some reason, was Jane*, who was born in 1829. In all these Anglican records, the parents are simply listed as 'Evan and Anne', with the surname Jenkins (now with an added 's').

This regularised form of the surname is what was used by the enumerator in the 1841 census when most of the family, except the two oldest children, were living at Blaenffinau in Silian. Evan (E2), Ann(e) and their children Evan (E3), David*, Mary*, Ann(e)*, Samuel* and Thomas* are listed there with the surname Jenkins. John* is probably 'John Jenkins' a male servant at Maespwll in Lampeter; Margaret, * Rachel* and Jane* have not been found with certainty in that census, and the latter two may well have died. As the next paragraph will show, however, it is extremely likely, that Martha* is the female servant at Blaenwern in Llanfair Clydogau (Cardiganshire) who is listed as Martha Evans: this suggests that the form of surname referencing the father's given name was also being used in some circumstances. Similarly, when living apart from the family unit and working on a farm in Llangybi, her brother Samuel* is listed in the 1851 census as Samuel Evans.

References to members of this family in Silian and other church records in the 1840s and 1850s consistently use the surname Jenkins. On 12th June 1842, the baptism is recorded in Silian of the illegitimate daughter of Martha*: 'Anne, daughter of John Davies of Blaenywern, Llanfair, farmer, and Martha Jenkins, Blaenffiniau, servant'. When Martha* married Morgan Morgan in Silian on 3rd May 1843, her name is shown as Martha Jenkins, and that of her father (E2) as Evan Jenkins (with added 's'): he, however, as a witness, signs as 'Evan Jenkin Blaenffiniau', identifying himself further but not using the 'Jenkins' form. His name, as the father, is also given as Evan Jenkins in three other marriage records: when Margaret* married Evan Williams in Pencarreg on 14th February 1845; when Ann* married Evan Richard in Silian on 13th November 1858; and when Samuel* married Ann Harris in Caio on 25th January 1860. However, the 1861 census shows Samuel*, listed separately from his family at the farm where he is working, once again as Samuel Evans.

The 1851 census for Blaenffiniau lists Evan (E2), his wife Ann and their children David* and Mary*, all with the surname Jenkins. This is used, too, in the burial records of David* (12th May 1859) and Mary* (25th May 1859), the census records of 1861 and 1871 for Evan (E2) and his wife, the burial records for the couple (1874 and 1878 respectively), the probate record for Evan (E2), and in a note in the Aberystwith Observer on 28th September 1874 recording the death of 'Mr Evan Jenkins, sexton of Silian parish church for many years'.

It seems, therefore, as if the process of standardisation into 'Jenkins' was complete, at least in official records. However, the study of records associated with the two sons Evan (E3) and Thomas* shows that this is not the full story.

In 1849, Evan (E3), who had moved to work on a farm in Llanycrwys, got married in the parish church there. He signs as Evan Evans, and the name of his father (E2) is correspondingly recorded as Evan Evans. (The marriage record shows the surname of his wife Jane and of her father as Thomas, but elsewhere, and more commonly, they have the name Williams: several more case studies could be devoted to alternative surnames in her family tree.) Subsequently their children are all baptised, at Ffaldybrenin Independent chapel, with the surname Evans, and this is the form used in later censuses and marriage and burial records for this line of the family. Evan's younger brother Thomas*, who was listed as Thomas Jenkins in 1851 when living in Pencarreg with his sister Margaret* and her husband, gave his name as Thomas Evans in 1860 when he married Esther Williams from Llanycrwys and settled there. Subsequent records for him and his descendants continue to use this surname.

Why did Evan (E3) and Thomas* use Evans rather than Jenkins? Was it because they had moved away from where the family was widely referred to as Jenkins? Or perhaps to avoid confusion or conform more closely to a pattern common elsewhere? Or was it a matter of personal choice? We can never know, but, as it happens, we have some evidence of how Evan himself (E3) saw the situation. He recorded dates of birth and death in his family Bible, and these were copied by his son Daniel into his own family Bible. Then, in turn, Daniel's son Wil Ifan copied the information into his family history notebook, his Llyfr yr Achau (now in his papers in the National Library).

There, Evan (E3) named his father (E2) simply as 'Evan Jenkin' and his mother as 'Ann Jenkins'. Their children (Martha*, John*, Evan (E3), Margaret*, Rachel*, Jane*, David*, Mary*, Ann*, Samuel*, and Thomas*) are listed as 'Martha Evanes', 'John Evanes', 'Evan Evanes', 'Margareat Evanes', 'Ratchel Evanes', 'Jane Evanes', 'David Evanes', 'Mary Evanes', 'Ann Evanes', 'Samuel Evanes' and 'Thomas Evanes'. It seems that he (E3) adopts the patronymic pattern of using the father's given name to form the surname but then adds the 's' sound which derives from the different system. He attaches this too to his father's surname to create a surname for his mother.

When Evan (E3) lists his own children, born from 1850 onwards, something different happens. He records their names as 'Daniel Evan Jenkins', 'Evan Evan Jenkins', 'Ann Evan Jenkins', 'John Evan Jenkins', 'David Evan Jenkins', and 'Margaret Evan Jenkins'. Thus, while he does not use the Jenkins surname in his everyday life, and other records regularly use 'Evans' as the surnames for this generation, he echoes the patronymic system here, as if his own name were 'Evan Jenkins'. This illustrates, in a small way, the fact that even in the middle of the nineteenth century there was still some fluidity in the system.

Evan's brothers John* and Samuel*, meanwhile, emigrated to the United States, in 1854 and 1870 respectively, settling in the Welsh community in Oak Hill, Ohio. American official records, their gravestones, and the emigrant press consistently refer to them as 'John E. Jenkins' and 'Samuel E. Jenkins'. Since the initial signifies Evan, what seems a characteristically American naming style in fact conceals another partial relic of the Welsh patronymic system.

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A name on a page – my search for Charles Harry Roberts

In 1841, the small fishing village of Aberporth was experiencing a building boom. In the 1830s, the Beynon family of Trewern sold off part of their Dyffryn Estate for housing. Thus the 'New village of Aberporth' was born. This is the area overlooking Dyffryn beach, the larger of the two beaches, and is in reality part of the parish of Blaenporth. The first people to move there were businessmen from the nearby parishes of Penbryn and Llangranog – two publicans, a smith, a general trader and a stone mason. Amongst the people listed on the 1841 census was one 'Charles Robots', no age or occupation, born in foreign parts. I assumed he was perhaps a servant, left behind whilst his employer was away.

Later, looking at the burial records of St Cynwyls, the parish church of Aberporth, I found the on 13th June 1847 the burial of one Captain Charles Harry Roberts, aged 51, officer of the 48th & 30th foot, on half pay. This was most likely 'Charles Robots' of the 1841 census. I was now intrigued, Roberts is not a local name, nor were there any military families in the parish. Who was he, and what was he doing there? He was clearly more than my initial assumption of a servant. The local paper muddled the water somewhat with a different age 43, but no further information.¹ I found him listed on the NLW website as a mapmaker for the Pigeonsford estate with William J Howells who was one of the publicans on the 1841 census. He was mentioned in the local papers as popular in local society, running a shop on Dyffryn Bank and an agent for the 'London, Edinburgh and Dublin Guaranteed Mutual and Property Life Assurance Company'. By the time of the 1851 census, both William Howells and Charles Roberts had been declared bankrupt and died.

I then tried to find out something more about Charles Harry Roberts. A period of frustration followed; no doubt familiar to many! I tried numerous different searches and different combinations of his name, initials, spelling etc. I could trace his army career, which didn't tell me anything new. However, spending time in London gave me the chance to visit TNA (The National Archives) at Kew and look up a reference I had previously ignored as being unlikely to be relevant. How wrong I was!!

