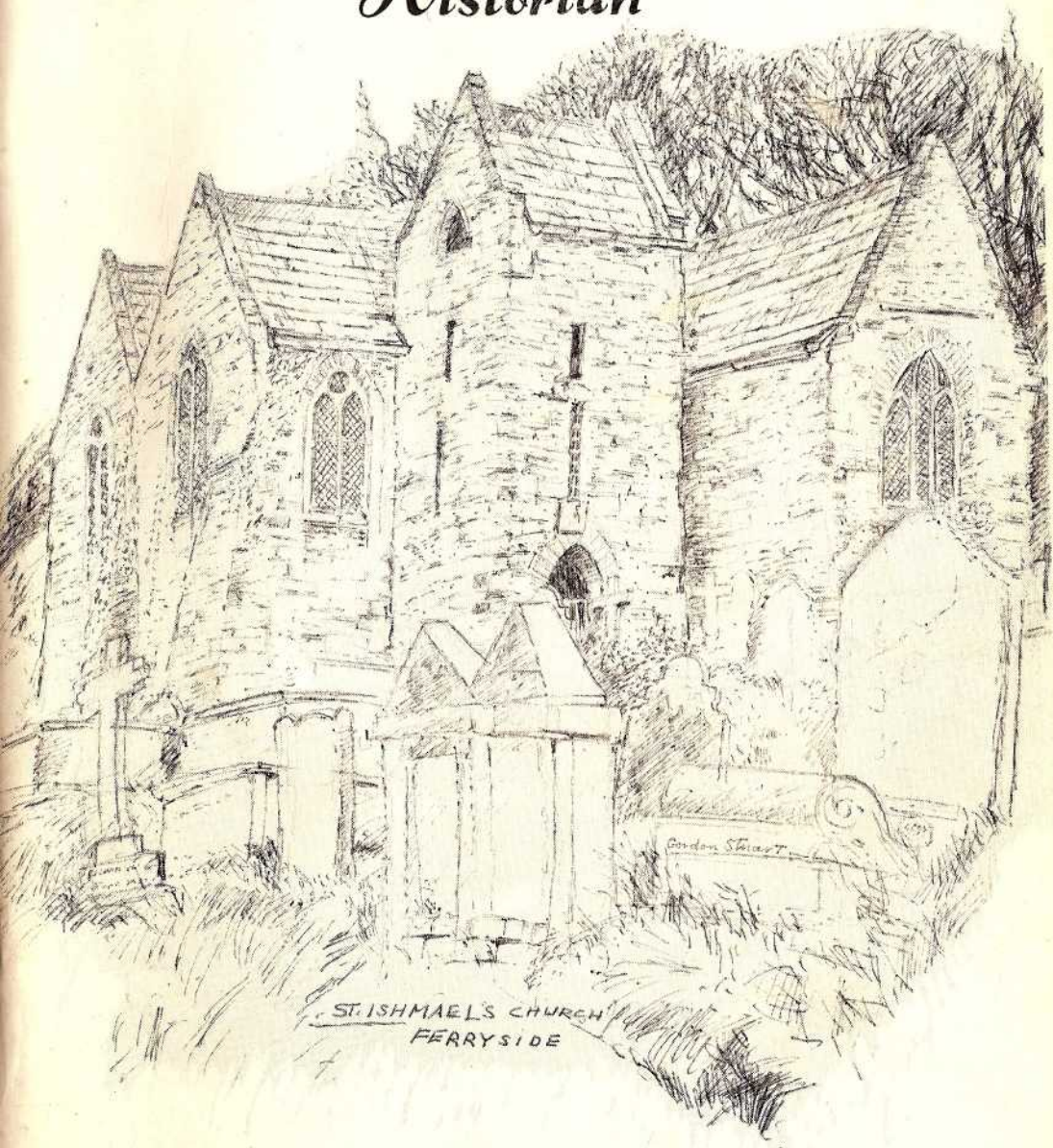


The Carmarthenshire Historian



ST. ISHMAEL'S CHURCH
FERRYSIDE

**THE CARMARTHENSHIRE
HISTORIAN**

Edited by
E. VERNON JONES

Published by
Dyfed Rural Council
Dark Gate Chambers, Red Street, Carmarthen
1982
ISSN 0576—7849

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COVER. The illustration is reproduced from a drawing by Ferryside artist Gordon Stuart.

Miss Jennings Abroad

by Major FRANCIS JONES, C.V.O., T.D., F.S.A.,
Wales Herald of Arms Extraordinary

TO many Britons, travelling in 18th and 19th century Europe was a genial form of flexible roystering. Some went to experience luxuries and enchantments, others to walk in royal palaces, stately chateaux, cities and spas, to enjoy the atmosphere of ancient cathedrals and shrines, to view sites of stirring bygone events and to dwell on dramatic, picturesque scenes provided by Nature, or to revel in drowsy delights under blue skies on sunkissed beaches and placid lakes. Fortunately a number of travellers have left records of their wanderings, and for this we who are living today should be profoundly grateful.

Perhaps one of the most agreeable ways of acquiring knowledge is by a perusal of journals and diaries, especially those never intended to be read by anyone outside the family circle and close friends, and in which the writer bares the heart and provides uninhibited commentaries on a variety of subjects, so that we are presented with an unvarnished and forthright representation of people and events. There are two main types of such compilations—one concerns experiences of the writer in his homeland and includes a record of contemporary life among his "ain folk"; the other concerns experiences during a tour to foreign lands wherein descriptions and impressions of unfamiliar places and aliens are chronicled. As the years roll by both types become increasingly important, particularly to historians, frequently developing into unique records, and in some cases are the only surviving first-hand accounts available describing certain national events, notable buildings, personages, and numerous other subjects that form part of the memorials of a nation.

Oftimes, journals and diaries tell us more about the diarists themselves than their authors intended or ever considered. We have glimpses of the writer's attitudes, national outlook, political and class prejudices, views of the feminist or of the "male chauvinist pig", influences of formal education and religious convictions; they may tell us about the scribe's character and personality, hobbies and interests, and we soon conclude whether we are in the presence of a humourous good-natured individual, or one who is solemn, staid, serious, or else (and not wholly unwelcome!) a malicious, spiky one. A diary can be a "candid camera" in prose.

In this contribution we shall savour the journal of a young lady enjoying a Grand Tour in the high noon of the Victorian age. We shall follow her into foreign lands and be instructed or reminded of scenes and customs of bygone as well as contemporary times. Nearly four centuries ago the learned Francis Bacon observed "Travel in the younger sort is a part of education, in the elder a part of experience". A discerning person will always acquire knowledge when travelling, especially in foreign fields where novelty serves to strengthen the impact made upon the observer's mind. Under these circumstances such ploy becomes education without effort, certainly without tears. In the *Gulistan* we are told by Sadi, "Of journeying the benefits are many; the freshness it bringeth to the heart, the seeing and hearing of marvellous things, the delight of beholding new cities, the meeting of unknown friends, the learning of high manners". These and many others are the bonuses that come the way of the sojourner in far-off lands.

The diarist whose observations now come under discussion was a talented young lady, Miss Agnes Hermione Jennings of Gellideg near Kidwelly. In volumes XI and XII of *The Carmarthenshire Historian* I published selections from her journals describing activities in West Wales and London during the period 1865-1871. In the introduction to that contribution I mentioned that some time in 1868 she had gone on a tour to the Continent and returned to England in the summer of the following year. I had no knowledge then of any journal she might have kept concerning her overseas tour, but subsequently I was delighted to learn from the tourist's grand-daughter, Mrs Jewson of Coppy Bush near St. Florence, Pembrokeshire, that two such journals had survived, and, with commendable public spirit, she kindly loaned them to me so that historians and antiquaries could benefit from a perusal of them. I wish to express my gratitude to Mrs Jewson for making these volumes available.

Details of the ancestry and biography of Miss Agnes Hermione Jennings (known as "Hermie" to her family and friends) were presented in some detail in volume XI of the *Historian* which renders unnecessary any repetition here. Suffice to remind readers that she was the daughter of a Carmarthenshire landowner, Richard Jennings of Gellideg by his wife Agnes Catherine Annabella Hamilton; born on 7 May 1848, she married in 1874 Captain H. F. C. Barclay by whom she had six children, and died on 29 May 1925.

On 31 April 1868, a week before her twentieth birthday, she went on a tour to the Continent with her parents and Susie Watson, and returned on 9 July 1869 to her native land from which she had been absent for over a year. She describes the itinerary in detail,

waxing eloquently on topics that particularly attracted her, not disguising those splendid island prejudices (to which we are all heir), likes and dislikes, aiming barbed darts at those foreigners who had aroused her spleen. Over a hundred years and several wars have elapsed since her journey took place, radical changes have overtaken many of the towns and cities, the scenes and landscapes that had so captivated her interest, so that her fresh, impromptu descriptions and comments are of significance to the historian, often providing a vivid picture of buildings, institutions, and landscapes before they were ravished by man's inhumanity or by his propensity to sacrifice traditional modes in the name of progress and modernization. Not only do the journals preserve accounts of physical features, but also of customs and fashions, attributes and life-styles customary in mid-19th century Europe.

It is clear that the young lady had written *three* volumes, but only two have survived, one covering the period 31 April—26 September 1868, the other 1 April—9 July 1869. The missing volume covered the period 27 September 1868—31 March 1869. In these two volumes we are presented with an account describing modes of travel, hotels, lodgings, how the diarist was suspected of smuggling, of her battles with Gallic bed-bugs, her visits to cathedrals, churches, art galleries, and museums where she saw relics of Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and Napoleon, the bones of the 1200 virgins of Cologne, and many other wonders; and, more contemporaneously, how Mr Jennings, to his horror, discovered that unwittingly he had been eating horseflesh at a hotel meal. She admired porcelain at Sevres and was delighted to see some china that had been presented by Mr Chambers of Llanelly; she watched Gobelin tapestries in the making, and blind people at work in an institution near the Invalides. At Tours, druidical remains claimed her attention, at Guernsey Victor Hugo's house, the palace of Versailles was a "must". In Italy the family stayed in Rome, the highlight of the tour being a visit to the Vatican where the family was received and blessed by the Pope with whom Mr Jennings cracked a joke, mutually enjoyed it seems. She had her portrait painted in cameo by Neri, and an interview with the sculptor Benzoni; in the Protestant Cemetery she stood by the tombs of Keats and Shelley. She describes how her trusting father was outwitted by a saucy American lady. She roamed happily through palaces and picture galleries, but during a stay in Naples fell ill and was confined to bed for three weary weeks. After recovering, she visited Capo di Monti, went to Sorrento where she sketched distant Vesuvius, and regales us to a graphic description of Pompeii; she saw Dante's burial place at Ravenna, and the mausoleum of Theodoric

the Great. At Bologna, in a remarkable manner, she discovered that she was "about half an inch taller" than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! At Turin, the armour of Prince Eugene "with three bullet marks on it" held her attention. Near Geneva she gazed at the house of Sir Robert Peel "which the Swiss people pronounce as Sir Rhubarb Pill"! At Freiburg she was disgusted by a purchase, namely two pounds of wormy cherries, each with a maggot inside, which her servant then gave "to a man for his children, as he said the maggots would fatten them, cela les engrassira". At fashionable Aix la Chappelle she tasted the waters "which were like bad eggs". Minor accidents occurred such as at the Stadt House in Cologne where "M's flannel petticoat came down, and she beat an ignominious retreat into a shop"! It is lively reporting.

Although the tour took place on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War, no references to any impending event or to political matters occur in the entries, but we are provided with indications as to where Hermione's sympathies were likely to be, for during her visit to Germany we are told "the Germans all smoked which was not pleasant", and on leaving that land feelingly commented "very glad to leave Germany and find ourselves in a civilized country once more".

The tour was made through parts of France, the Channel Islands, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium, and I have noted the places visited below the journal headings in the following pages. The journals are far too long to be quoted in toto—the first volume contains 268 pages, the final one 167, and so, extracts only have been made which hopefully convey the atmosphere and flavour of the tour, especially the ability of this very observant young lady to note not only historical features, but those joyous trivialities without which no journal of a Briton abroad can be considered complete. And so we now turn the hands of the clock back some one hundred and fourteen years and become travelling companions of the engaging Miss Jennings.

* * *

The first volume, 30 April—26 September 1868.

Places visited — Boulogne — Paris — St Cloud — Sevres — Versailles
St Germain — Andelys — Rouen — Harve — Honfleur — Lisieux
Caen — Mans — Tours — Blois — Amboise — Saumur — Augers
Nantes — Clisson — Rennes — Dol — Pont Orson — Mt St Michael
St Malo — St Aubins — Dinan — La Garaye — Jersey — St Heliers
Guernsey — Sark — Cherbourg — Bayeaux.

30 April 1868. "Papa, Mamma, Susie Watson and I started on our travels abroad, having been ordered to go on account of Mamma's health". They

left Charing Cross station at 9.40 a.m. and arrived at Folkestone at about 12 noon where they were met by Lady Jodrell who saw them to the ship. The day was beautifully bright and fine, but very windy, the sea tremendously rough. "Everyone ill except one or two gentlemen and myself. Mamma was not at all ill though she suffered from the effects of another person being so, who was sick all over her dress". They landed at Boulogne "but as I was proceeding with my traps in my hand I was suddenly stopped by a gendarme who looked at me very suspiciously and seized hold of my rug which was filled with my night things and done up with a strap. Everybody standing around looked at me as a guilty smuggler". After searching all her luggage she was allowed to go, and then went by carriage to the Hotel des Bains.