TNA holds the papers of the Colonial Office which include applications from those hoping to be granted land in Australia. Two letters were indexed

¹ *The Welshman* 11th June 1847.

from Charles Harry Roberts. Dated August 28, 1827, the first letter² I looked at outlined the intentions of Charles Harry Roberts of the 48th Foot. It was the right person. The second letter mentioned references he could supply, including his grandfather John Roberts Esq. The only John Roberts who seemed to be of the right age was a former chairman of the East India Company. This seemed incredibly unlikely, but, being at Kew, I looked at his will.³ A codicil to the will mentioned his grandson, Charles Harry Roberts, ‘natural son of my son Christopher’.

Knowing his parentage, I was then able to trace him. Assuming Charles Harry was born in the 1790s, his father Christopher then worked for the EIC (East India Company) and was a judge on the Dacca Circuit in Bengal.⁴ There is no record of Charles’s birth. The EIC, due to the shortage of European women in India, encouraged their employees to set up households with local women. I suspect this may have been the case here. None of this seemed any handicap to Christopher marrying in 1804, Caroline Bird, daughter of Sherman Bird, a senior judge on the Dacca circuit. They had a daughter in 1806. Sadly, later that year, Christopher died.⁵ His will⁶ refers: “*to Charles Harry Roberts, now or later under the care of my father John Roberts, when he shall arrive at the age of 21 or sooner if my executors deem it desirable, 25,000 sicca rupees*”.

His wife and daughter were far more generously provided for to the tune of an annual income of £1,500 and £800 respectively.

Christopher’s father John died in 1810. A codicil to his will dated 1809 leaves “*a small legacy of £200 from us to Charles Harry Roberts, natural son of my late son Christopher Roberts*”.

Thus, by 1810, Charles had lost both his father and grandfather and was resident in what was to him, a foreign country. His grandmother had already died. Presumably Christopher’s executors, mostly elderly judges on the Dacca circuit, supervised Charles’s education and arranged his future employment. By 29th August 1816 he had joined the army, an ensign with the 48th Northamptonshire regiment of Foot. His army career would seem to be uneventful. On the

² CO201/190.

³ PROB11/1511/429.

⁴ UK register of employees of EIC 1792 (Ancestry).

⁵ English Cemy at Dacca (Find a grave) Sacred to the memory of Christopher Roberts esq
^{3rd} judge of court of appeal & circuit at Dacca who departed this life 4 May 1806 37th year.

⁶ EIC wills. Find my past.

25th March 1824 he was made a Lieutenant, and Captain on 19th December 1826. He then appears to want to try something different to the army.⁷

The two letters held by TNA were fascinating. Charles would have been in his early 30s. His handwriting was appalling. He was hoping to settle in Van Diemens Land (Tasmania) or New South Wales and demanding to know how much land he could expect to be given. It seemed to be the practice then for the Colonial Office to give grants of land to prospective settlers of good character who would invest in the new colonies. Charles wrote:

"I have taken the liberty to write being desirous of obtaining an extensive grant of land at Port Philip. I am owner of the brig Woodlark which sailed about 10 days ago for VDLand and NSWales. I am also about to send out 2 heavy and 2 light stagecoaches for VDLand ... I shall, if I receive liberal encouragement, take out £1,000 cash capital ... keep the brig in full employ and the horses for the coaches will most likely be my own. I am still with the 48th foot but will go onto to half pay when I know the quantity of land I may have".

The Colonial Office seemed unimpressed as a month later he left a note at their door reiterating his request and mentioning references, including his grandfather, John Roberts. The only element of his letter I was able to check was the ownership of the Woodlark. Certainly a brig named Woodlark sailed for New South Wales at about this time, she was a whaler and he was not the owner! I suspect the cash and stagecoaches may have been equally exaggerated.

By 26th February 1828, Charles was back in the army, this time with the 30th foot, again as a captain. His service with them was brief, and he is not mentioned in any of the army lists after 1830 either as a serving officer or an officer on half pay.

How did he arrive in West Wales and meet William Howells? This question I have yet to answer. For somebody who dreamt of life in Australia, was a shop in Aberporth enough? Who would have thought though that the grandson of the chairman of the EIC would be buried in St Cynwyls in an unmarked grave. I do wonder how many other 'names on a page' have stories to tell.

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⁷ Army lists.

Genealogical insights gleaned from a murder investigation

An investigation into a murder or other serious crime leads to a spotlight being put onto the personal lives and habits of a number of people who might not otherwise be newsworthy. Many of our ancestors appear on census returns, electoral registers, civil registration and parish registers but often not that much more and so it is hard to find anything much about them as people. However, if they are involved in a serious crime, whether as victim, criminal, suspect, witness or detective, then interesting insights into their lives can be obtained.

I will illustrate this from the characters who appeared in my recently published book, *Harold Greenwood and the Kidwelly Poisoning*. This took place in the small Welsh town in Carmarthenshire in 1919–1920. Greenwood was a middle-aged English solicitor living with his family in Rumsey House in Kidwelly. His wife, Mabel, died in 1919, apparently from natural causes, and shortly afterwards Greenwood married again, to a younger woman, one Gladys Jones. Tongues wagged and his wife's corpse was disinterred. Arsenic was found therein and Greenwood was sent to prison prior to being put on trial for the murder of his first wife.

The police investigation, which included detectives being sent down from Scotland Yard, uncovered much about the household, about Greenwood, his wife and children and their servants. Other friends of the family and neighbours provided evidence. Regrettably the Carmarthenshire Constabulary's records of the time do not seem to survive, but those of the Metropolitan Police and public prosecutor can be found at the National Archives at Kew (ref. MEPO3/265b; DPP1/57). These include statements by witnesses and comments made by the police. The details of the inquest,



Greenwood and fellow cricketers – he is front row, second from the left.

magistrates' court hearings and trial were published in 1930 in the series of *Notable British Trials* (the latter edited by Winifred Duke, titled *The Trial of Harold Greenwood*). Local and national newspapers contained reports about the case, including a series of articles by Harold Greenwood.

Unsurprisingly most of the spotlight was on the accused man, and to a lesser extent, his unfortunate first wife. He was the attention of the police and the press and so his actions and words were scrutinised; as well as him providing information about his life himself. The police report on Greenwood's character was damning enough, 'a man of little ability, a certain amount of simple cunning, and a large measure of conceit... He has a poor reputation, both as a lawyer and generally, no one seems to have a good word for him locally'. Miss Phillips, his wife's best friend, added 'Mr Greenwood was very fond of making his wife jealous'.

Given that this was a poisoning case, there is much by doctors and others about Mrs Greenwood's health in the last year or so of her life. Often the only clue to someone's health is what little is written in their death certificate. However, in this case, there is much more. Dr Griffiths noted that he had attended her in 1917–1919 for gastric trouble and biliousness. Her husband reported her walking and talking in her sleep. He told how she was taking patent medicines. Her best friend told how she kept much of her health problems from her. All this helps to build up a portrait of Mrs Greenwood's physical and mental state in her later years.



Mrs Greenwood

As to her character, the vicar said 'I had always found her quite cheerful, genial, kind-hearted and thoroughly upright with an excellent character. She was most highly respected'. A neighbour reported 'Mrs Greenwood was the soul of kindness and probably nobody in the village was better liked'. 'She visited the sick people and did whatever she could for the poor,' said her daughter Irene.

Glwadys Jones became Greenwood's second wife and Frank Russell, her former

fiancé, provided information about her and their eventually futile romance. He had been introduced to her through one of her many brothers in 1912 and they were engaged in 1915 and as he was serving with the army during the war they corresponded rather than met very often. In 1919 he was dumped by letter. In a press interview with her and Greenwood she appears to play second fiddle with her more dominant and older new husband.