1 May. The morning was spent sight-seeing in the town; they saw the Cathedral, then on to the Museum where they saw "a lot of medals, a lock of hair of Napoleon 1st, and a beautiful specimen of a mummy, the best in the world". They left by the 1.30 train, arrived in Paris at 6 p.m., and stayed at the Hotel Vouillmont, rue Boissy d'Anglais.

2—4 May. Visited the Louvre to see pictures, "met Mr and Mrs Lewis Loyd but did not speak to them as I did not know whether they would know me". In the evening the Champs Elysees "looked like a large fair". They went to service at the English church which was crowded, visited Notre Dame, and the Bois de Boulogne "saw the emperor reviewing some of the troops. He was on horseback in uniform, the empress was also with him riding dressed in a blue habit". As their hotel was noisy they moved to the Breteuil Hotel.

5 May. Went to see "the column of Napoleon 1st in the Place Vendome. It was the anniversary of his death and the railings around were hung with wreaths of immortelles black, white, and yellow. There were several of his old soldiers in the uniform of his day standing about who were going to walk in procession round the column and then back to the Invalides". The Breteuil looked out on the Palace of Tuilleries . . . "our rooms comfortable, but our bedrooms very *mysterious* with bits of box sewn on to the beds to charm away the devil as the chamber maid told us . . . Passed most awful night bitten to death by bugs, and mysterious noises and creakings in the room and lights flashing across it. I got into Sissie's bed, could not sleep till 2".

6 May. "Went to lunch in the Restaurant du Progres. Sissie and Papa found out to their horror they were eating horse flesh. Mamma and I had veal". At night, tormented by bugs again.

7 May. In the afternoon, Mrs Jennings's cousin, the Comtesse de Notallier, called on them, accompanied by her two daughters, aged 14 and 17, "neither could talk English".

8 May. Went to see relics of Napoleon 1st, Louis 16th, Marie Antoinette, and many others in the Louvre. "Napoleon's were very interesting, we saw his uniforms, cocked hats, swords, and all his dressing apparatuses".

10-11 May. Sunday went to church, and afterwards "went to hear Lord Radstock preach in a sort of chapel, he made an extempore prayer before and after": on the following day went to see markets, churches, and relics in Notre Dame.

12 May. They left the hotel "because of the bugs. The landlady was furious and when she went out she attacked Mamma, and pulled the fussy bed curtains down all over our clothes". They moved to the Hotel Cotiglione.

13-18 May. Sight-seeing. "Count Broe invited us to dinner. Declined it."

19 May. "Saw Miss Jones of Pantglas passing our door before we went out, did not speak to her".

20 May. "I bought a live tortoise for 1 franc 50 and brought it home. Mamma was horrified and persuaded me to give it away to the waiter".

22-28 May. "Went to St Denis, saw the Emperor's stables at the Tuilleries, the Blind Asylum near the Invalides, and to St Cloud", where she saw marble busts of Napoleon and the King of Rome by Canova.

29 May. "Papa, Mamma, and I called on Mr and Mrs Lloyd Price at the James Hotel, and talked to them in the public sitting and reading room".

31 May. "We saw the Emperor and Empress go down our street on the way to the railway station as they were going to pass the day at Rouen. They were in a close state carriage, followed by three of the same sort; theirs, which was driven by the same old coachman who [had] showed us over the Emperor's stables".

2 June. "Called on M and Madame de Broe whom we found at home. Went to an "anatomical museum", some things in which shocked Cissie very much".

4 June. Went to Sevres and saw over the porcelain manufactory. "I bought a biscuit profile of Napoleon 1st for 2½ francs, in a frame"; saw upstairs specimens of different countries, found some Carmarthen and some Swansea ware, the former sent by Mr W. Chambers.

5 June. Went to see the treasure and picture galleries of the Palais de Luxembourg—"Here we all gloated for a long time over the horrible picture of the people being dragged out to execution in the time of the revolution, the painter of it, Muller; they also gave us a share of our cruelties by having pictures of Charles 1st taking leave of his children, and the little Princes in the Tower before being murdered. They also had a picture of Joan of Arc".

10-12 June. Went to Versailles palace, and to St Germain where "the Palace was very disappointing, being all a museum and the rooms small and dark . . . The Baroness Adelsward called for us in an open carriage and took Mamma and me for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne".

17 June. Went to Gobelin, and "saw the tapestry being made which was very interesting. It was worked at the back by men who ran little bobbins of different coloured silk through vertical lines of thread. The carpets which were being made in another part were worked in front and were made very much in the same way as worsted balls, and were clipped with large shears in front afterwards". Later heard the Zouave band playing.

18 June. Sat on a bench in Les Jardins des Plantes; "had a discussion on cruelty to animals with a woman sitting on the bench who killed a caterpillar. Left her suddenly on discovering her child had the whooping cough".

24 June. At the Blind museum. "Went over it, a painful sight, they all appeared sickly and unhappy. Heard them play on the piano and flute, saw them setting their types and printing, also doing carpenter's work and turning; also writing by punching holes in paper and reading it by feeling the raised pricks on the other side. They don't use letters as in England, but the pricks are put in various forms for each letter, thus A is ∴, B is ∵, C is ∶, or something in that way. We saw one girl reading the History of France, and we made her read it to us. We saw their concert room, their chapel, and their play ground. Looked at the girls's knitted work which was beautifully done.

30 June. Left Paris for Andelys where they stayed at the Hotel de Grand Cerf; went to see the chateau Gaillard which "is situated at the top of a very high hill . . . It is a fine old ruin, built by Richard Coeur de Lion and named by him his 'saucy castle' as it looks down from such a height on the town beneath".

1 July. Left Andelys, came by train to Rouen where they stayed at the Hotel d'Albion. Went to the cathedral where "the heart of Richard Coeur de Lion was buried but afterwards removed to the Museum . . . visited the Tour de la Grosse Horloge where there is a most curious old clock over a handsome Gothic carved archway . . . went to see the statue of Joan of Arc in the Place de la Pucelle which represents her, sword in hand, standing over a drinking fountain".

2-3 July. Went by ship to Havre, put up at the Premier Hotel, where Aunt Fay was also staying. "Aggie, Sissie, and I bathed in the sea before breakfast".

7 July. Left Havre by steamer for Honfleur, went on by train to Lisieux and looked at the town, "we were much pleased with Lisieux and thought it *delicieux*". Left by train for Caen and stayed at the Hotel d'Angleterre.

8 July. Visited the church of St Etienne built by William the Conqueror and where he was buried; his remains were taken away and destroyed by Huguenots; visited the palace where he lived, now used as a Training College; saw L'Abey aux Dames built by Matilda of Flanders, the Conqueror's wife.

9-10 July. Went to Mans, then on to Tours, and then to Blois where they put up at Hotel d'Angleterre.

13 July. Went to Chateau Chinon-Clauss, where "the castle is a most curious and unique place, it is almost entirely built on a bridge over the river Cher so that the inhabitants can fish from the windows. It formerly belonged to Diane de Poitiers, being given her by Henri 2nd. It was built by Francois 1st. It now belongs to a private gentleman, M. Pelouze, but strangers are allowed to see it".

15 July. Went by train to Saumur where they saw "one of the finest Druidical monuments in France, viz the 'Dolman of Bayneaux' which is a room composed of only 14 stones of enormous size and built like a house of cards". Then on to Angers.

16 July. Saw Angers castle, "a large straggling place with a number of dice box towers all round. It is now used as a barrack and arsenal". Saw the cathedral, and the museum where they saw "a stone vase which they professed was one of those that had been used at the marriage feast at Cana when water was turned into wine".

17 July. Went by steamer for Nantes; "a very spoony couple on board who went on in a most absurd way; also a spoiled child with an evil eye; decided that both she and the spoony couple ought to be thrown overboard. A moustached and bearded female who was at the table d'hote yesterday was on board with an old priest, both of whom I sketched. Papa talked to the priest, and Mamma to the female who was 'bearded like a pard'."

18-21 July. At Clisson they saw "the castle which is an old ruin something like Kidwelly"; at Dol they "walked about the town which is a nice quaint old place, and visited the cathedral which Mamma thought like St Davids; it is an ancient place and falling to pieces".

22-29 July. Visited Mont St Michael, St Malo, and St Aubins where they saw "a fine quarry of granite, some of which was being sent off to London for the Thames embankment". In the evening she passed the time playing billiards [this often occurred].

26 August. Embarked for Guernsey where they stayed at the Clarence Hotel. She saw "some Druidical stones", and on the shore seaweed "called

vraie which they spread out to dry and then collect it and cart it home where they either use it as fuel or burn it in large bonfires and use the ashes for manure".

29 August. "Went to see Victor Hugo's house which the woman demurred about showing us as they had just received intelligence of Mrs V. Hugo's death. She however took us over it. It is the most eccentric house I ever saw, with old fashioned oak furniture and curious old china, principally Chinese. The house had a very stuffy unwholesome feeling from all the ceilings, walls, and staircase and ballustrades being muffled up in some woollen material. The room in which he wrote his books was on the leads and surrounded with glass like a photographer's room, and as hot as an oven. His bedroom was a most ghostly haunted-looking place. In the drawing room was a table with the names of the four principal French writers in the corners—Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, George Sand, and Lamartine, in front of each name was let into the table some implement of writing having belonged to the author, and in a drawer underneath was a specimen of the handwriting of each. This table, the woman told us, was got up for a fancy fair by Madame Victor Hugo".

1 September. Went by steamer to Cherbourg, and in the harbour "passed the Empress's yacht, La Reine Hortense". Saw the equestrian statue of Napoleon 1st.

23 September. From Paris, went to Versailles, and passed "through the rooms on the south of the palace. Saw a room filled with pictures of the assemblies of the Etats Genereux. Went through the Salon des Glaces, a splendid room 239 feet long, so called from having 17 windows on one side and the same number on the other side to correspond. Went through the Cabinet des Perrugues, where the king used to change his wig, into the bedroom of Louis XIV from the central window of which Marie Antoinette showed herself to the mob. Went through the room called the Oeil de Boeuf from the oval window in it, through several others, then into the Galerie des Batailles which is 392 feet long and in which are pictures representing all the principal French victories. We then went through a room with scenes in the life of Louis Philippe, and afterwards went out into the garden, and had luncheon. We afterwards returned and went through several rooms of Napoleon's campaigns and victories. We also saw the piece of sculpture representing him in his last moments which was at the exhibition last year and which was bought by the emperor. There were statues also of the emperor and empress, and the emperor as a little boy standing by his mother. We then went through some rooms of their naval victories, and then left".

[The final entry in this volume was written at Paris on Saturday 26th September 1868].

The second volume 1 April—9 July 1869.

Rome — Tivoli — Albano — Frascati — Naples — Capo del Monte—
Sorrento — Pompeii — Terni — Ancona — Ravenna — Bologna —
Venice — Verona — Brescia — Milan — Como — Novara — Turin—
Susa — Mt Cenis — Sans le Bourg — St Michel — Aix les Bains —
Geneva — Lausanne — Berne — Thun — Interlaken — Grindelwald
—Lucerne — Freiburg — Baden — Heidelberg — Cologne — Aix
la Chapelle — Brussels — Calais.

1 April. Rome. "Showery and windy. Papa, Mamma, and I went to the Pope's reception at the Vatican at 11 o'clock. Mamma and I were dressed in black and wore veils instead of bonnets. Papa wore evening dress, not having a uniform with him. We went through a whole suite of rooms until we came to a long gallery where the reception was to take place. There were benches placed all along the walls so there was room for everyone to sit down. The Pope's throne was in the middle of the room against the wall. We had about an hour to wait as we came half an hour before the appointed time and the Pope was half an hour late. There were about 3 or 400 people of all nations, and they all sat down in two long lines down the room. It was quite absurd to see the immense number of rosaries and things nearly everyone brought to have blessed by the Pope. They carried them in large bunches dangling from their wrists or their waists. A French lady next me had several boxes full of them and looked as if she was going to set up a shop. I took 5 rosaries, 4 photos of the Pope and a palm branch like the ones he blessed on Palm Sunday. A great number of the gentlemen were in uniform. I saw several white Austrian ones, some green Russian, several diplomatic, and one English. The Pope entered the room by the same door that we had done at the end of the room. Everyone stood up as he entered. He was attended only by 3 men, two in violet, and one in black; there were no soldiers in the room to keep order, only the Pope's footmen in crimson livery. The Pope began by walking up the left-hand side, first stopping before each person and giving them his hand to kiss. He was dressed all in white, a cashmere robe and watered white sash, and little cap of the same material. He seemed rather deaf or else the people spoke low for he constantly put his hand up to his ear to catch what they said. We were on the right-hand side just above the throne, and we watched him gradually approaching us with some anxiety and nervousness. He took nearly half-an-hour before he came near us, as it was a long business stopping before every person, and I was very much afraid lest he might get tired before he got to us and not go all round the room. On the last reception (the day before Easter Sunday) he was so tired with all the ceremonies of the week that he did not walk round the room at all, but only made them an address. When he arrived opposite the throne about 6 from where we were, he returned back again to the other end of the room and began again with those on the opposite side. At last he arrived at the throne again and then he crossed over again to our side, when we all went down

on our knees. His chamberlain preceded him and took away our tickets which we had previously shown at the door. He read the names aloud as he took them. Some Irish ladies were next to Mamma, who said 'Irlandaise' to the Pope when he came up to them, being evidently anxious for him to think them Roman Catholics. Then he came up to Mamma and Papa and asked them what they were, when Papa cleverly replied 'Angli non angeli', 'English not angels', which is a well-known saying of a former Pope respecting the English not being Roman Catholics. This so tickled the old Pope's fancy that he burst into a loud laugh and gave Papa a hearty slap on the shoulder. He next came to me and gave me a very fat white hand with a very large ring on it. I took it in both hands and, squeezing it affectionately, I kissed it. I then held out my rosaries and things and asked him to bless them. He laid his hands on them, but told me he would bless them afterwards, and so he did from his throne. He blessed everything we had about us, but first of all he made us a very nice address in French, so that we could all understand it. He called us 'mes enfants', and began by saying that he hoped there were very few amongst us who were opposed to the only true church, and he hoped in time that there would be only one religion and one faith; that there were many enemies to the church, but he hoped there were not many present. He then talked about continuing steadfast in prayer, and said he hoped we would take perseverance as our lesson from today, and as Mary Magdalene continued steadfast in her belief in our Saviour's resurrection so were we to persevere steadfastly in faith. He then gave us his blessing during which everyone knelt down. He blessed all our rosaries annulets and everything we had with us, he blessed us ourselves now and forever, he blessed all our friends and relations, and we were to convey his blessing to them. His blessing was to keep us through dangers and temptations; if there were any discords or dissensions in our families, it was to be as honey amongst it; it was to be with us through life and death unto the end of our days. He then gave the blessing of the Trinity, crossing himself three times as he did so. This final blessing was in Latin. As soon as he had finished the room resounded with cheers and cries of 'Viva Pio Nono, Viva le Saint Pere', the English hurrah'd, and the Germans yelled, in the midst of which hubbub the Pope disappeared. We then all got away as soon as we could and reached home about 1".

They afterwards had lunch, and she went with her father to Neri's "and gave him an hour's sitting for my cameo. He worked in clay and got it very like in one sitting".

2 April. Went to Neri's and gave him another sitting of one hour. "Then went to see a sculptor's studio near. Benzoni the sculptor himself was working in clay at a group of Hector and Andromide. He talked about Sir Bulwer Lytton or rather Lord Lytton who had given him some orders. When Papa told him he was a cousin of his, he became very civil and took

us all round the studio himself and afterwards promised to send us some photos of those we admired most. There were a great many very pretty things. Those I liked best were—Benzoni himself as a boy being patronized by some great man who discovered his talent and sent him to Rome to study. This piece he was going to send us as a present to the family; a couple of statues representing gratitude, in one a little girl taking a thorn out of her dog's foot, in the other she is asleep, and the little dog is protecting her from a serpent; a couple of statues representing hunting and shooting, two little boys; Rebecca veiled; Diana; a bust of the Pope with *Pax* scratched on it by himself; the last days of Pompeii; and Eve holding an apple". Later she "did some shopping in the Corso, got a diary and a pair of garters".

3-8 April. Mr. Jennings gave Neri a sitting for a cameo to be done of himself. They went to the Quirinal Palace, "which used to be a summer dwelling of the Pope, but Pio Nono does not inhabit it". Saw the church of Santa Maria supra Minerva (near the Pantheon) built on the site of a former temple of Minerva; went to the Protestant cemetery and saw the tombs of Keats and Shelley; visited Tivoli.

10 April. Went to the catacombs outside Rome, on the Campagne—"first went through a Jewish one with many curious inscriptions and frescoes. Mamma very soon went back and amused herself with collecting skulls and crossbones outside, which she pocketed and smuggled away. We afterwards all went through a much larger catacomb, and then went to see some excavations which were going on near, bought some things there. Mrs Ind found a cameo".

10-13 April. Celebrations of the Pope's 50th anniversary of his first celebration of mass. Saw the ruins of Cicero's villa.

14 April. Went by train to Albano, Frascati, Naples. "Got to Albano in an hour, great scramble for the omnibus, would not hold all. The American's consul's wife was very rude and spread a false report that there was room on the box, which made Papa get out, and then she stuffed her maid in his place. Papa had to stand up behind".

19 April. At Naples she became ill—"stayed in bed all day. Took a dose of castor oil the first thing, making a sandwich of it between water and brandy so as not to taste it". She was ill for a long time, being confined to the house for three weeks.

5 May. Her 21st birthday, and went for a drive for the first time since she started being ill. "The carts in the streets mostly drawn by 3 beasts abreast, horses, cows, oxen, mules, and donkeys, being variously used and

put together for the purposes, the horses's trappings and decorations very grand, but the poor beasts themselves seem dreadfully flogged and ill-used. The women wear coloured handkerchiefs tied round their head, beggars uncommonly numerous".

8-12 May. Visited Capo del Monte, and drove back to Naples "along the Strada Nuova, passed the Prince and Princess Humbert driving"; at Sorrento sketched Vesuvius from the window of the Tasso hotel on a cliff above the sea; and saw the room where Tasso was born.

14 May. Went to Pompeii. "Got 'chaises apportenses' there for Motta and me, in which we were carried about by two men. M asked one of her bearers if she was not very heavy and he promptly replied 'yes, you must have eaten a great deal of macaroni'! Took two hours and a half going over the place, very interesting, saw Diomed's house, in the cellar of which several skeletons were found; the houses of Glaucus, Pausa, Sallust, etc; the amphitheatre, the street of tombs, and innumerable houses and shops most of them having different names such as the house of the wild boar, etc. Nearly all of them had an open court in the centre with a fountain. The frescoes were mostly quite fresh and many names still visible over the shop doors. In one street, the cart tracks were quite deep on the stone-paved road. Nearby all the streets had large stepping stones put across for foot passengers which it seems difficult to conceive how any horse or cart could pass. We saw the forum and the ruins of an ancient basilica, the baths, and the museum in which were many of the things discovered, ornaments, pots, pans, etc, and many loaves of bread perfect in shape but quite black. In one place we saw the bodies of the poor people, discovered most of them in most painful attitudes, one poor woman covering her mouth with her hands as if she was being suffocated with the fumes of sulphur. They nearly all had rings on. There was only one skeleton, the forms and features of the others were perfectly preserved in the moulding of molten lava in which they were found. The houses in Pompeii were all of one storey except that of Diomed which was three, he being a very rich man. The streets were narrow, but there was a foot pavement on each side".

15 May. Returned to Rome, and two days later "went to see Tadolini's studio who did Fay's bust, saw the plaster cast of it. Not many pretty things. Several Egyptian heads of women. His great subject was the archangel Michael, very much the same as the celebrated picture. Then went to Neri's and we each gave him a last sitting for our cameos which he then finished".

18-21 May. Went to the Palazzo Barberini to see the Beatrix Cenci; then travelled on to Terni and Ancona, and on 21 May arrived at Ravenna "a queer old-fashioned looking town, in the time of the Goths capital of Italy". She notes that Dante died and was buried in this town, formerly a sea-port,

1 July. At Baden Baden saw "the Kursaal where the gambling takes place, it is a fine building and has 'Conversation Haus' written on it, a very innocent name".

2 July. At Heidelberg, went to see the castle "a magnificent old ruin. We saw the cellar with the largest vin ton in the world, on the top of which the peasants had a dance after the vintage was got in, and the great barrel filled . . . There is a college for students at Heidelberg and we saw many of them about, they wear funny little round caps with strips of different colours round them according to the part of Germany they come from; they wear also a striped ribbon of corresponding colours across their chest".

3 July. They sailed in a steamer on the Rhine, and passed Coblenz "very strongly fortified . . . an immense number of flags were hung out all along the quay, and we were saluted with guns at this and several other towns as we passed along. This was on account of its being the anniversary of the battle of Sadowa which they gained over the Austrians. Both at Coblenz and Cologne the English union jack was displayed with great prominence, being the only foreign flag hung out, this being I suppose in honour of the Princess of Prussia".

4 July. Sunday at Cologne, "went to the Church of St Ursula where we saw the bones of the 12,000 virgins who with their mistress Queen Ursula, an English Queen, who, according to legend, miraculously floated up the Rhine with her virgin attendants for the purpose of converting the people of Cologne, was barbarously murdered with all her 12,000 virgins. The bones are ranged all around the inner porch-way of the church in glass cases". They then went to the Stadt House where "M's flannel petticoat came down, and she beat an ignominious retreat into a shop".

5 July. Went to Aix la Chapelle, "tasted the waters which were like bad eggs". Then on to Brussels, "very glad to leave Germany and find ourselves in a civilized country once more".

7 July. "Went to see the manufacture of Brussels lace and a large shop where they let us watch the women at work. It seemed to injure their eyes very much as they all seemed to have something the matter with their eyes. They made it on cushions with bobbins like other lace. One woman was making it with a needle".

8 July. Went to the Hotel de Ville, Brussels, where "one room seemed to alter its position in a wonderful way as you walked round the room".

9 July. Went to Calais, boarded a steamer which took $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours crossing to Dover, and thence by train to London. Saw Canterbury Cathedral from the train—"very large and handsome, beats anything seen abroad". At Victoria station "they examined Mamma's box and were very irate at dis-

covering several volumes of Tauchnitz editions which are prohibited from being brought into England. We received a severe reprimand, but only one volume was seized . . . Found Louy and Willy in Portland Place. W up for the cricket match. Richie arrived later in the evening".
[This is the last entry in the volume].

And so, the tour ended as it had started, in a brush with Custom officials, happily leaving the travellers with barely a bruise. I have already referred to the value of journals and diaries for the historian. Many journals similar to those we have considered are often weighted with descriptions of magnificent buildings and landscapes, towns and cities, battles and sieges, spectacular events, monarchs and heroes, and indeed it is proper that such aspects of past and contemporary times should be emphasized. However, we should remember that the modest, the recondite, even seemingly trivial items, form part of a nation's biography, and deserve the attention of those who would know the complete and true chronicle. Miss Agnes Hermione Jennings, young though she was, had appreciated this, possibly unwittingly. The journals show her to have been a lady for all seasons. She recognized not only the splendid and dramatic elements but also the less publicised aspects of existence. History often lurks in dark cobwebbed corners. When Miss Jennings turns her glance towards these corners, history comes out of hiding.

The Edwardian Days of a Dafen Diarist

by GWILYM B. OWEN, B.COM., M.PHIL.

WILLIAM Owen was born at Cwmnant, a small farm on the outskirts of the village of Dafen, near Llanelli, on the 29th June, 1876. His parents were David and Mari Owen, who had ten children. Cwmnant extended to only twenty-four acres and it was scarcely big enough to maintain the family. To eke out a living David employed his horse and cart to carry coal from the nearby St. George pit and sell it in the district. Mari delivered milk daily from door to door in the village.

David came from Mynydd-y-Garreg, near Cydweli, his home being a farm called Penymynydd. He met Mari when they both worked at Maes-ar-Ddafen, on the lowland near Llwynhendy, he as a farm servant and she as a maid. Mari was from Llwynhendy, being the daughter of Jona John, a colourful and original character known by his bardic title, Jona o'r Ynys. (The well-known rugby player, Barry John, of our time, is of the same lineage).

David was of a quiet nature and Mari was without doubt the stronger personality. She could neither read nor write but was extremely astute and possessed an excellent memory. Her kindness to the poor and unfortunate was proverbial and many a family in time of distress had reason to bless her for a deed of generosity, usually done by stealth.

Of the ten children, one died in infancy. The others were four girls, Margaret, Catherine, Mary Ann and Rachel, and five boys, John, David, Daniel, William and Frank. William was the youngest son but one and, like the other children, he went to the village school in Dafen. He recalled taking his penny to the schoolmaster every Monday morning to pay for his tuition. Later he went to the Llanelli Higher Grade School, where he learned history, English grammar, French, mathematics and elementary science. He was a bright pupil and when he left school at the age of fifteen, he secured work at the Llanelli Post Office. Here he remained until January, 1901, when, at the age of twenty-four, he was promoted to a post at Dowlais. On his departure from Llanelli he received gifts from his colleagues and was treated to a farewell party at the Federation Rooms of the Malabar Hotel, an occasion which was reported by the

local press in terms which reflected the high esteem he enjoyed in the community.

William did not stay long at Dowlais. In June, 1902, he was appointed a registry assistant in the General Post Office, London and remained there until 1914, when he was appointed postmaster at Llangollen. During his time in London he kept a diary. Parts have been lost but the diaries for 1902-4 and 1907-8 are still extant. Following the fashion of the period, they are for the main part in English despite the fact that William's first language was Welsh and that Welsh was the language used in most of the events that are recorded. In the diaries we get a glimpse of the life of a young man away from home, devoted to family and friends, and immersed in the activities of the Welsh Nonconformist community in London.

London in 1902 had a population of four and a half million. 4,000 buses ran on the streets; most of these were horse drawn, there being, in fact, only 28 motor buses. There were also 200 electric tramcars. The underground railways had been in existence for forty years, using steam power and running near the surface; the first electric underground had been opened in 1890. Houses were lit by gas and thousands went to bed nightly by the light of a candle. Country-wide, transport was mainly by railway; that recent invention, the motor car, barely disturbed the rural peace. Bicycling was a pleasurable way of travelling; other means were walking and riding by pony and trap.

Life for Welsh people in London offered much activity and stimulation. The chapels were well-supported and preaching was highly regarded; there were concerts and eisteddfodau and considerable interest in political matters, under the influence of the Liberal Party and men like Lloyd George, D. A. Thomas (later Viscount Rhondda) and Ellis Jones Griffith (later created a baronet, and briefly M.P. for Carmarthen, 1923-4).