But we also learn about the Greenwood children. Of their four children, two of them were away at boarding school and of the others, the youngest was John Kenneth and he had little involvement in the story. But the eldest daughter, Irene, had an important part to play. We learn that she spent time in London enjoying herself with others and that she had a job in a bank in Carmarthen. She probably preferred her father to her mother as she termed her father 'Daddy' (she was 22 at the time) and her mother rather more formally; 'she did not show much affection' towards her. She spoke up for her father during his trial as a crucial witness for the defence.

Then there is much about their friends and neighbours. The Griffiths lived opposite the Greenwoods' home and were composed of Dr Thomas Griffiths and his sister, Mary Griffiths and the two socialised with the Greenwoods. However, as with Greenwood, he was not well thought of professionally, 'He is not regarded by many who are quite friendly with him as particularly competent rather the contrary'. At the trial he revealed he was careless in record keeping and confused between dispensing various drugs. Miss Phillipps was praised by onlookers as being intelligent, trustworthy and a good witness.

Finally, there is information about the family's servants, both past and present. Principal among these was Hannah Maggie Williams. She was employed as a parlourmaid. However, she had also incurred the wrath of her employer,



The Greenwood home, Rumsey House, Bridge Street, Kidwelly

Mrs Greenwood. She may have been taking wine from her employers' store. She was also apparently back late from her evening off. This seems to have led to her employer being about to dismiss her, but she personally denied this. Her fellow servants instead thought that she had been given notice to quit and indeed did leave the Greenwoods' employ shortly after Mrs Greenwood's death.

Mrs Annie Groves was employed by Greenwood in his office in Llanelli as caretaker. Her evidence, as well as that of a former house servant was that they both lied at their employer's behest. This was to cover up Greenwood's meeting Glwadys Jones in private. Another servant stated that she had to lie to cover her employer from his wife and when she was reluctant to do so Greenwood said 'Well, it will mean a divorce'.

Yet there is room for uncertainty; one central issue in this case are the exact relations between the Greenwoods. Greenwood himself insisted that 'There was no more a united family than we'. Naturally, some might say as he was accused of poisoning her he would say that. Some neighbours and servants agreed with this assessment. Lily Powell said 'Mr and Mrs Greenwood were living on very happy terms. Dr Griffiths agreed. However, the police assessment was, 'He was too friendly with other women... which caused a certain amount of domestic infelicity' and others supported such views.

Newspapers covered the case in great detail and were illustrated to show the various participants, not just the accused but the legal figures, witnesses and jurymen. Often these may be the only pictures that exist of these people. There were also written descriptions of some of those at the trial. Greenwood was 'Well groomed and in apparently excellent health, he looked all over the country lawyer'. Margaret Morris, his cook, was 'a small frail figure, she gave her evidence very quietly' whereas Lily Powell, a housemaid, was 'a trim figure, neatly dressed'. Irene was given the lengthiest description of all:

'Irene is a slim girl of 22. Over a black coat and skirt with a thin white stripe, she wore heavy furs and held in her hand a small lace edged handkerchief. A light fawn hat covered a mass of very dark hair. She gave her evidence quite firmly, but her voice, in which there was a distinct trace of the musical Welsh accent, was so low that she was frequently inaudible'.

We also learn about the lifestyle of the people under investigation, quite apart from the criminal aspects of the case. The Greenwood family lived in a detached house with grounds, with three live in domestic servants and two part time gardeners. They had a car but no telephone (so Greenwood used a neighbour's

telephone when he wanted to speak to Glwadys). In 1919 the family drank their way through a great deal of claret, burgundy and whisky, which was mentioned because Mrs Greenwood allegedly was poisoned by her lunchtime wine. Greenwood clearly did not take his work too seriously as his

working hours were but between 10 and 3 each day, minus his lunchbreak, when he often spent with Glwadys Jones. The servants had Sunday evening as leisure time but had to prepare lunch, tea and supper and eat the leftovers. This was a crucial point because it indicated that the arsenic could not have been put into the food as none had any adverse consequences.

So, to conclude, we can learn a lot about the private lives, professional reputations and even health by examining police, court and newspaper evidence surrounding a serious crime. Had all these people led entirely blameless lives (or covered any blemishes up) there would have been no need for any of this information to have been recorded and kept.

The reader may wish to know the outcome of the trial. Greenwood was found not guilty as the jury could not ascertain how the arsenic had been introduced into his wife. Whether this was the correct verdict is a matter for dispute, in this author's opinion. He and Glwadys sold their house and eventually moved to a small village in Herefordshire, had a son together and Greenwood died in 1929 aged 55; his widow lived another 33 years, dying in Llanelli. Both changed their names to escape any possible scandal.

Anyone interested in a copy of this book, please contact the publisher, at sales@irregular-special-press.com

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Jurors on their way to court.

Thomas Edwards of Betws Ifan

With nothing better to do one day, we thought we would have a look at the churchyard at Betws Ifan. Amongst the stones leaning against the church, this one caught our eye:

It records the burial in 1783 of three year old Thomas Edwards, eldest son of Thomas Edwards, schoolmaster. We resolved to discover more about Thomas Edwards schoolmaster and translate the lines at the top of the stone, which seemed to be neither English nor Welsh.

We were startled to discover a schoolmaster in Betws Ifan, which is a small rural parish near Newcastle Emlyn. Betws Ifan was part of the parish of Penbryn at this time and it is not always clear from the parish register whether the minister is referring to Penbryn itself or Betws Ifan. Most of the parish records were completed by Thomas James, curate of Penbryn.

Edwards is not a local name, and we didn't find any other instances in the parish register of Edward as either a first or second name, so assumed that all references to Thomas Edwards referred to this one. Helpfully, he is sometimes referred to as 'schoolmaster'.

He married Margaret James at Betws in 1779. Thomas signed the register, following his name with the initials 'S.M', which we assume to stand for schoolmaster. He also witnessed several marriages at Betws between 1774 and 1782. Margaret gave birth to Thomas in 1780, James in 1782, both baptised at Betws, then baptised at Troed-yr-aur, Marella 1789, and Thomas 1791. Thomas Edwards himself died in his 50s in 1807 and is buried at Betws. The registers themselves are not in good condition and we may well have missed other children.

Having studied the parish registers, this was all we had managed to discover. Our initial assumption was that he taught at one of the grammar schools in the county,



living there in term time. However, his frequent witnessing of marriages would seem to make that unlikely. The 1798 land tax records show him at Pant y barra in Troed-yr-aur, a property owned by Reverend Evans. This was his home as recorded on his gravestone in 1807, and where his daughter was still living in the 1820s. He may have run a school on these premises, catering for the sons of local farmers.

We do not know where Thomas himself was educated, or indeed where he came from. However, the will of Thomas James, curate of Penbryn, who died in 1789, may hold a clue. Thomas Edwards was one of the executors of the will, referred to by Thomas James as his friend. Thomas James the curate was very well educated, mentioning in his legacies Greek, Latin, English and Welsh books. He also referred to his son Thomas and his granddaughter Margaret and her son James Edwards. It seems possible that Thomas Edwards's wife, Margaret James, was Thomas James the curate's granddaughter. Furthermore, it could be that the curate played a major part in the education of Thomas Edwards.

We were then left with the phrase at the very top of the stone. The gravestone which began this search was designed by an educated man, the Welsh verse being of a complex construction. We turned to that well known research tool Google and decided (possibly incorrectly) that the phrase was a translation in Ancient Greek of "Oh Death where is thy sting?" 1 Corinthians 15.55. We could not work out the motive behind the inclusion of such a phrase on a gravestone in a rural parish, where one would imagine not that many people would be able to read it, let alone understand it.

Most of these 'facts' are guesswork and supposition. If anybody knows, or recognises Thomas Edwards as their ancestor, please let us know.

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Tracing London Convicts in Britain & Australia 1780–1925

<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/themes/ab29592b-6fd9-353e-b39e-fd08cc69277a>

This website allows you to search millions of records from around fifty datasets, relating to the lives of 90,000 convicts from the Old Bailey. Use the site to search individual convict life archives, explore and visualise data, and learn more about crime and criminal justice in the past.

Changes for Research in the USA

This changes everything for 20th Century research in the United States – for many, it's a bigger deal than the 1940 and 1950 Censuses. I've been lobbying for this since the 80's! But there is power in numbers.

Most US researchers are aware MILLIONS of military service records from the 20th Century were lost in a warehouse fire in the 1970's.

<https://www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/fire-1973>

If fortune smiles on us, most of those individuals (or their families) claimed pension payments.

Note you can apply from anywhere, so our members can submit for their “lost” relatives who emigrated and may have served in the US military.

Billie McNamara (9117)

Reclaim The Records wins FOIA lawsuit for (probably?) largest public database of deceased US veterans (over 18 million names), builds free searchable website with Free-FOIA-by-Fax system, for pretty-darn-amazing claims files

There are more than eighteen million of these deceased veterans' C-Files, all open under FOIA now. Some of them are quite graphic, as these files very often have medical information in them, including mental health information, and are surprisingly not subject to HIPAA. And amazingly for genealogists, the files will sometimes contain copies of the veteran's vital records, including copies of marriage certificates and divorce decrees, records that you often cannot get even from the official agencies or courts in the states where they lived (*cough*cough*New York*cough*), but you can get from the VA under FOIA, if they were in the veteran's file!

And if you can't find a name in the BIRLS database for a known-deceased veteran – and my own grandfather (a deceased WWII veteran of the Army Air Force) is not listed in there – our website also explains why that may be, and we even included a build-your-own-FOIA system on the site so you can still try to get the VA to look for the old file. Many of these C-Files really do still exist, but they just never got indexed into BIRLS when the database first

started getting built in the 1970s, often because some veterans just weren't in contact with the VA for a pension or healthcare at that point.

For a lot more information about our FOIA lawsuit against the VA for the database, including copies of our court papers and the SDNY judge's order, and for your chance to request files for your relatives and/or research interests, check out our latest Reclaim The Records newsletter issue.

And the website address is, of course, <https://www.BIRLS.org/>

Thank you to our ~50 brave beta testers for their help with the new website over the past few months, many of whom are fellow genealogists on this listserve, some of whom have now received (or are in the process of receiving) some interesting files from the VA about their relatives and/or public figures. One of the beta testers was genealogist Lara Diamond, and she has written a blog post about her experiences requesting files for her relatives using our new BIRLS website, and her blog shows examples of some of the materials she got back, including particularly the WAVES (Women's branch of the Naval Reserve, during WWII) application for a female relative.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't point out that Reclaim The Records is a non-profit, not an expensive genealogy subscription website. We always release all our data online for free, as public unrestricted data – because after all, our taxes paid for it! We filed this lawsuit against the VA in federal court for the BIRLS database for free, we built the website to search the data we won for free, we built the fax-your-FOIA-request system into the search results for free, and we're bearing the cost of all the current and future web servers, mail and fax API, data storage, bandwidth, etc... So if you want to see more great projects like this one, more FOIA lawsuits against government agencies and archives, more free websites and helpful tools... well, we would appreciate your help in continuing our work!

We hope you all find terrific new materials in these newly available veteran files!

Brooke Schreier Ganz

President and Founder, Reclaim The Records

<https://www.ReclaimTheRecords.org/>

Collapse of a Gas Holder – Singular Experience

Item from the *Pembrokeshire Herald* – 18 January 1901

AT ABOUT HALF PAST seven o'clock on Saturday evening, when the shopkeepers in the centre of town were very busy and there was a lot of people in the street, the whole of the gas jets in the lower portion of the town became suddenly extinguished. A pretty strong wind was blowing at the time and this added to the difficulty of the situation, for no one was in the position, for some time at any rate, to say what was the cause of the collapse or whether the gas supply would be restored in a short time. There was a wide raid of shopkeepers and others upon the supplies of lamps and oil kept in stock by the local ironmongers and many had to be content with such temporary light as could be offered by candles stuck in the necks of bottles.

It afterwards became known that the cause of the trouble was the collapse of the gas holder at the gas works near "the frolic". How this occurred it was quite impossible to tell on Saturday, but a visit to the spot on Sunday morning some light was thrown on the subject. The gas holder was supported by pillars joined together by iron girders fixed with bolts. Apparently, the bolts have been gradually worn away by the friction caused by the constant rubbing by the wind and the breeze on Saturday evening was just sufficient to cause one of these to give way. This of course threw extra pressure on the others with the result that about half of the pillars and the connecting girders fell down with a crash. This brought down the balancing weights and in turn caused the holder itself to collapse on one side. The side plates were brought violently in contact with the masonry forming the well in which the gas holder rests, and they were badly damaged. The whole affair was of course rendered quite unserviceable, and it is calculated that about 50,000 cubic feet of gas was wasted.

When the workmen arrived on the scene on Saturday evening it was at once seen that nothing could be done with the holder at present and temporary measures were adopted to secure a limited supply of gas to the town. The service was turned on to a smaller gas holder and in the course of an hour or two shopkeepers and others were able to get abbreviated supply with which they will have to be content until the repairs, which have been at once put in the hands of an Exeter firm, have been carried out. One of the worst sufferers by the accident was the Great Western Railway Company. The lights of the station, signal

boxes and signals suddenly failed just after the departure of the up mail train. When the cause had been ascertained telegraphic messages were sent warning goods and passenger trains to proceed with caution and then the station master organised a system of lighting with oil lamps. Signals were attended to at once but a considerable time elapsed before they could be supplied. When the 8 o'clock down passenger train arrived the station was almost in complete darkness and as it was an exceptionally dark night passengers had to almost feel the way over the footbridge.

(submitted by Idris Thomas)

Editor's note: The gas holder concerned was situated in Haverfordwest.