The focal point of William's life was the chapel and he noted every service he attended, recording the name of the preacher, his text and frequently the heads of the sermon or a summary of it. He became a member of Castle Street Welsh Baptist Church but later transferred to Commercial Street¹ to help the weaker cause there. He was soon elected a deacon and frequently took the service in place of the minister.

1. The first chapel to be opened by the Welsh Baptists in London was in Eldon Street, Moorfields, in 1822. The congregation moved to Commercial Street in 1903 and, in 1904, to Little Alie Street. The church continued to be called 'Moorfields'.

The following entries from the diary have been selected and edited to show the range of William Owen's interests.

"4-1-03. Sunday. Got up at 8.15 a.m. Had breakfast at 9.30 a.m. Walked to Castle Street. Only three in early prayer meeting. Morning service: Mr. Williams² preached. Psalm 90.12. Saw Gwili³ outside. He had failed to find Moorfields Chapel. In Sunday School—lesson Paul and Silas in prison at Philippi. Evening: Mr. Williams preached from Exodus 14.15 as a New Year's motto. Communion. Wet night; returned early".

"30-8-03. Mr. Shankland, Rhyl,⁴ preaching at Commercial Street. Hebrews 8.10—12. The writer shows the superiority of the Gospel of the New Dispensation over the Old. 1. Its superiority because it emphasises the importance of inner experience. 2. Its superiority because it emphasises the importance of the individual. 3. Its superiority in graciousness. It is complete forgiveness. I preached in the evening. John 14.27".

"2-10-04. Dark and foggy. Mr. Herbert Morgan⁵ at Little Alie Street. Morning sermon, Col. 3. 1—4. The Christian in living a new life has new interests and ideals which elevate life. The things which raised Christ to the right hand of God will also raise us. These ideals when reached glorify our life. Life hid with Christ in God. All life is hidden until it is perfected".

"Evening: Communion and sermon on Cor. 12.9. 'My grace is sufficient for thee'. Man's weakness and failings are evidences of the great possibilities he has. 'Thorns in the flesh' are essential to our everlasting benefit. In our failures God has an opportunity of coming to disclose his strength. The grace here was a new standpoint from which he viewed his life; a new light in which he saw the events of his life, helping him to see how needful indeed trials are for

2. Revd. R. E. Williams (1862-1926), minister of Castle Street from 1890 to 1904. The membership doubled during his ministry and by 1904 it stood at 475.
3. John Gwili Jenkins (1872-1936), theologian and poet. Professor of New Testament at the Baptist College, Bangor, 1923-36. Elected Archdruid of Wales, 1931.
4. Revd. Thomas Shankland (1858-1927), historian and bibliophile, Minister at Rhyl, 1891-1904. In 1904, he was invited to come to the University College of North Wales, Bangor, to supervise the Welsh library. He undertook valuable research at Lambeth Palace and the British Museum into the history of religion in Wales and this brought him frequently to London.
5. Revd. Herbert Morgan (1875-1946). In 1904 he was a student at Mansfield College, Oxford. He became minister of Castle Street, London, in 1906. He was later Director of Extra-mural Studies, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. Herbert Morgan was an eloquent preacher, a fine scholar, a pacifist and social leader.

perfecting us. After this he believed that all things work for the good of them that love Him".

Chapel life was by no means confined to preaching and devotional meetings. Both Castle Street and Commercial Street had their Mutual Improvement Societies, where topics of general interest were discussed and debated, and there were eisteddfodau, social evenings and concerts held in the chapel or schoolroom, or on more important occasions in such centres as the Queen's Hall.

"10-1-03. Walked home through City Road and spent a few hours reading and writing. In evening heard debate on 'Is it the duty of London Welsh parents to make Welsh the family language?' at Castle Street Mutual Improvement Society".

"23-3-03. Eisteddfod at Castle Street. Took prize for essay, 'Llwyrymwrthodiad yng ngoleuni'r Testament Newydd', and half the prize for translation into Welsh. Harry Thomas had full prize for translation into English".

"19-12-03. Went to Castle Street Eisteddfod. Unsuccessful in 'Letter to parents' and translation into Welsh. Half prize for tenor solo and full prize for reciting 'Morfa Rhuddlan'".

"9-1-04. Went to British Museum to meet Mr. David Williams⁶ and obtained a reader's ticket. Then went to Castle Street to social. Mr. Williams lectured on 'Jac Glangyngors a'i gyd oeswyr'".

"12-1-04. Read paper on 'John Williams, Yr Oraclau Bywiol'.

"18-2-04. Eisteddfod at Queen's Hall.⁸ Met several Llanellyites, among them S. Aubrey and W. Jones, Globe Row [Dafen]. Eisteddfod not over till 11.40. Then had to walk home".

"10-3-04. Went to City Temple in the evening to hear *The Creation* (Haydn) performed. Very full".

"17-12-04. Spent afternoon at British Museum. In evening at Castle Street Eisteddfod. Prize for 'Drylliad y Royal Charter' (three shillings) won by me".

A day in the country was a great delight to the town-dwellers of London and Sunday Schools often arranged an annual outing of this kind. Commercial Street Sunday School held their outing on the 1st June, 1903, William noting in his diary, 'went to Court Farm,

6. David Williams was an active member of Castle Street and a man of considerable culture who was a good influence amongst the youth of the church.
7. John Williams, 1806-56; Baptist minister and author of *Yr Oraclau Bywiol*.
8. The Queen's Hall Eisteddfod was an important event in the London Welsh calendar. In 1904, the Chair was won by Nantlais. Nine male voice choirs competed, seven of them being from Wales (Llanelly amongst them) and two from London itself.

Upper Warlingham.⁹ Very warm day. Enjoyed ourselves very much'.

William Owen did not confine himself to his own chapel and denomination but took the opportunity to hear pulpit orators of all denominations, both Welsh and English, including such famous people as P. T. Forsyth, R. J. Campbell, Campbell Morgan, F. B. Meyer, Elvet Lewis and others. William thought deeply about religion and the diaries reveal that he experienced a spiritual crisis in his own life. On the 8th February, 1903 he heard the renowned preacher Dr. P. T. Forsyth in Bloomsbury Chapel and summarised the sermon at some length, being obviously moved by it. He frequently went to listen to evangelical preachers of the day like Dr. Campbell Morgan and F. B. Meyer, but also heard the lectures given by R. J. Campbell, the apostle of the New Theology, who in 1903 succeeded Joseph Parker as minister of the City Temple.

"8-2-03 . . . in evening went to Bloomsbury Chapel to hear Dr. Forsyth.¹⁰ Fluent speaker—pithy sayings intermixed in his sermon. His text was taken in Genesis 32.31. 'and as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him and he halted upon his thigh'. Jacob's struggle with the angel. The difficulties of the gospel and the Christian life have to be met and conquered. And this comes to every Christian. No true Christian can have an easy-going life . . ."

"16-4-03. Went to laboratory class in morning, then to the City Temple. Heard Revd. R. J. Campbell. Could only just hear him. Temple was crowded to overflowing".¹¹

"12-10-03. In evening went to hear Elvet Lewis¹² preaching at Wilton Square. Matthew 13.3. 'Wele yr hauwr a aeth allan i hau'. Iesu fel hauwr yn (1) Ei gydymdeimlad â dynion sydd yn hau, ac yn medi siomedigaethau (2) Ei ostyngeddrydd. Mab Duw yn

9. Court Farm was a popular rendezvous for Sunday Schools and other organisations. One Sunday School advertised its annual trip in *Celt Llundain* on May 21, 1904, in the following terms: 'Court Farm is situated on the high cliffs near Caterham Valley. The scenery is lovely and the country around is now at its best. The farm is only a short walk from station and has fine covered Halls for indoor games should weather be unfavourable. Return fare from Victoria, 1s. 6d. Children under 12 years of age, half price'.
10. Revd. P. T. Forsyth (1848-1921), Congregationalist preacher and influential author. In 1903 he was Principal of Hackney College.
11. The seating capacity of the City Temple was 2,500. City workers went without their lunch to attend the Thursday mid-day service, maintained by Dr. Joseph Parker for thirty-three years and continued by R. J. Campbell.
12. Revd. Howell Elvet Lewis, 'Elfed' (1860-1953), Congregationalist minister, hymn writer and prominent Free Churchman. Archdruid of Wales 1923-7.

dod mewn gwisg hauwr i hau ar feysydd oerion y byd (3) Ei obaith. Y tir da, a'r had sydd yn dwyn 30, 60 a 100. 'O lafur ei enaid y gwel'."

"26-6-04. In morning went to Borough Chapel to hear Hwfa Mon.¹³ He preached on Daniel 5.27. 'Wele ti a'th bwyswyd ac a'th gaed yn brin'. Pregethodd am awr a hanner".

"25-11-04. Went to hear Dr. Campbell Morgan¹⁴ at Westminster Chapel speaking on 'Christ and the Old Testament'. Splendid and orthodox lecture. Feel stronger than ever in my belief and faith in the Bible *as it is*".

Although the chapel was central to William's life, he had other interests. He attended classes at the Northampton Institute to improve his position at the Post Office, he was an amateur painter and he also took an interest in the popular causes of the day, particularly those that were of concern to the Welsh Nonconformists: Disestablishment, Temperance and opposition to the Education Act, 1902. Lloyd George was very active at this time and William heard him speak on a number of occasions.

"6-5-03. After tea went to the G.P.O. to ascertain duty. Then to the City Temple to the Annual Meeting of the Liberation Society.¹⁵ Overflowing. Chairman: Dr. Clifford.¹⁶ Speakers: J. Jones, Bournemouth,¹⁷ Ellis-Griffith,¹⁸ Wilfred Lawson,¹⁹ Silvester Horne."²⁰

"23-5-03. Demonstration in Hyde Park against London Education Bill".

13. Revd. Rowland Williams, 'Hwfa Môn' (1823-1905), Congregationalist minister. Elected Archdruid 1894.
14. Revd. George Campbell Morgan, D.D. (1863-1945), evangelical preacher and a leading Congregationalist.
15. The Liberation Society had as its aim the disestablishment of the Church of England. The moving spirit in the Society was Edward Miall and it developed into a formidable political force.
16. Dr. John Clifford (1836-1923), minister of Westbourne Park Baptist Church 1856-1915. A renowned Nonconformist, a man of tremendous energy and ability and a leader in many public causes.
17. Revd. J. D. Jones (1865-1942), minister of Richmand Hill Congregational Church, Bournemouth, and one of England's greatest preachers. He was a son of J. D. Jones, Ruthin, schoolmaster and composer.
18. Sir Ellis Jones Griffith (1860-1926), barrister and Liberal Member of Parliament for Anglesey 1895-1918; Under Secretary of State. He played a leading part in guiding the Disestablishment Bill through the House of Commons.
19. Sir Wilfred Lawson (1829-1906), Liberal Member of Parliament.
20. Revd. Charles Silvester Horne (1865-1914), Congregational minister, a powerful preacher and orator. Member of Parliament for Ipswich.

"11-7-03. Very hot day. At Albert Hall demonstration. Revd. Scott Lidgett,²¹ Revd. J. Morgan Gibbon,²² Dr. John Clifford, Revd. G. Hooper, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. R. W. Perks spoke. Hall crowded".

The demonstrations on the 23rd May and the 11th July were against the Education Act, 1902. Although the Act possessed many good features, it made provision for denominational schools to be maintained out of the rates and was ferociously opposed by the Liberals and Nonconformists in England and Wales, led by Lloyd George. The grounds for the opposition were that the children of Nonconformists would be compelled to receive sectarian education and that public money would be spent without public control.

The march to Hyde Park started at 4.15 p.m. and the marchers, preceded by bands and carrying banners, took until 6 p.m. to get into the park; one procession was led by the renowned Dr. John Clifford. It was estimated that there were 150,000 people present. At the demonstration in the Albert Hall on the 11th July, 18,000 were present and when Lloyd George rose to speak the cheers were deafening.

Despite the protests in London and elsewhere and strenuous efforts throughout the country to oppose the Act, its implementation was not prevented.

"3-3-04. To tea with Mr. Scrivens and together went to Harecourt Hall to hear John Burns, M.P.,²³ speaking to the electors in the L.C.C. election. Very powerful speaker—witty and eloquent".

"26-3-04. Walked to Hyde Park for the Anti-Chinese Labour Demonstration".²⁴

"28-5-04. Demonstration at the Albert Hall against the Government's Licencing Bill.²⁵ Lord Peel presided. Speakers: John

21. Dr. Scott Lidgett, Methodist minister and founder of the Bermondsey Settlement, which sought to bring men together to discuss social evils and seek to eradicate them.
22. Revd. James Morgan Gibbon (1855-1932), a popular Congregational preacher. He wrote a book explaining his support for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales.
23. John Burns (1859-1943). Sidney and Beatrice Webb described him as 'the most impressive personality' of the Labour movement in his time. He became a Member of Parliament in 1892 and was made a member of the Cabinet in 1906—the first from the working class to occupy a Cabinet post.
24. Chinese workers were brought to South Africa after the Boer War had ended to work in the gold mines. The Tory Government were accused of permitting conditions which were the equivalent of slavery.
25. The Licencing Act, 1904. It provided that a licence could only be withdrawn if the landlord was found guilty of misconduct or of keeping unsuitable premises. The measure was seen by the temperance movement as a means of favouring and enriching the brewers.

Morley, the Bishop of Kensington, Arthur Chamberlain, T. P. Whitaker, T. W. Russell, Revd. F. B. Meyer, Dr. John Clifford. Splendid meeting. Lasted for four hours, including the hour's organ recital".

Life was not entirely serious for William. There were occasional visits to the theatre and other entertainments, friends came up from Wales and were conducted around the sights, there were social occasions apart from those in the chapel and frequent calls upon friends in their homes to share a meal and enjoy conversation.

"20-1-03. At Olympia, seeing 'Buffalo Bill'.²⁶

"18-3-03. Met Willie Fisher. Went to Her Majesty's Theatre to see 'Resurrection'.²⁷ Got home 11.55".

"21-3-03. Bought Tolstoy's *Resurrection*".

"20-2-04. Met a good company [of friends from Llanelli who had come up for the Queen's Hall Eisteddfod] and went to the Tower and thence to the City. In evening went to Drury Lane to see 'Humpty Dumpty'—Dan Leno and Harry Randall.²⁸ Got home very late again".

24-6-04. Holiday—King's birthday. Cycled down to Windsor via Kingston, Hampton and Staines. Started 12.15 Got there 3.30. Visited Castle. Stayed about one hour and returned via Colbrook and Hounslow."

"28-6-04. In evening, tried to get into the Listeners' Gallery at the House of Commons but House too full."

"29-6-04. *Jour de naissance*. Allen and myself were successful in getting a permit by Mr. Lloyd George to listen to debate. We went about 6.30 p.m. Afterwards we all went for a ride as far as Clapham Common. Agnes, Miss Gay, Allen and his wife and myself."

"14-5-04. Very warm day. Cycled out to Romford. Heard the cuckoo. Saw a robin's nest with young. Called at Ifford on my return and had tea with Mr. and Mrs. Arthur. There met Mr. and Mrs. Elliot. Got back at 8.35".

26. Colonel William Cody, who fought against the Red Indians in the American West. After the cessation of the wars against the Indians, Buffalo Bill toured America and Europe with his Wild West Show. They performed to vast audiences, on one occasion in the presence of Queen Victoria.
27. A play based on Tolstoy's novel *Resurrection* was performed with great success in Moscow, London and other cities.
28. Dan Leno (1860-1904) was one of the best-known and most popular stars of the music hall. 'Humpty Dumpty' was the last pantomime in which he appeared. Harry Randall (1860-1932) was regarded as a worthy successor to Dan Leno on the music hall stage.

"21-9-04. Went to Her Majesty's Theatre to see 'The Tempest'. Had a good seat".

"22-9-04. Mr. and Mrs. Romans met me at St. Martin's-le-grand and we went to the Adelphi and saw 'The Prayer of the Sword'. Good acting but a miserable piece altogether".

William spent most of his holidays in Wales although he made occasional visits to friends in England. He remained a countryman at heart and was at home in the countryside, amongst family and friends. But he also kept in touch with colleagues he had worked with in the Post Office, to whom he wrote regularly and whom he visited from time to time.

"11-4-03. Got up 6 a.m. Started for Waterloo 7.20 a.m. Reached Salisbury 11.30 a.m. Visited Cathedral and Old Sarum. Had a look over the town. Then left for Semley [railway station about three miles north of Shaftesbury], getting there at 6. Bertie met me. We walked up to Shaftesbury, meeting Mr. Romans on the way. Found them all well there".

"12-4-03. Easter Sunday. Spent a nice day. Attended church twice".

"13-4-03. Spent today walking about. Went to Melbury Hill [south of Shaftesbury] and viewed Isle of Wight! [over 30 miles away]. We had snow this day."

"14-4-03. Bert and I hired cycles and went for a two hours' run. Left Shaftesbury at 3.15 p.m., getting to Semley Station at 4 p.m. Mr. Romans and Bert came with me. They returned in a trap before my train came. Left Semley at 4.16 p.m., reaching Salisbury at 5 p.m. Called at Post Office to see Maggie and left Salisbury at 5.50 p.m., coming back through Romsey and Eastleigh. Got to Waterloo at 9.40 p.m., reaching Gordon Street at 10.20. Had very nice weather and thoroughly enjoyed myself".

"31-3-04. Worked on till 7 p.m. Then prepared to go home on the excursion²⁹ leaving Paddington 11.30 p.m."

"1-4-04. Good Friday. Reached Llanelli at 7 a.m. and went straight up to Dafen. Very fine morning. Mother was milking the white cow and singing. In afternoon went to tea party at Maescanner³⁰".

"2-4-04. Late getting up. Went down to Cydweli by 12.33 train . . . Found them pretty well at Penymynydd but Charlotte Ann was being nursed. It came to rain on my way up".

29. Excursion trains at cheap fares did much to enable ordinary folk to travel by rail. Their disadvantages were that they ran mostly overnight and took longer than the ordinary services. The first excursion ever run was one organized by Thomas Cook to bring people to a temperance meeting in Loughborough in 1841.

30. Maescanner Baptist Chapel, Dafen, where the family were members.

"3-4-04. Went to Soar [Llwynhendy] in the morning. Mr Evans³¹ preached on the Resurrection. Cwrdd Cwarter at Maescanner in afternoon. In evening went to Seion . . ."

"4-4-04. Easter Monday. Went to Llanelli, calling at Post Office. Went with W.T. as far as his home and had tea. I called to see George Davies at the workhouse and found him very well. Left home about 7 p.m. and went to Burry Street before leaving. Train left at 9.55 p.m."

"5-4-04. Got to Paddington at 4.45 a.m. No train before 5.30 a.m. Went down to Hammersmith and from there to the office. On duty 9-5. In evening went to prayer meeting".

"1-8-04. Arrived Llanelli 5.45 a.m. Lovely morning. Went to Burry Street. No-one up. Knocked at Sal's. Had breakfast there and then went down to Cydweli by train. Train went through Cydweli and stopped at Ferryside. Walked from Ferryside to Cydweli and got there about noon. I joined Penymynydd folk in the hayfield. Went to Penymynydd on top of a load of hay and found that Mrs. Williams, Jellico, was at Penyrheol. Aunt saddled the pony and I trotted up to see her in the afternoon. Found her out in the hayfield. I stayed about an hour and then returned to catch 9.15 excursion at Cydweli. Called at Pinged Hill Stores.³² Mrs. Arthur very ill. Saw Mrs. Powell and all the girls. Had a cup of coffee and then went to the station. I slept the best part of the journey. Got to Paddington at 5.10 a.m. Walked across the parks to Westminster Bridge Road and went for a few hours to bed, being on duty at 12".

"10-10-04. Dull morning. Left London by the 10.50 a.m. express and alighted at Bath. Visited the Roman baths before leaving. Bath seemed a slow and not too clean place but it is rather pretty. Situated in a deep, narrow valley, the terraces rising on all sides. Went on to Bristol and took tram to the Tramway Centre. Went to 24 Clare Street. Mrs. Jones was cleaning the office when I arrived. We had a good time in the evening talking about old times and the latest news".

"11-10-04. Beautifully fine day. Mrs. Jones and I started out at 10 a.m. for Clifton. Went over the Suspension Bridge, then walked the Downs and took the tram from Durdham Downs to the city. Had some dinner and then went out to see the Müller Institute.³³ Had a look round Bristol Telegraph Office".

31. Revd. J. R. Evans (1852-1931), minister of Soar 1889-1927.

32. The home of Sarah Jane Arthur, whom he later married. Her father, John Arthur, sank the Tynywaun colliery at Ponthenry.

33. Müller's Homes for orphan children were founded by George Müller (1805-98), who came to this country from Germany and joined the Plymouth Brethren. He depended on prayer only to maintain the orphanage and received large donations.

"12-10-04. Took train to Newport, getting there 12.30 p.m. Called to see Mr. Griffiths during the dinner hour. Walked to Alexandra Park and went on to Cardiff by the 3.25 train. In Cardiff I saw the Penarth brake in St. Mary Street and went by it to Penarth (4d.). Penarth is a clean place but the town is not pretty excepting perhaps the west side which faces the sea. Went on by Taff Vale Railway to Merthyr that night and was in Dowlais before 10 p.m. Went to Thomas Watts and found them all well and expecting me".

"13-10-04. Visited various friends at Dowlais during the day".

"14-10-04. Spent the morning with Mr. Hughes³⁴ walking over the Bryniau. Had dinner with him and then went over to the Post Office and called to see other friends before going. Josiah Davies and I went to see Tom Walters at Penydarren".

"15-10-04. Went on to Swansea and enquired my way to 48 Sea View Terrace. As I was going up I met D. Davies going back to the office. It began to rain and I had to forego a run down to Mumbles; went as far as Victoria Park and returned about 5.30 p.m. Had tea and a chat and left by train for Llanelli. Got there about 8.55 p.m. and went to Burry Street. Found them fairly well there. Chatted till late and got to Cwmnant about midnight. Rachel and Frank were sitting up. Others were fast asleep".

"16-10-04. Got up about 9 a.m. Went to chapel. Mr. Phillips³⁵ preached on the Burning Bush. Saw Lettice Bowen and some of my old friends. In afternoon, Mother and I went to Cwm-felin, visiting the scene of the railway accident on our way. Went to see my great-uncle and great-aunt, Isaac Jones and Hannah. Both very ill. In evening went to Soar, young R. D. Hughes preaching (grandson of R. D. Roberts).³⁶ 'Erail a waredodd Efe, ei hun nis gall ei waredu'. Called at Uncle Daniel's³⁷ in evening and a storm came on; we had it very rough on our way home".

The *London Welshman*, 8th October, 1904, reported the railway accident as follows:

'Last Monday afternoon a fearful accident occurred on the Great Western Railway main line about three miles from Llanelli. The express from New Milford due at Paddington at 5.40, drawn by two engines and travelling at a rate of at least 50 miles an hour, was

34. Revd. J. D. Hughes (1859-1927), a popular preacher and public figure. He was William Owen's minister at Moreia, Dowlais, and a lifelong friend.

35. Revd. Philip Phillips (1834-1917), first minister of Maescanner, Dafen.

36. Revd. R. D. Roberts (1820-93) minister of Soar, Llwynhendy, 1862-87, a renowned Baptist preacher.

37. Daniel John ('Ynysog') (1862-1923), a son of Jona John (see page 20). Daniel wrote a number of popular songs, his brother Jona (Junior) composing the music for them.

nearing Loughor Bridge when the leading engine left the rails and turned completely over. The second engine also ran off the metals, dragging the four carriages immediately behind. Passengers were hurled through the windows. It seems only three lost their lives (the driver and the stoker of the leading locomotive and a Mr. Stallard from Bristol). Six or seven were seriously injured'.

"17—20-10-04. Spent these days at Dafen and Llanelli. It being damp and dull, did not go about much".

"21-10-04. Mother and I went by 12.33 p.m. train to Cydweli. At Cydweli it rained hard. No trap awaited us at station but we met it on our way, Aunt driving. We had to stay in during the afternoon but it cleared a little in the evening. Went to Parcymynydd".

"22-10-04. Went over to Glyn Abbey,³⁸ Tudor Rees, Green Hall,³⁹ coming with us. It was a fine afternoon. We saw some of the monks. Mother returned home by the 7.4 train from Cydweli, we going as far as the station".

"23-10-04. Glorious morning. Went to Meinciau. Miss C. Williams, Hengoed, came to dinner to Penymynydd and in afternoon we went to Coedybrain.⁴⁰ Very few there. After tea, went over to Hengoed and then to Meinciau in evening. Went to Green Hall to supper and chatted till 10.30. Got to Penymynydd 10.45 and found all locked up".

"24-10-04. Wet morning so did not go out. In afternoon, rode down to Cydweli to post a parcel and called at Pinged Hill Stores. In evening went to Green Hall".

"25-10-04. Fine day. Hounds chased fox past Penymynydd but lost it on the mountain. In afternoon, went for walk with Mr. Rees to the Van and in evening went to prayer meeting at Meinciau. Stayed to supper at Green Hall".

"26-10-04. In afternoon went down to Cydweli with trap to take the Misses Arthur out for a drive. Had a photograph taken and then drove round Pont Morlais. Got to Penymynydd 4.30 p.m. and had tea. We returned early, Aunt coming with us. It was a beautiful night. We spent a very happy day".

"27-10-04. Went off by 8.56 train and got to Aberystwyth 12.20 p.m. Very warm day. In afternoon went to Devil's Bridge.

38. A modern residence. There is no evidence of an ancient religious establishment although it is possible that the site may have been that of a monastic grange.

39. A large house in a commanding position, looking out over Cydweli and Cefn Sidan sands. It was the home of the Revd. M. T. Rees, minister of Llangyndeyrn and Meinciau. His son, Tudor, had a distinguished career as a schoolmaster and minister.

40. Coedybrain Baptist Chapel, near Llandyfaelog.

The scenery is glorious around here and I thoroughly enjoyed myself, although the journey in the light railway train seems a perilous one. In evening, stayed at 3 Terrace Road, where I met Mr. Samuel, Glyngwernen. In evening went to the university buildings, where I heard Sir John Williams, court medico,⁴¹ addressing the students. Sir Lewis Morris⁴² was in the chair".

"28-10-04. Left Aberystwyth 9.5 a.m. and reached Carmarthen at 12.15 p.m. Spent the afternoon there and went on to Cydweli by the 4.33 train. Waited at Pinged Hill Stores till the gambo came down for goods. Rather a cold night".

"29-10-04. Cydweli Fair. Walked down and bought a cow and calf for Cwmnant, £13.10.0.⁴³ Stayed the whole day at Cydweli. In evening the Misses Arthur came out and we did a little fairing. Walked up to Penymynydd and got there 11.50 p.m."