Interesting things you find on the internet

In Loving Memory

OF THE

MINERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES

— IN —

WELSH COLLIERY DISASTERS

	Killed.		Killed.
1934—September 22, Gresford, Wrexham ...	251	1876—September 1, Abercarn ...	62
1932—January 25, Llwynypia, Rhondda ...	11	1877—March 8, Worcester Pit, Swansea ...	18
1931—Aug. 25, Caerau, Mountain Out-crop ...	3	1876—December 13, Abertillery ...	20
1929—July 10, Milfron, Blaenavon ...	9	1875—December 5, Llan Pit, Pentrych ...	12
1929—Nov. 28, Wernbell, nr. Penclawdd ...	7	1875—December 4, New Tredegar ...	22
1927—March 1, Cwm, Ebbw Vale ...	52	1874—July 24, Charles Pit, Llansanlet ...	19
1923—April 26th, Trimsaran ...	9	1873—April 5, Abertillery ...	6
1913—October 13, Senghenydd ...	436	1872—March 8, Wernfach ...	18
1905—July 5, Wattstown ...	119	1872—March 2, Victoria ...	19
1905—March 10, Clydach Vale ...	31	1872—Jan. 10, Oakwood, Llynvi Valley ...	11
1901—September 10, Llanbradach ...	12	1871—October 4, Gelli Pit, Aberdare ...	4
1901—May 24, Senghenydd ...	82	1871—February 24, Pentre ...	38
1899—August 18, Llest Colliery, Garw ...	19	1870—July 23, Llansanlet ...	19
1896—January 28, Tylorstown ...	57	1869—June 10, Ferndale ...	60
1894—June 25, Cilfynydd ...	276	1869—May 23, Llanerch ...	7
1892—August 26, Park Slip ...	110	1867—November 8, Ferndale ...	178
1892—Aug. 12, Great Western Colliery ...	58	1865—December 20, Upper Gethin ...	30
1890—March 8, Morfa ...	87	1865—June 16, Tredegar ...	2
1890—February 6, Llanerch ...	176	1863—December 24, Maesteg ...	14
1890—January 20, Glyn Pit, Pontypool ...	5	1863—October 17, Margam ...	39
1885—May 14, Aber, Tynenydd ...	5	1862—February 19, Gethin, Merthyr ...	47
1887—February 18, Ystrad ...	27	1860—December 1, Risca ...	146
1885—December 24, Mardy ...	81	1859—April 5, Neath Chain Colliery ...	26
1885—Naval Colliery ...	14	1858—October 13, Duffryn ...	20
1884—Nov. 8, Pochin Colliery, Tredegar ...	14	1856—July 13, Cymmer ...	114
1884—January 28, Penygraig ...	31	1853—March 12, Risca Vale ...	10
1884—January 16, Cwmau ...	10	1852—May 16, Duffryn ...	64
1883—August 21, Gelli ...	4	1850—Dec. 14, New Duffryn Colliery ...	13
1883—February 1, Coedcae ...	5	1849—Aug. 11, Lletty Shenkin, Aberdare ...	52
1883—February 11, Coedcae ...	4	1848—June 21, Victoria (Mon.) ...	11
1882—January 15, Risca ...	4	1846—January 14, Risca ...	35
1880—Dec. 10, Naval Steam Colliery ...	96	1845—August 2, Cwmfach ...	28
1880—July 15, Risca ...	119	1844—January 1, Dinas ...	12
1879—Sept. 22, Waunllyd, Ebbw Vale ...	84	1837—June 17, Blaina (Mon.) ...	21
1878—January 13, Dinas ...	3	1837—May 10, Plas-yr-Argoed, Mold ...	21
1878—September 11, Abercarn ...	288		

"IN THE MIDST OF LIFE WE ARE IN DEATH."

Let's hope the Gallant Miners haven't died in vain.

On God's own shore their friends might meet them once again.

Help Needed

Does anybody know a David Davies?

MORE SPECIFICALLY, does anybody know my 4x great grandfather? He's my brick wall. Here's what I know. The first official sighting of him is in the Admiralty records at the PRO. Before I go on, let's be clear about the spelling – the man himself spelt his name with the penultimate 'e' – DAVIES. All official records use DAVIS, as did all of his descendants. So, back to Kew. The records tell us that David Davis was seized in Tenbigh by a Royal Navy pressgang. I'm sure most members will have heard of the press gangs; in the 17th and 18th centuries, armed Marines abducted and forcibly recruited men into the Royal Navy. Tenbigh threw me – I thought it was spelt Tenby but several researchers have told me that Tenbigh is not unknown, so I will assume that we are talking about the well-known Pembrokeshire coastal town. So, in July 1804, David Davis was forcibly enlisted into the Navy. The records show that he was 22 years old. That would make his year of birth 1782.

That was the last time he saw Wales. He was taken, I think, by the United Brothers, an Appledore-built brig, on hire to the Royal Navy as an armed tender patrolling the Bristol channel. On 16th September, we find him on board the *Salvador Del Mundo* moored in the Hamoaze in Plymouth. *Salvador* was a very large Spanish ship of the line, three decks and 112 guns. She had been captured by the Royal Navy at the Battle of Cape Vincent in 1797. In Plymouth, she acted as an HQ and a Receiving Ship. In those days, the Royal Navy had no shore establishments so new recruits, willing or unwilling, were posted to such ships. On 16th September 1804, Ordinary Seaman David Davis was transferred to HMS *Mars*. She was a 74-gun third rate ship of the line. And there he stayed until 15th March 1809, when he was discharged from the navy – still an Ordinary Seaman. One navy expert told me that to spend nearly five years as an Ordinary Seaman was unusual. Normally, once a sailor had grasped the basics – i.e. “knew the ropes” – he was promoted to Able Seaman. My source speculated that David deliberately decided not to do anything other than the absolute minimum he had to – a sort of passive resistance.

He wasn't entirely inactive in his last year of naval service. On 13th September 1808, William Isaac Davis was born in the parish of Stoke Damerel (now Devonport). The mother was Grace Martin. I do know a little about Grace Martin. She was born Grace Higgins, in the small north Cornish village of

Poughill (a mile or so inland from Bude). I haven't found her birth but in the 1851 census, she was 87, from which we can deduce a birth year of about 1764. She married a John Martin in Poughill on 26th Nov 1787. Martin was described as a 'sojourner' – i.e just passing through.

We next meet her on 10th March 1810, at St Andrews Church, Plymouth, where she marries our David Davis. She is described as a widow and he is described as being "of HMS *Mars*" – which he hadn't been for about a year. What happened to John Martin? Well, who knows – with a name as common as that. However, I found the death of a John Martin of appropriate age, in the right part of Plymouth in February 1807, which might explain Grace's widowhood. If my estimate of her age is correct, then it means that (a) she was about 18 years older than David (nothing new about toyboys) and (b) that she had their child William Isaac at the age of about 44.

The next sighting of a David Davis is in 1812. A Trade Directory lists a David Davis as the licensee of The Hope and Anchor, a pub on North Corner Street, Plymouth Dock (again, part of Plymouth that later became Devonport). He was there in 1823 but not 1824. Why do I think that was our David Davis – only because of what comes next. In 1830, Pigott's Directory tells us that David Davis (and I know this is the right one) is licensee of The Kings Arms in the small north Cornish town of Stratton, about a mile from Poughill, his wife's birthplace. The Kings Arms was a more significant establishment, a coaching inn, not just a pub. So he'd learnt the innkeeper's trade somewhere. And he wasn't just the licensee – he owned it. He also tenanted various parcels of land around the town. For a man who was an impressed Ordinary Seaman for nearly five years, and discharged from the Navy with no compensation or pension, he's done well. But I still don't know where he came from. He died in October 1849 – if only he'd survived for the 1851 census, I might have had a clue as to his origins.

The 1841 census starts another hare running. In The Kings Arms we have two households; David Davis and wife Grace (he is described as



The Kings Arms



Benjamin Davies headstone

being 'of independent means') and his son William Davis with wife and five children, plus a Benjamin Davis, a man of 65 (but remember they rounded ages in that census), not born in Cornwall. Who is he? We can establish a more reliable year of birth from his headstone in Stratton churchyard – he died in 1842, aged 62. So his likely year of birth is 1780. David Davis's likely birth year is 1782. I think it is reasonable to assume that they were related. But were they brothers? Or cousins? Who knows.

There are only three pieces of information about this Benjamin Davis – the 1841 census, his death certificate and his headstone. He might have been the Benjamin Davis, a dairyman, who married a Philippa Kelly in Stoke Damerel on 6th April 1829 and the William Davis who was a witness at that wedding might have been his nephew William Isaac Davis. And Philippa might well be the Philippa Davis who died in Plymouth on 4th August 1839. And what would be more normal than for the 57 year old widower Benjamin to go up to Stratton to live with his brother (or cousin), the licensee of The Kings Arms. And it's equally possible that the whole scenario is total fiction.

Now, over to you, my Welsh friends. Does anybody recognise a David Davis, born about 1782 who might well have been a seaman or fisherman. I say this because, despite the lurid tales, the majority of impressed men were taken at sea from homeward bound (never outward bound) merchant ships or fishing vessels. Obvious, really. The navy wanted men who were at home on the sea. And does this David Davis have a brother (or other close relation) born about 1780, called Benjamin? And did this family live anywhere in or near Tenby. If you do, please let me know.

Mike Whitaker (4268)

Email: mjowhitaker38@gmail.com

Note: During my research I came across a headstone in Bude churchyard, the resting place of Capt Henry THOMAS of Tenby, who was drowned at Bude – for anyone researching same.

A Bidding in Myddfai

I WONDER whether you can help me, please? I've been a family historian for over 50 years and am currently a member of my local FHS in Devon and was previously a member of Huntingdonshire FHS (now Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire FHS).

I have a maternal DNA link to a family called Harries from the Myddfai area in the 19th century. I recently came across a reference to the Myddfai (Mothvey) Women's Institute Scrap Book which is referred to in a 1991 book by David B James called *Myddfai: Its Land and Peoples*. The book refers to the Scrap Book which contained a facsimile of a Bidding issued by Henry and Anne Harries of Cwmclyd, Myddfai in 1871. The text of the Bidding is:

Carmarthenshire Jan 31st, 1871

Having entered the Matrimonial state, we are encouraged by our friends to make a Bidding, on Friday the 24th day of February 1871 at our own house called Cwmclyd in the Parish of Mothvey; when and where the favour of your most agreeable company is humbly solicited, and whatsoever donation you may be pleased to bestow upon us then, will be most thankfully received, warmly acknowledged and readily repaid, whenever called for on a similar occasion, by your most obedient servants.

Henry Harries

Anne Harries (late Davies)

The YOUNG MAN desires that all gifts due to him be returned on the said day and will be thankful with his stepfather and Mother, James and Sarah Morgans, Neuadd, Llanwrda for all additional favours granted.

ALSO THE YOUNG WOMAN, together with her Mother and Sister, Mary and Gwen Davies, Gellyfelen, Mothvey desire that all gifts due to them be returned on the said day, and will be thankful for all additional favours conferred.

The Bidding is, obviously of historical importance, as is the Women's Institute Scrap Book and are important artifacts to preserve. I was recently in touch with the NLW in Aberystwyth who do not hold the Bidding. I was also in touch with Carmarthenshire Archives who hold a catalogue of Women's Institute records though they do not include those of Myddfai. I am contacting the library in Llandovery to see if they or the Museum may hold these items. Do you know if the original Bidding or the Scrap Book still exist? While I would be interested in a digital image for my personal research I am more interested in their preservation for the future and thought the FHS was more likely to know if anybody. Any information would be gratefully received.

Peter Hendy-Ibbs

Email: peter.ibbs@hotmail.co.uk

Thomas Gareth Samuel

MY SPECIAL area of interest in this instance centres on Llanelli and, specifically, Felinfoel. I am hoping that amid your membership there may be someone able to assist with my obscure request.

The above gentleman was the older brother of my mother. He was born in what was then 7 Adulam Row, Felinfoel, on 15 April 1924. As a boy, he was well-known in the area for having a wonderful boy soprano voice. He won many local competitions, until stopped by an adjudicator who believed his voice was breaking. In 1943, he joined the armed forces and was sent to India and Burma with the 14th Army. He survived. While away, he had continued to sing and was broadcast on the radio in India to the forces and back home. In 1947, he married Dilys Roma Davies. His enthusiasm for music remained and his greatest achievement was being joint winner of Hughie Green's Opportunity Knocks on the radio. It was the only time the series was broadcast in this manner and would subsequently become televised.

Prior to his armed service, he was in a relationship with a young lady whose name was unknown to my mother. She let me have the postcard photograph of her. It may have been a keepsake for him while he was away. That often happened. A copy is attached, herewith. I'm hoping that you will be able to publish it in your journal in the possibility of it being recognised. There are many possibilities as to why the relationship did not endure but it would be nice to put a name to the face. I hope you will be able to do this for me.



Ieuan Jones

Email: ieuan29@btinternet.com

Members Interests

(This list contains the details of new members interests added since the last journal was printed)

Member	Surname	Forenames	Occupation	Place	County	Country	Event	From	To
2329	Arthur	Joshua	Labourer	Carew	Pembr	Wales	Any	1720	1790
2329	Welby	William	Groom	Tenby	Pembr	Wales	Any	1820	1855
27552	Davies	John	Cheesemonger	Cardigan/ Houndsditch	Middl			1820	1890
27552	Phillips/James			New Quay / Llanllwchaearn	Cered			Any	
52424	Rees	Sarah	farmers wife	Penybanc farm Llwyncroes, Llanpumsaint	Carma	Wales	Birth/any	1806	1835
76613	Bowen	David	Farmer	Cymbach	Carma	Wales		1910	1940
5023	Richards	John	Master Marinerr	Pwll	Carma			1833	1870
36314	Morris	Jenkin		Lledrod	Cardi	Wales	Any/ALL	1841	1892
34328	Williams	Daniel	Farmer	Llansawel	Carma	Wales		1797	1800
58979	Davies	Simon	Station master	Crymnych	Pembr			1880	1917
69112	Philpott			Any	Any		Any	Any	
34437	Williams	David	Gentleman	Cwmgwaednertherth	Cardi	UK		1600	1800
79516	Lewis	David Warren	Merchant	Carmarthen	Carma	Wales		1845	1930
79516	Lewis	John Rae	Merchant	Carmarthen	Carma	Wales		1869	1935
59841	Lee	Jeremy	Retired	Wolverhampton	West	UK	Pembrey	1500	2000



Around the Branches



CARMARTHEN

FOR OUR AGM on January 29th, we were six members. I remain as Secretary, with Betty as assistant. Janice is also remaining as treasurer. The accounts and report have been submitted to the Society Treasurer for 2024.

We have several members who have been unable to attend, also one who has left the area, but remains a member of the society. Anyone wanting to attend the Carmarthen branch meetings should contact me to be added to our email list.

Janet Slate (6020)

HAVERFORDWEST

IN OUR NOVEMBER meeting we had an excellent evening where Gareth Morgan told us of his research and displayed his family tree. The presentation using Power Point was really brilliant and would make a good model for others to follow. We are grateful to Gareth.

In December we visited Pembrokeshire Archives for a research session. The staff there were welcoming and helpful as always. Several members of the Cardigan branch joined us and had a tour of the facilities which everyone found very informative. There was no meeting in January.

Our February meeting was an introduction to using FreeBMD and the GRO in finding certificates to assist in your family history research. It was a useful meeting for those who had not used these sites before and was made more enjoyable by the participation of all who attended, giving examples of how they had used the sites in their own research. March saw us back in the Archives for one of our regular afternoon sessions.

Cate Hobbs (2872)

CARDIGAN

THIS TIME OF YEAR, is a quiet period for us. The castle is closed to visitors and the weather prevents us from continuing with outside activities.

Despite the castle closure, we were able to access our research room at the castle, updating the MI's that we had completed during the year and generally tidying up our files and folders ready for the half term periods later in February. We have also started to plan our programme of MIs for the coming year.

We opened our offices up to the public who were attending the Christmas fair at the castle. It was quite a successful day with several visitors taking an interest in what we were doing and some promised to sign up as members of the DFHS.

We had a well-attended meeting in January where our guest speakers were Gerwyn Morgan who gave a very interesting talk about the local gentry houses of the Teifi Valley. He has written a book on this subject called 'The Faded Glory' which is well worth reading.

In February, Idris Rees, a Cardigan DFHS member, gave another interesting talk about William Gilbert Rees of Haroldstone, Pembs, who emigrated to Australia and then New Zealand and was the founder of Queenstown in that country. He was a cousin of William Grace, the famous cricketer of the time.

Our March speaker is Richard Ireland a retired senior lecturer in Law at Aberystwyth University. His subject is "Crime in a Private Ceredigion Archive". He is an accomplished speaker with many amusing anecdotes sprinkled through his talk.