"30-10-04. Sunday. Went to Meinciau in morning. Miss S. Williams, Hengoed, came to Penymynydd to dinner. In afternoon, I went to Carway and back to tea, then to Four Roads at night".

"31-10-04. Sad news for Aunt Sarah this morning; she had news of her brother Daniel's death at Jellico. She felt it very keenly. We drove over to Cwmnant. My anut returned that night and Dan and I went with her as far as Penyfai. It was a very dark night."

"3-11-04. Left home noon; travelled by 1.5 p.m. from Llanelli and got to Paddington 6.10 p.m. G. H. Mills travelled with me. Felt very homesick this time, as mother was so very good to me. Went to service at F. B. Meyer's".⁴⁴

The diary does not record many of William Owen's innermost thoughts although occasional comments on sermons reveal, as we have seen, that he thought deeply about spiritual matters. Here and there we get a glimpse of the warp and woof of life—joy and sorrow, hope and disappointment, pleasure in the company of friends and loneliness in London. There were friendships with men and women. A lasting relationship developed between him and Sarah Jane Arthur, of Cydweli, and they were married in the old Congregational chapel there (Capel Sul, now demolished) on June 5th, 1907.

41. Sir John Williams (1840-1926), chief founder of the National Library of Wales, to which he transferred his valuable collection of books and manuscripts.

42. Sir Lewis Morris (1833-1907). Poet. He did much to advance higher education in Wales. Vice-President of the University College of Wales, 1889-1907.

43. At today's prices, a cow and calf would cost about £400!

44. Revd. F. B. Meyer (1847-1925), eloquent preacher and prolific author. He was for many years minister of Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, 'the Nonconformist Cathedral', and a leader in social and political causes.

"26-12-02. Boxing Day. . . . In evening went to Burry Port Ladies Concert at Maescanner. Saw D. J. Hughes [his best friend] and M.H.H. together. Lettice Bowen sat above me although I was not conscious of it until I heard next day".

"27-12-02. Got up late. Dan and I went to Cydweli with 12.30 train. Got there soon after 2 p.m. They were well. Weather became rough but we declined to stay the night. Trap carried us to Cydweli. Called at Pinged Hill Stores and having two hours to wait for train went to send Aunt back as far as Llangadog, the two Miss Arthur's being in the trap. Walked back and left them near the Town Hall".

"28-12-02. Fine morning. Went to service in morning. Mr. Phillips preached from Psalm 90. 1-6. After dinner, I went to the Workhouse Infirmary. Saw Mr. G. Davies. He wept but said he was comfortable. Stayed an hour, then returned passing the cemetery, where I saw Mrs. Davies with David John (Mrs. George Davies died on November 11th, 1902). On my way near Nevill's [Arms], met Margaret Jones and Lettice Bowen coming from Sunday School. Walked through New Row as far as the railway. Here we parted when, after a few steps, Margaret Jones wished 'Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi Mr. Owen' and L.B. added, 'A gwraig cyn y diwedd'. I replied, 'Ie wy'n gobeithio', but felt very surprised. Thought she was more refined and delicate".

"D. J. Hughes came to tea. In evening I went to hear the drama at Maescanner. At the gate I farewelled with D.J.H., pressing him to remain single for some time yet. He said, 'until I'm 28'. I came out of meeting at 7 p.m. and went home, gathered a few books and made my parcel. Night very stormy and wet. Frank and Rachel came as far as the Box⁴⁵ with me, when I asked them to return, as I could then get along all right. Parting with Mam was affectionate. Dad, I thought, seemed sad which I accounted for by the story of William Pembre and the hay cutter. Left Llanelli 10.10 p.m.—ten in compartment. Reached Paddington 6.5 a.m."

"24-12-03. Kept on till 8 p.m. Then walked home. Lit fire and read paper. Thoughts wandered constantly to last Christmas, when I went home. Felt happy, although full of longings for the past—and regret a good deal. Sat up late, preparing to go to Walthamstow to spend my Christmas".

"25-12-03. After breakfast walked to Liverpool Street Station and went to Walthamstow by 10.52 train; arrived there about 11.30 a.m. Mr. Pennington and I went for a walk around Hale End and came back to dinner. Spent a very happy day. Played with children and sat up late. Stayed the night with them."

45. The Box Cemetery, burial ground for the borough of Llanelli.

"31-12-03. Finished at 8 p.m. Went home and lit fire. Stayed in all the evening. Very cold night. Thus endeth the year 1904. W.O."

"1-1-04. Had a New Year's card from Lettice Bowen".

"27-1-04. Very troublesome day at office. Stayed in during evening. Had letter from W. G. Beynon".

"26-2-04. Went to prayer meeting. Felt very lonely and despondent, for memories of old friends fully overcame me when praying. Mrs. Beaumont asked me to go out to breakfast".

"22-12-04. Fog on. Very few in sewing class and prayer meeting, but we had a hearty time. Miss Moses read and prayed; Mrs. Morgan Jones prayed also. Sent box of flowers to Sarah Jane Arthur.

1904 was the year of the Revival in Wales and the happenings there were of great interest to Free Churchmen generally and to Welsh people in particular.

"25-12-04. Sunday. Christmas morning. Got up about 9 and had breakfast. Went to Little Alie Street. We had a prayer meeting in morning. In afternoon, I went to Christ Church P.S.A.⁴⁶ Two persons spoke on the Welsh Revival. In the evening, I heard the Revd. Campbell Morgan speak—in lieu of a sermon—on the Welsh Revival. He spoke for upwards of an hour and I was much impressed by his earnest testimony to the reality of the Revival. No delivery of letters in London".

"31-12-04. Saturday. This is the last day of the year 1904. Beautifully fine day. I attended the Free Churches' meeting at Christ Church and heard the testimony of eyewitnesses of the Revival in Wales, among them Gipsy Smith,⁴⁷ Thomas Phillips (Norwich),⁴⁸ Elvet Lewis, Richard Roberts, Revd. Gregory Mantle, Dr. Campbell Morgan and Mr. Ewing. Dr. Munro Gibbon offered prayer. There was a good deal of fervour and a great effort to feel the presence of God. There was much singing throughout but in the evening the warmth of the afternoon meeting was not maintained and a great number—out of necessity or voluntarily—left before the finish. There were two women converts. I went straight to Westminster Chapel and a good number mustered and, headed by Dr. Campbell [Morgan]

46. The letters P.S.A. stand for Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. This popular movement was started by John Blackham in Birmingham in 1875. The Gospel message was combined with community singing and orchestral music and the meetings were held in halls or theatres in order to attract those who would not enter a church or chapel.

47. Gipsy Smith was of pure Romany descent and was born in a gipsy encampment. He became a world-famous evangelist.

48. Revd. Thomas Phillips (1868-1936), one of Britain's most popular preachers; minister at Norwich and Bloomsbury Chapel, London; Principal of the Baptist College, Cardiff, 1928-36.

and the Revd. Swift, we marched round a good district, bringing back with us a great number of people. Instead of the usual order of service Dr. Morgan held an evangelistic service, personal testimony of believers, prayer and voluntary singing being the order—something like the Welsh Revival I think. During the last twenty minutes of the Old Year from 40 to 50 came forward professing belief in Christ. A remarkable meeting—I wept and laughed with gladness and was thankful to God for the manifestation of His power."

"The year ends. Looking back, God has been wonderfully good to me. I am happier, more content, stronger in faith and willpower. Have sinned less than in former years but far too much and more than I should. But I thank God for all His benefits during 1904".

Bangor 1982.

The Heritage of Lletty Mawr

By THOMAS LLOYD

FEW people today hurrying through that quaintly named village of Upper Tumble on the busy road to Llanelli would have time to notice the little lane running off to the right, just beyond the junction of the Cross Hands and Drefach roads, which bears the name of Lletty Road. Far less are they likely to wonder what such name portends or what house, so clearly indicated, lies at its end. And even then a leisured traveller, with time to wander down and look, would like as not be disappointed, for though the house which gave this lane its name still stands, he may not spot it among the modern houses. For only an eye practised in the skill of seeking out old stones could see, beneath those bright green tiles and neat red chimney pots, the old stone walls that are the ancient house of Lletty Mawr.

The Thomas family of Lletty Mawr have left no mark on the stage of national affairs, nor, even locally, could one easily point to any monument to their industry and name; and yet they, as members of that great body of lesser gentry families (now all but vanished), were not without their place of importance in shaping locally the nature and the temper of their times and those that followed. This short essay then, in response to the recent *cri-de-coeur* of Major Francis Jones¹ aims to rescue from oblivion one more such family of whom by chance a few scant memories and last possessions remain of all that once represented and proudly proclaimed the name of Thomas. For such indeed is the measure of the times, when the finest portrait of a lordly ancestor lends him little surety now of the earthly immortality he so dearly craved, while all the rest is scattered and forgotten.

The ancestry of the Thomas family can be traced back to Elizabethan times to one Trahearne ap Thomas, recorded at Lletty Mawr in 1597. In keeping however with the aspirations of the last century, when future prospects were the brighter for a longer past, the family tried to push back the curtain of history and link their thread of ancestry to the brisker days of chivalrous medievalism and the iron race of armoured knights. The Thomas family believed they were descended from one Sir Hugh Trahearne who fought for England in that great battle of Poitiers in France in 1356 in the course of a campaign in which the famous Welsh longbow left its piercing mark.

1. *National Library of Wales Journal* 1981 (Summer): The Families of Blaiddbwl.

Sir Hugh's wife was a daughter of Sir Matthew ap Ellis of Overleigh near Chester and their son Owen married Matilda, daughter of Thomas Winstanley of Winstanley in Lancashire. Their son, another Ellis, married Isabel Colegreave, daughter of Roger, Lord of Hargreave, Tarvin and Tattenhall near Chester. He is recorded by William Camden as being alive in 1490 and it is this Ellis that the Thomas family claimed as forbear to Trahearne ap Thomas of Lletty Mawr.

He cannot on any count have been the father of Trahearne, as they may have thought, and there is in fact no evidence at all to connect this old Cheshire family with that of Lletty Mawr, save the linking name of Trahearne. The truth now cannot be known but the Thomases themselves never provided a credible link and thus the adoption of these ancestors and their coat of arms (bearing three herons to illustrate the name Trahearne) looks strongly to be no more than just that—an illicit, spurious but advantageous adoption, intended in the way that so many other families did as their lot improved, to give them added dignity and status.

Coincidentally—or in the light of the above perhaps not—the story goes that the Black Prince spent a night at Lletty Mawr during his Welsh campaign (the house stands right on the old Roman road), yet if one adds together all the nights that he and Henry VII and Cromwell are alleged to have slept in Wales, there would hardly have been time for any substantive history to have been performed at all and this particular attribution matches the family claims to ancient ancestry a little too closely, for not only do we find Sir Hugh fighting for the Black Prince in France but lo! he has actually slept in the house the family is later to occupy.

However that may be, we arrive in the world of fact with Trahearne ap Thomas, living at Lletty Mawr at the close of the reign of Elizabeth I. He had a son named Rhys, mentioned in a deed dated 1608 now in Cardiff, who in 1610 married Ellen daughter of John ap William of Mydfrwch in Glamorgan and his son Thomas born two years later married Margaret Bowen of Marchoglwyn, south-east of Pontyberem.

The old house of Marchoglwyn in which Margaret grew up still stands, a ruin clad in ivy, small and thick walled, a place as full of age and interest as the image of its marvellously evocative name conjures up in the imaginative mind, for Marchoglwyn means "the Grove of Knights". Before the house still stand two gaunt stone gateposts, tall sentinels, guarding their master's house and round the walls it is recorded that there once were carved a series of stone heraldic shields—perhaps still there even now, beneath the cloak of ivy. How small this little pile of rocks appears today, this knightly

hall where swords once hung and minstrels sang so long ago—no problem finding ancestors here! Behind the house, the grove itself still stands where Margaret Bowen played as a child nearly four centuries ago.

Thomas died in 1670 and was succeeded by his son, another Rhys, who married Sarah Powell of Pentreardd, a farm in the parish of Llanedy nearby. Their son, also Rhys (1680—1759,) likewise married locally—to Mary King of Mansant, a farm to this day near Kidwelly, and they produced a total of thirteen children, of whom three, among those that survived the perils of infancy, deserve mention in this record:—

- (i) Rhys, born in 1710, was the eldest son and in due course inherited Lletty Mawr upon his father's death. However, he never married and upon his death in 1777 Lletty Mawr passed to the next surviving son, David.
- (ii) David, mentioned above, was the fifth child born to Mary in seven years and his story is taken up below.
- (iii) Morgan the tenth child (born 1729) married Frances, daughter of Henry Goring of Frodley Hall, Staffordshire. Henry was clearly a man of action, since he had raised his own troop of horse to fight the Old Pretender in 1715. He had paid all the expenses for this himself but received not a penny of compensation from his ungrateful country and, thus impoverished, was forced to sell his estate in 1730. If Morgan therefore, with little hope of benefiting from any inheritance under his father's will, had been looking for a wealthy heiress, Frances Goring was clearly not the person to ensure him of his leisure. From such an inauspicious start however, there sprang from Morgan and Frances a family which long outstripped the senior branch of the Thomases and indeed still exists to this day.² Their son Rhys assumed the surname of Goring Thomas and settled down at Plas Llannon and Gelliwernen in Llannon (only a few miles from Lletty Mawr); his descendants were well known and respected members of the community, as may be recalled from the two contiguous streets in nearby Llanelli still known as Goring Road and Thomas Street

2. Morgan Thomas and indeed his son also took up the career of attorney in London. He was not without success in this profession, most notably acting for John Vaughan of Golden Grove in his attempts to clear the massive debts in his estates by means of breaking settlements and selling trust lands. The personal ambitions of Morgan in building up an estate for himself in Carmarthenshire are, however, quite evident in his dealings with Vaughan. (See "Vaughans of Golden Grove IV" by Major F. Jones, *Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymmrodorion*, 1966, Part I).

and the inn known as the Thomas Arms. His son, also Rhys Goring Thomas, became high sheriff of Carmarthenshire in 1830 and fathered yet another Rhys, who married Emily, the daughter of R. Janion Nevill of Llangennech. The high sheriff's youngest son, George Gilbert Treherne (1837—1923) was responsible for reviving the ancient family name by adopting the surname Treherne in place of Thomas; he became a distinguished local historian and was the first president of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society.³ In the last century the family embarked on plans to build a rather grander house at Gelliwernen, but the walls never rose beyond their builder's height before the red light of financial stringency held them back from the ruin that so many other families rashly consigned themselves to in heady flights of grandeur and rivalry.⁴ A recent Goring Thomas was to be found living in Henley-upon-Thames after the last war and rose to be Mayor of the town. Whether there was any ancestral link with the nearby town of Goring or whether this is mere coincidence is unknown.