(Further details of these talks can be seen on the Cardigan Spotlight and on Facebook each month)

We have speakers booked for the remainder of the year, some of them are new to us at Cardigan and we look forward to hearing them.

We are also assisting the local history group in scanning and transcribing the Barbara Wood letters. She was the last private owner of the castle. This is a long-term project and it will take some time to complete.

Phil Davies (5741)

LLANELLI

THE SPEAKER for our February meeting was Lyn John. Lyn has a wealth of knowledge on the history of Llanelli and was invited to speak on the work undertaken by Llanelli Community Heritage in placing Blue Plaques and Interpretive Panels to preserve the heritage of Llanelli and ensure that future generations are made aware of the people, the buildings and the industries which helped to make Llanelli a prosperous and successful town. Lyn explained that a plaque costs approximately £300–£400, suggestions for plaques can be placed with the society. Many of the plaques are metal and cast aluminium, there are also some made from plastic and resin.

There are currently fifty-seven Blue Plaques in Llanelli, the largest number of any town in Wales. Far too many plaques to list here, however a visit to the Llanelli Community Heritage website enables the user to access the list of all plaques and interpretive panels and the stories behind them, together with an interactive map illustrating the location of the blue plaques. The website opens the door to a wealth of information on a wide range of topics covering the centuries. The website is www.llanellich.org.uk

Llanelli Community Heritage unveiled its first blue plaque at the Pottery Street entrance to St Elli Shopping Centre, where the supermarket ASDA now stands, on Saturday 24 July 2004. This plaque commemorates Llanelli Pottery, which operated in the centre of the town from 1839 to 1922. The pottery became very famous, and many examples are on permanent display at the Parc Howard Museum in Llanelli.

A plaque commemorating the life of James Dickson Innes can be seen at Greenfield Villas in Murray Street. A well-regarded landscape painter who travelled widely in Europe and was a close friend of Augustus John.

A famous Llanelli born celebrity was Dorothy Squires, who rose to fame at the end of the thirties. She made many visits to Llanelli over the years, performing in several venues, Chris Davies one of the founder members of the Llanelli branch of DFHS recalls meeting her in the Stepney Hotel. A blue plaque commemorating her life and work has been placed at Aston House, her former home, in Dafen; this plaque was sponsored by the actor Sir Roger Moore to whom she was married for several years.

[The Carmarthenshire Railway and Tramway, the earliest operating public railway in Great Britain, consisted of horse-drawn wagons running on cast iron tram-plates. It initially ran from Raby's iron furnace at Cwmdyche to

the coast; in the first decade of the nineteenth century, it was essential to the coal mining industries and Raby's furnace.

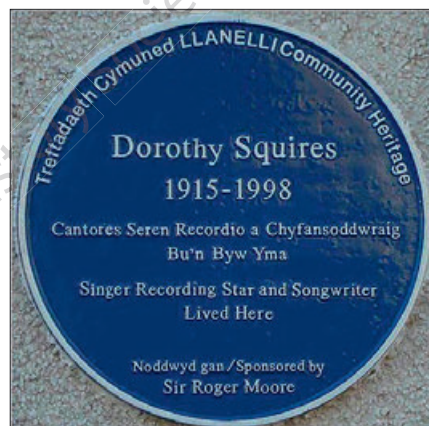
A very sad occasion is marked by a plaque in Queen Victoria Road. This plaque commemorates the site of the Llanelli Riots of 1911. The national Rail Strike was in its third day and there was a clash between striking railwaymen and soldiers of the Worcester regiment. Two young men were shot and killed whilst others were injured.

On a happier note, in 1936, Felinfoel Brewery became the first brewery in the UK to successfully can beer. Felinfoel beer can be purchased far and wide and is sometimes interpreted elsewhere in the world as "feeling fowl". The plaque can be seen at Farmers Row in Felinfoel.

The Rebecca Riots are commemorated in more than one location in Llanelli. One plaque can be seen at the Post Office next to The Colliers public house in Furnace. In August 1843 the gate was destroyed and the house burnt down.

[In addition to the Blue Plaques there are nineteen interpretive panel positioned around Llanelli. These panels enable residents and visitors to the town to see how the town has changed over the many years of its existence.

During an informative and entertaining meeting members were



able to discuss the various locations and people commemorated on the plaques. Some members had connections with either the businesses or the individuals mentioned. Towns and communities change so much over time and the work of Llanelli Community Heritage is important in keeping local history in all its forms visible and available to all. Many thanks to Lyn for his talk.

Linda Martin (5468)

UPPER TOWY VALLEY

IN SEPTEMBER, we welcomed back Mr Jeremy John, who on retirement volunteered at the Gwili Railway. He told us that the train had first come to Carmarthen on September 17th, 1852. People had invested their savings in the railway system to allow it to reach the ports of Milford and Fishguard and forge links with Ireland.

The opening ceremony took place at the original railway station at Pensarn. It was a 7ft gauge and Brunel was the engineer. Between six and eight hundred passengers, including the Lord Lieutenant in his very ornate carriage, boarded the train at Swansea with two locomotives. They arrived at Carmarthen two and a half hours late, having been met at each station by dignitaries. There was a band, and many townspeople congregated to await the arrival. A breakfast was put on at the Market Hall in Nott Square, providing, as it was reported in *The Welshman*, pineapples, beef and venison. A ball was held in the evening along with a firework display.

A train took the dignitaries back at 9.00 in the evening. At Pibwrlwyd there was a curve where people were told not to put their heads out of the window or lean against the door. However, John Williams of *The Cambrian Newspaper* in Swansea leaned against the door and fell out, resulting in the carriage going over his legs. When the train reached The Ferryside it was found he was missing and two porters were sent to look for him. He was taken to the hospital in Carmarthen, which had been founded in 1847, between a workhouse and a poor house, near the site of the present day Boots. He spent the night there then was taken back on the train to Swansea Hospital. People like Mr Harris from Haverfordwest came to see the operation. John Williams recovered.

Mr John told us of anecdotes found during his research. Charles Dickens returned from Paris on the ferry to Folkstone. The train came off the rails and landed in the river. Ten people were killed and dozens injured. Dickens tended

to the injured but refused to go to the inquest, though he had been awarded a silver plate, as he had been accompanied by another woman and her mother. He had with him the manuscript of *Our Mutual Friend*, which he rescued. Dickens died five years later of a stroke. He was in his fifties, and it was thought that maybe he had received a head injury in the accident. He didn't like train journeys afterwards though he had to travel that way. He always bought his Christmas turkeys from Ross on Wye and on one occasion the train went on fire at Swindon, where the turkeys – now cooked – were sold for 6d each!

During the Boer war at the turn of the last century troops, ammunition and horses were needed. They had to go to South Africa by ship so there was a need for coal, which was taken from Cardiff and Barry – the best steam coal. The colliers were given bonuses and the Taff Vale Railway workers – the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, wanted extra pay too, but the company refused.

A signalman started to stir things up among the workers and he was moved to another signal box fifty miles away. The staff went on strike. There was a loss in trade and money and the affair went through the courts of appeal with the Taff Vale Railway Company suing the Society successfully. The strike was over but it led to the formation of the Labour Party with all-powerful unions in 1906.

Mr John also told us of publisher Allen Lane deciding to provide cheaper books to sell at the railway stations, and bringing out Penguin paperbacks; William Huskisson, M.P, the first person to be killed on the railway; the many railway closures during the 1960s and the reopening of the Gwili Railway in 1976.

In October we went on holiday to Chatham in Kent, visiting Windsor, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Brooklands Motor Museum and Canterbury. Our grateful thanks to Nan for organising such a wonderful holiday.