To return to David, mentioned above, we find that in 1752 he had married Deborah Rhys of Brynmynydd, Llangendeirne and that, as a marriage settlement, his father had purchased for them the house and farm known as Llwydcoed, between Upper Tumble and Llannon, in which to live, Lletty Mawr then being something of a full house and never having been of any great size in any case. David's father had bought this property from the Stepney estate and it was recorded in the estate map book of 1721 as being of 221 acres and tenanted, by coincidence, by one David Thomas. Thomas Kitchin also marks it on his county map of 1755, under the disguise of Kevon Llwydcoet. This was therefore by no means a trifling acquisition and clearly marks the rising fortunes of the family.

3. Memories of his childhood in Carmarthenshire are published in *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, Vol. XIII, pp. 3-17.

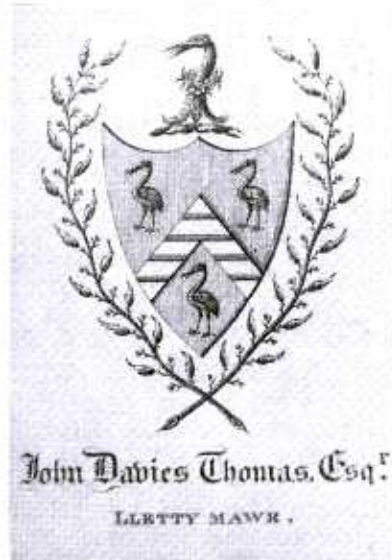
4. Gelliwernen was the scene of dramatic events during the Rebecca Riots of 1843. Rhys Goring Thomas was lay-impropriator of the parish tithes and his agent, a Mr. Edwards, in charge of the actual tithe collection was residing in the house at the time. On 1st August a mob arrived at the house, after breaking down the Llannon tollgate, and smashed in all the windows. Later in the month they returned, some 700 strong, this time with guns, and proceeded to fire at random at the house, breaking many windows. Poor Mr. Edwards was at the time upstairs ill in bed and in some considerable danger of being killed. After his daughter had bravely persuaded them to desist, they proceeded round to the garden, uprooted the apple trees and smashed the green-houses (see "*Rebecca and her daughters*", H. Tobit Evans, 1910).

on the map. Yet from this verge, as British armies marched to stunning victories across Europe, aided by the neighbouring genius of Sir Thomas Picton, at this almost triumphant moment, brought about through the endeavours of all those previous generations, all was lost. Young John died at Oxford in 1812 in the very flower of youth, aged 23. Not for him the glory in death that earned Picton a nation's proud salute, but an unsung demise and an ageing father burying his only son, the fame of Poitiers useless now in the wilderness of wasted hopes.

Almost as if by irony however Anne, the surviving daughter and a not inconsiderable heiress now, became in 1819 the wife of Thomas Lloyd of Bronwydd, an ancient and powerful Cardiganshire house whose owners held the rights and title to the Lord Marchership of Kemes, inherited from the Owens of Henllys and Lloyds of Penpedwast in Pembrokeshire and by this time the last surviving of these



John Thomas, Esq.
Lletty Mawr.



John Davies Thomas, Esq.
LLETTY MAWR.

ancient Norman lordships, the exact privileges of which (principally the right to appoint the mayor of the borough of Newport in Pembrokeshire) had become more than a little uncertain with the passage of time. Thomas Lloyd was high sheriff of Cardiganshire and deputy-lieutenant of the three counties now forming Dyfed. The eldest son of the marriage, Sir Thomas Davies Lloyd, was for many years the member of Parliament for Cardigan and received a baronetcy from the Queen: and thus it was that as the history of this family

of Thomas closed forever, so, through Anne, its final scion, the hopes and endeavours of all her ancestors found expression in honours of the highest rank, like the final twinkling of a burnt-out star, and with none of her own family alive to see it.

Sir Thomas Lloyd, no doubt with the aid of his mother's money, tore down the solid old house of Bronwydd and erected at great expense instead the towering Victorian sham castle which he felt more appropriate to his times and status and here rested the final possessions of the Thomas family. Yet no safe haven of refuge was this, for with the great social upheavals of the Great War era only two generations later, the vicissitudes of fortune now saw Bronwydd too a roofless ruin, the son and heir a tragic victim of the Somme, possessions scattered far and wide and memories grown dim. Lletty Mawr and Llywcoed were sold off with the demise of the estate.

Anne Lloyd lived to great age, dying in 1889, aged 93. Her life had spanned a great era of British history, one of her most cherished memories being a trip to London aged 20, to see the Duke of Wellington's victory parade after Waterloo. A curling photograph of her in old age still survives, as does the message which she desired be given to her grandchildren:

"Remember as our Lord said, 'Lo, I am with you always'."

And thus it was with the Thomas family, as with all families it always has been or one day will be.

NOTE: The two bookplates reproduced here are found in several books which passed to the Lloyds of Bronwydd upon the marriage of Anne Thomas to Thomas Lloyd. In due course, they were added to the fine library built up by their third son the Rev. Rhys Jones Lloyd, a notable Cardiganshire vicar, who died without issue and left most of his books to his nephew, Col. John Lloyd of Park Henry Dryslwyn, whose son Col. Audley Lloyd, brought them to Court Henry, which he had inherited from his aunts, where they now rest.

The books belonged first to the ill-fated John Davies Thomas, who fixed his bookplate to the inside cover. After his death, his father seems to have assumed ownership of them, as he glued his bookplate over his son's. In due course Rhys Jones Lloyd added his bookplate on top again and the earlier two only came to light recently. Neither are listed in Francis Green's list of Carmarthenshire Bookplates in the *Transactions of the West Wales Historical Society*, Vol. IV (1914) and only that of John Thomas, senior is found in Sir Evan Jones' great collection in the National Library, indicating how little time poor John Davies Thomas had to use them before his untimely demise.

The arms of the Thomases are an interesting example of heraldic punning or canting, as it is called, being based on their supposed ancient forbears, the Trahearnes, whose name is reflected in the three herons (or herns) and the heron crest. The arms on the right hand side of John Thomas' bookplate are those of his wife, being Davies impaling Morgan (her own maternal family).

Some Bygone Social Frictions

By E. VERNON JONES

FREQUENT in the Police Information Book of Carmarthen Borough for 1865-6 (Museum 647) deposited at Carmarthen County Record Office are cases of assault and threatening behaviour. That many of those who laid information signed their complaints with a mark suggests, not unexpectedly, that such behaviour was common only among the lower orders, though the record allows room to suspect that more respectable types were not entirely immune.

It is significant that such offenders were often butchers and ragmen or rag gatherers, which may mean that there was either a surfeit of these people or that they were more prone to berate anyone—sometimes their own kind—who roused their temper. That butchers should resort to violence, threatened or real, is perhaps, not surprising, since it appears that their trade required them to fill the role of slaughterman.

But this social disease spread wider. Among the accused stand a schoolmaster, a sawyer un intimidated by a boxer (albeit a probable tinworks employee rather than a pugilist) and more than a few women, one a 'professor of mesmerism' and another Amazon who baulked not at a yeoman.

Street parking and furious or careless driving in an age before the arrival of the motor vehicle seem unlikely but they were not unknown transgressions in 1865. The fiddlers and diddlers were as active then as they are now, the tollgate-keeper, for instance, being fair enough game for deception by such stratagems as paying for one horse instead of two or dishonestly declaring lime for agricultural use.

It is proper to point out that those informed against were not necessarily guilty and that the cases cited in the appended extract are only representative samples—reproduction *in toto* would have been repetitious—but, nevertheless, they serve to reveal some of the social frictions of the period.

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Extracts From The Police Information Book

1865

7th March. Anne Davies, wife of John Davies, Goose Street, Carmarthen, mason, complained that James Davies, Goose Street, labourer, did threaten

and declare that "he would by God finish her before he left the town" and from these and other threats . . . this complainant is afraid that he will do her some bodily injury and prays for Sureties of the Peace against him.

11th March. Rachel Edwards, wife of Richard Edwards, Quay Street, Carmarthen, mariner, complained that David Richards of Quay Street did unlawfully assault and beat her . . .

17th March. Evan Davies, Carmarthen, lessee of tolls complained that Henry Jones, Catherine Street, Carmarthen, pig dealer did unlawfully refuse to pay . . . the sum of two shillings and eleven pence the lawful toll payable in respect of thirty-five pigs brought to be sold at the Carmarthen Cattle Market of which the said Evan Davies is Lessee and Collector.

20th March. Margaret Lewis, wife of James Lewis, Catherine Street, Carmarthen, butcher complained that Elizabeth Lewis, wife of Thomas Lewis, Catherine Street, butcher did assault and beat her.

29th March. Francis Green*, St. Mary Street, Carmarthen, solicitor, complained that John William Hughes, late of Carmarthen, being then clerk to the said Francis Green, did receive and take into his possession for and on account of the said Francis Green his master the sum of five pounds in money and the same did feloniously and fraudulently embezzle.

8th June. John Lewis, Carmarthen, draper, complained that Thomas Lewis butcher, being a person able to work and thereby wholly to maintain himself and his family, did then and there wilfully neglect to do so whereby his wife and their two children whom he was then and there legally bound to maintain became chargeable to the Parish of St. Peter.

12th June. Thomas Fontaine, Water Street, Carmarthen, innkeeper complained that Henry Evans, St. Catherine Street, shoemaker did feloniously steal, take and carry away certain household furniture to wit one half drawers, one looking glass, one square table, one round table, three chairs, one tent bedstead, one bed and bedclothes and sundry other articles . . . of the said Thomas Fontaine.

13th June. William Nicholls, Bridge Street, Carmarthen, laborer complained that David Richards, Dame Street, laborer did hire and employ the said William Nicholls to serve him as a laborer at the wages of two shillings and sixpence per day . . . and that there is now due and owing to him . . . the sum of nine shillings and one penny half penny which amount the said David Richards refuses to pay . . .

John Quin, Castle Hill, Carmarthen, laborer, made a similar complaint against David Richards for refusing to pay eleven shillings and tenpence halfpenny wages due.

* Father of Francis Green, the noted antiquary, who was then a lad of eleven.

16th June. Samuel Kentish, Priory Street, Carmarthen, Superintendent Constable, complained that William Davies, Queen Street, commercial traveller, did wilfully cause an obstruction in a public footpath in . . . Queen Street by leaving a large number of casks . . .

17th June. James Fontaine the younger, of Water Street, Carmarthen, butcher, complained that Ellen Evans, wife of Henry Evans, St Catherine Street, shoemaker, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

23rd June. Samuel Kentish, Priory Street, Carmarthen, Superintendent Constable complained that Thomas Fontaine, Water Street, Innkeeper, . . . duly licensed to sell exciseable liquors by retail in his house . . . and the day being Sunday did unlawfully open his said house for the sale of beer before half past twelve o'clock in the afternoon of the said day to wit, at ten minutes past three o'clock in the morning contrary to the Statute . . . did . . . sell to two females a certain quantity of beer, to wit two quarts of beer, the same not being then sold as refreshment for travellers.

29th June. Wearn Rickard of the National School, schoolmaster, complained that John Lovell and David Morgan James both of Water Street did unlawfully steal . . . a quantity of apples, gooseberries and currants of the value of one shilling, the property of the said Wearn Rickard . . . growing in a certain garden . . . in the occupation of the said Wearn Rickard.

7th July. John Williams of the Bridge Gate, Carmarthen, toll collector, complained that John Evans, Penlan, labourer, did resist or make forcible opposition against . . . John Williams . . . in the execution of the Act 3rd George 4th Chapter 126 by hindering him from distraining on certain horses in respect of which toll was imposed.

A similar complaint was laid against William Williams of the County Gaol, turnkey.

The same day John Evans, Penlan complained that John Williams, toll collector did unlawfully assault and beat him.

8th July. Hannah Davies, wife of James Davies, Island Row, Carmarthen, tailor, complained that Mary Lewis, wife of Benjamin Lewis, Island Row, sawyer, did threaten and declare that she would "by God pull her intestines out" . . . and prays for sureties of the peace against her.