Our meeting that month was taken by Mr Elwyn Baynham, our Vice Chairman, who spoke of his career in scientific research and the spin offs benefiting medical research.

Elwyn was born at Gladestry, Radnorshire, a village with a church, two chapels, a shop and school and about ten houses. Now there are about thirty homes, but the shop has gone. About 750 feet above sea level, this was border country with England a mile to the east.

Elwyn attended Gladestry Primary school until 1957 when he moved to Presteigne Grammar School, a small school of about 200 pupils. In 1964 he

went to Aberystwyth University to study Geography but changed to Physics. He completed his three years of research for his PhD in Nuclear Physics at Aston University in Birmingham and he and Maureen married in 1968.

Elwyn applied for a job in Oxfordshire at the Rutherford High Energy Laboratory and they lived there from 1970 until 2008. The Atomic Energy Research Establishment was set up there, which was top secret. At the end of the '70s another lab was set up to provide equipment for university research and experiments.

In 1972 Elwyn and Maureen's son Rob was born, Elwyn was awarded a PhD and presented his first paper to an International Conference on Magnet Technology. In 1974 he made his first overseas visit with work to Saclay Lab, Paris. In 1975 he spoke on Magnet Technology to the International Conference in Rome and made his first visit to the USA. In 1981 he was part of the Protvino International Committee for Future Accelerators in Russia and in 1984 he made a four months visit to Japan to work at the KEK lab.

From 1984 to 2008 Elwyn was involved with the Cern project. Large accelerators were unable to be made in the U.K. and so the focus moved to working for the Cern Laboratory in Geneva. Thousands of physicists from around the world were involved.

Huge magnets were needed and in 1987 the Delphi magnets was built and sent to Geneva, and another from Hamburg in 1989.

Elwyn made twenty visits to Hamburg and from 1993 to 2008 was involved with the Cern Large Hadron Collider. A tunnel was built, sixteen miles around Geneva, 30 metres underground, filled with magnets going round 11,000 times a second. The particles collide and come out in all directions, going on a curve as they pass through a magnetic field. Millions of detectors detect how fast they are going and what energy they have. The magnets had to be made in pieces and brought to Geneva to be assembled then lowered underground. The work was completed by 2008. In 2011 two experiments found one of the most fundamental particles predicted in 1960 by a Scottish scientist – he won the Nobel Prize in 2013. A number of Welsh scientists worked at Cern, such as Lynn Evans of Cwmbach, Aberdare, Mike Price of Llanwrtyd and Rhodri Jones of Carmarthen.

Elwyn had retired by 2008 and worked until 2015 on Nuclear Fusion. Spin offs from particle physics include the MRI scanner, inside which is a super-conducting magnet. The atoms in the body and how they are connected

can be recorded. In Saclay, Paris a scan of the human brain was made for the first time. This work is still being developed. The size of individual neurons in the brain and how they are working can be seen, as can what changes occur in the neurons when people suffer from dementia and cancer. Seeing what is happening can lead to a cure through Proton Radiotherapy.

Elwyn and Maureen talked of coming back to Wales after retirement and in 2022 they moved from Didcote in Oxfordshire to Llandovery.

In November we enjoyed our Christmas dinner at the Castle Hotel,

Llandovery and began the year with a Members' Interests meeting in January. We also held our AGM at which all committee members were re-elected.

In February we had an illustrated talk by Mr Terry Norman on the bridges of Llandeilo and look forward to hearing Mr Noel Rees in March. This summer we hope to transcribe the monumental inscriptions at Tabernacle Chapel, Ffairfach.

Moira C L Evans (39)

ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP

OUR FIRST MEETING OF 2025 was a very interesting talk by Tom Latter about the history of his farm near Fishguard, Pembrokeshire. Not many farmers can boast having a cromlech on their land! Miall James is filling the presentation slot in February and our March meeting will be addressing some brick walls recently submitted. We will also be hearing success stories as a result of recent talks regarding the US census records and free online research sites. I haven't had confirmation for our April meeting yet so if you would like to tell us about some of your research, please let me know. We are enjoying seeing new faces each month and, in some cases, finding immediate connections within the group.

Remember even if you aren't able to be with us via Zoom on the night, we record most sessions which are then made available to view to those who have ticked the box for the Online Discussion Group on your dashboard. These recordings are available for a limited time and are for your own personal use only.

Rosaleen Boardman (6495)

New Members

This list contains the details of new members who joined since the April journal was printed.

Member Number	Member Name	Address	Email Address
41724	Janie Thomas	Weston Super Mare	tjanie2@gmail.com
16916	Mrs Margaret Williams	Llanfairfechan Wales	alanwilliams444@btinternet.com
49272	Katherine Whitton	Ridgeway Ontario Canada	k8whitton@icloud.com
64685	Gareth Hicks	Milford Haven Wales	Sc26hicks@aol.com
95353	Sean Clarke	Melton Mowbray UK	seanclarke01@doctors.net.uk
48889	Ms Stevie Flynn	Ensworth Hampshire UK	stevieflynn23@gmail.com
29824	Mr David Surdeau	Buckinghamshire UK	dsurdeau@gmail.com
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24872	Mrs Susan Duncan	Colton Staffordshire UK	
21484	Caitlain Franklin	Belgrave Staffs UK	caitlain.boyle@hotmail.com
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94352	Mr Peter Davies	Penarth Glamorganshire UK	

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34328	Mr David Huw Williams	Ystradgynlais	Powys	Wales		
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55392	Amy Ackland	Witham UK	amyackland126@gmail.com
74461	Mr Alun Wynffordd James	Llandaff Wales	

Obituary

Membership No.	Name	Joined
2	Mrs Maureen Barber	1982
803	Major W A C Griffiths	1987

Major William (Bill) A C Griffiths 23/11/1937–13/12/2024 87 years

Bill was a well-known member of the Society and helped many members and non-members alike with his vast knowledge of Pembroke families. His research of family trees has been donated to the Pembrokeshire Archives. He will be sadly missed by us all.

Branch Meetings

Branches organise regular meetings to which all members and the public are invited.
Meetings usually take place at the times and venues below, but check with the named contact.

Cardigan Aberteifi

The first Monday in each month at 7.30pm
Tower Room, Cardigan Castle.

Contact Mr Ken James - Tel: 01239 710829. Email: cardigansecretary@dyfedfhs.org.uk

Carmarthen CAERFYRDDIN

The last Wednesday in each month at 2.00pm
Spilman Hotel, Spilman Street, Carmarthen.

Contact Mrs. Janet Slate - Tel. 01267 782099. Email: carmarthen@dyfedfhs.org.uk

Haverfordwest Hwlffordd

The second Wednesday in each month 6.00pm until 8.00pm
Pembrokeshire Archives, Back Lane, Prendergast, Haverfordwest SA61 2PE
Contact Ms Cate Hobbs - Tel. 07777 695865.

Email: haverfordwest@dyfedfhs.org.uk

Llanelli

The third Monday in each month from 2pm
Plas Llanelly House, Bridge Street, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire/Sir Gâr SA15 3UF
Contact Mrs. Linda Martin - Tel. 01267 267039. Email: llanelli@dyfedfhs.org.uk

London Llundain

On four Saturdays each year at 2 pm by Zoom or in person at
The Kwanglim Room, Wesley's Chapel, 49 City Road, London EC1Y 4AU.
Contact Mrs. Anna Brueton - Tel. 0207 9230302. Email: london@dyfedfhs.org.uk

Upper Towy Valley Cwm Tywi Uchaf

The fourth Wednesday in each month at 7.15pm
Our Lady Catholic Church Hall, College View, Llandovery
Contact Miss Moira Evans - Tel. 01269 592278.
Email: uppertowyvalley@dyfedfhs.org.uk

Contacts

www.dyfedfhs.org.uk

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