18th July. David Morris, Jackson's Lane, Carmarthen, Police Constable, complained that Charles Regan, Kidwelly fadh did ride furiously a certain horse in Goose Street so as to endanger the lives and limbs of passengers . . .

25th July. Roger Lester, Furnace Lodge, Carmarthen, gentleman, complained that John Jones, Charles Davies, David Howells and David Morgan did unlawfully steal . . . a quantity of apples of the value of one shilling . . . growing in a certain garden . . . in the occupation of the said Roger Lester.

26th July. Charles Elias, Kidwelly fach, complained that Margaret Elias wife of John Elias, Kidwelly fach, engine driver, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

27th July. Joseph Morris, Quay Street, Carmarthen, innkeeper, complained that Benoni Davies, Bull Lane was unlawfully drunk in . . . Quay Street and while so drunk was guilty of riotous conduct.

2nd August. Evan Davies, lessee of tolls, complained that David Rees, Tenby did sell and expose for sale at or near the Quay and not in the Market Place nor his own dwelling house, shop or premises certain fish.

5th August. William Thomas, Priory Street, Carmarthen, boxer, complained that James Hughes, Priory Street, sawyer, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

12th August. John Thomas, Priory Street, Carmarthen, printer, complained that William Harries Thomas, Priory Street, printer did threaten to stab him with a knife . . . and prays for sureties of the peace against him.

14th August. John Jones, Penycnw, Abergwili complained that John Jones, Catherine Street, Carmarthen, pig drover, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

17th August. Thomas Evans, Waundew, Carmarthen, Police Constable, complained that Daniel Williams, Aberdare, Glamorgan, shopkeeper, did drive furiously a certain carriage or cart in King Street so as to endanger the lives and limbs of passengers . . .

1st September. Mary Jones, Llanllwch, schoolmaster [sic], complained that George Edmunds, Llanllwch Farm, schoolmaster, did unlawfully assault and beat her. [Mary Jones signed her complaint with a mark].

4th September. George Davies, The Old Priory, Carmarthen, hammerman, complained that William Williams, The Old Priory, laborer, did threaten and declare that "by the devil" he would "thrash him" . . . and prays for sureties of the peace against him.

21st September. Samuel Kentish, Priory Street, Carmarthen, Superintendent of Police, complained that Thomas Thomas, Narberth, wool dresser, did drive furiously a certain horse and car in Lammas Street . . .

25th September. David Edwards, Blue Street, Carmarthen, marine store dealer, complained that Benoni Davies, Bull Lane, hawkler, was unlawfully drunk in . . . Dark Gate . . . and guilty of riotous conduct.

The same day David Edwards complained that Gwennlian Davies, wife of Benoni Davies, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

30th September. Samuel Kentish, Superintendent Constable, complained that James Fontaine the younger, Water Street, Carmarthen, butcher did

slaughter or dress two sheep for sale in a place within the limits of the Carmarthen Market Act 1853 and not in the slaughter house provided by the Corporation . . .

9th October. Eliza Headon, wife of Thomas Headon, Priory Street, Carmarthen, ganger, complained that Jane Henderson, wife of ——— Henderson, Duke Yard, sailor, did threaten and declare "that she would by God, be her murderer" . . . and prays for sureties of the peace . . .

14th October. David Jones, Little Water Street, Carmarthen complained that Maragaret Lewis, Saint Catherine Street, single woman, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

21st October. Howell Howells, King Street, Carmarthen, one of the Overseers of the Poor, complained that Daniel Williams, Dame Street, tinman did run away from the parish of St Peter whereby his wife and their two children became and still are chargeable to the parish . . .

21st October. Evan Davies, lessee of tolls, complained that John Evans, Bankyddaitir, Llanfihangel Rhosycorn, farmer, did . . . expose to sale in . . . Blue Street and not in the Market place or his own dwelling house, shop or premises certain live fowls . . .

24th October. Rollins Davies, Water Street, Carmarthen, shoemaker, complained that Richard Jones, Water Street, police constable did unlawfully assault and beat him.

16th November. Samuel Kentish, Priory Street, Carmarthen, Superintendent of Police, complained that Timothy Manning, St Catherine Street, rag gatherer, did ride furiously in St Catherine Street a certain pony so as to endanger the lives and limbs of passengers . . .

A similar complaint was laid against Dennis Sullivan, St Catherine Street, rag gatherer.

16th November. Evan Bowen, Bynea, Llanelly, railway inspector, complained that Thomas Harries, Velinisaf, Llanddarog did unlawfully and wilfully obstruct . . . Evan Bowen . . . in the execution of his duty [as an inspector of the Llanelly Railway and Dock Company] upon a certain railway . . . by . . . pushing and striking him.

A similar complaint was laid against George Evans, New Lodge, Llanarthney.

17th November. Mary Leary, wife of James Leary, Kidwelly fach, laborer, complained that Ann Fewins, wife of John Fewins, Kidwelly fach, plate-layer, did threaten and declare that "she would rip her open and twist her intestines round her fingers" . . . and prays for sureties of the peace . . .

20th November. Mary Henkin, Priory Street, Carmarthen, spinster, complained that David Beynon, Priory Street, nailer, did threaten and declare that he "would knock her brains out with a hammer" . . .

24th November. Eliza Jones, Pentrepoth, Carmarthen, complained that John Jones, Pentrepoth, painter, did threaten and declare that "he would run her through with a poker" . . .

24th November. Samuel Kentish, Superintendent of Police, complained that Hannah Davies, wife of James Davies, Island Row, tailor, did feloniously steal . . . a certain piece of print of the value of thirty shillings of the goods of one John Davies.

25th November. Jane Wilcox, Dame Street, Carmarthen, widow, complained that Mary Thomas, Dame Street, single woman, did wilfully and maliciously commit damage, injury and spoil to a . . . certain window the property of . . . Jane Wilcox by breaking seven panes of glass . . .

5th December. Margaret Phillips, St Catherine Street, Carmarthen, widow, complained that Thomas, son of David Lewis, Fare dealer, and William, son of Thomas Bevan, laborer, both of St Catherine Street, did wilfully and maliciously commit damage, injury and spoil to a certain Iron Boiler the property of Margaret Phillips by breaking or making a hole therein . . .

27th December. Thomas Evans, Waundew, police constable, complained that Rachel Mathias, wife of John Mathias, Rhydygwiel, Llanarthney, laborer, did wilfully interrupt and cause an obstruction in a certain public crossing or footpath leading from Guildhall Square to Dark Gate . . . by leaving a horse and cart thereon.

1866

13th January. Howell Howells, King Street, Carmarthen, grocer, one of the Overseers of the Poor, complained that William Phillips, Water Street, sawyer, being a person able to work and thereby in part to maintain himself and his family did . . . wilfully neglect so to do, whereby his wife Mary and their five children . . . became chargeable to the parish . . .

27th January. Edward Joseph, Mansel Street, Carmarthen, printer, complained that Miss Pole, Blue Street, professor of mesmerism, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

Joseph laid similar complaints against Coulson Smith, James Leonard, and John Stewart, all of Blue Street.

27th January. Howell Howells, grocer, complained that Thomas Lewis, butcher, being a person able to work and thereby wholly to maintain himself and his family did . . . wilfully neglect to do so . . .

1st February. Samuel Kentish, Superintendent of Police, complained that a breach of the provisions of the Salmon Fishery Act 1861 had been committed by some unknown person or persons and that salmon illegally taken is now lying on the premises of the Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway at Carmarthen . . .

2nd February. Samuel Kentish complained that Richard Mansfield, Birmingham, hawk, did expose to sale at . . . Dark Gate and not in the Market Place . . . certain fancy goods.

15th February. George Terry, John Street, Carmarthen, victualler, complained that Thomas Henry Moody, King Street, butcher, did threaten to "take his guts out and knock his soul out" . . .

21st February. The Rev. Latimer Maurice Jones, clerk [vicar of St. Peter's] complained that Mrs. Rees, wife of Morgan Rees, Maesycrigie Arms, and David Richards, Priory Street did break up and damage certain property in Priory Street . . . doing injury to the amount of five shillings.

2nd March. John Jeremy, Tanderdy, glover, complained that Thomas Thomas, Narberth, fellmonger, did unlawfully assault and beat him.

3rd March. Samuel Kentish complained that George Isaac Shepherdson, St. Peter Street, Carmarthen did wilfully cause an obstruction in . . . Saint Peter Street by leaving . . . two tables, four chairs and a mattress.

10th March. Owen Jones, manager of the Tinworks, Carmarthen, as agent for Thomas Lester & Company, complained that James Jenkins, The Tin Works, refiner, being . . . employed by . . . Thomas Lester and Company . . . was . . . guilty of certain ill behaviour by . . . refusing to work and absenting himself from his service for the space of seven days without the consent of . . . his masters and with just cause or lawful excuse.

24th March. John Jones, Carmarthen, seaman, complained that Thomas Weyman, Carmarthen, master mariner, did unlawfully neglect or refuse to pay him . . . the sum of eight pounds nine shillings and four pence, being the amount of wages justly due to him for services performed as a seaman on board the schooner Alfred & Emma . . .

9th April. David Williams, Water Street, Carmarthen, police sergeant, complained that Evan Jones, Clynelwyd, Llangelet, farmer, being the driver and owner of a certain cart . . . did . . . ride upon the cart in St Mary Street not having . . . any other person to guide the same and the said cart not being such an one as is driven with reins conducted by some person holding the reins of the horse drawing the same.

12th April. William Lewis Morris, St. Peter Street, Carmarthen, tinman, complained that William Evans, Waterloo Terrace, being an apprentice to . . . William Lewis Morris . . . upon whose binding out no premium was paid . . . was guilty of a . . . misdemeanour by . . . absconding from . . . service without consent and without just cause.

12th April. Evan Horatio Nelson Davies, Carmarthen, ship owner, complained that William Williams, Evan Evans and John Williams of Carmar-

then, being seamen and having been lawfully engaged to serve on board a certain brig called the Village Belle on a voyage from Carmarthen to Ardrossan did unlawfully neglect and refuse to proceed in the said ship.

14th April. Ann Shamby, wife of Mr Shamby, Dame Street, Carmarthen, laborer, complained that David Jones, Dame Street, butcher, did unlawfully assault and beat her.

14th April. Samuel Kentish complained that James Edwards, Priory Street, weaver, did unlawfully assault and beat one Charles Davies, an infant under the age of seven years.

30th June. The Guardians of the Carmarthen Union by John Evans, relieving officer, complained that Henry Thomas, Old Tan Yard, Johnstown, mason, is indebted unto the said Guardians in divers sums of money amounting in the whole to the sum of sixteen shillings . . . paid on account of his wife . . . as relief by way of loan from time to time . . . within one year . . . which sum the said Henry Thomas refuses and neglects to pay.

28th June. Robert Slater, Millbank, Carmarthen, yeoman complained that Eliza Williams, King Street did unlawfully assault and beat him . . .

7th July. John Evans, King Street, Carmarthen, relieving officer, complained that Catherine Lloyd was on the 13th February legally removed from the parish of St Peter when she . . . was then actually chargeable to the parish of Llanfihangel-ar-arth . . . by an order . . . of Her Majesty's Justices . . . for Carmarthen bearing date 13th August 1860 but which order was suspended by reason of the sickness of . . . Catherine Lloyd until 2nd January 1866 and that [she] hath since her removal . . . on or about 13th February last returned to the parish of St Peter and did on 14th April last become chargeable to the common fund of the said Union she . . . not having joined any settlement therein and not having produced any certificate of the churchwardens and overseers of any other parish, township or place thereby acknowledging her to be settled therein, contrary to the Statute.

13th August. John Williams, Francis Well Gate, Carmarthen, toll collector, complained that Evan Davies, Tywrthyreglwys, Llanfihangel-ar-arth, farmer, did receive from some person unknown, such person not being the collector of tolls at the gate called Francis Well Gate, a certain note or ticket issued at the said gate, with intent . . . to evade the payment of the toll to wit the sum of fourpence . . .

31st August. Robert Wade, Temple Gardens, Carmarthen, inspector of nuisances, complained that James Griffiths, St Peter Street, brewer, being the owner and occupier of certain outhouses . . . in St Peter Street did . . . in the said premises keep certain swine . . . which are nuisance to persons living in the neighbourhood . . .

4th September. John Williams, toll collector complained that James Davies, Conwil Elvet, farmer, did pass through . . . Francis Well Gate . . . without paying the toll to wit the sum of eight pence . . . in respect of a certain cart drawn by two horses . . .

6th September. John Williams, toll collector, complained that John Jones, Abergwilly, labourer, did claim the benefit of an exemption from the toll, to wit the sum of fourpence . . . payable at . . . Francis Well Gate in respect of a cart drawn by one horse . . . [by] fraudulently pretending that the the lime in the said cart was for agricultural purposes whereas such was not the fact . . .

7th September. William Wonnacott, Guildhall Square, Carmarthen, provision merchant, complained that Thomas Hoskins, The Mount, Carmarthen, labourer, did cruelly beat . . . a horse by . . . violently beating the same with a stick.

16th September. Henry Lawrence, Johnstown, toll collector, complained that William Manning, Birmingham, hawker, after having passed through . . . Royal Oak Gate . . . on a turnpike road leading to St. Clears with a certain carriage or caravan drawn by one horse and having paid . . . the toll . . . in respect of such carriage or caravan drawn by one horse only did afterwards . . . put another horse to the said carriage or caravan . . . whereby the payment of part of the toll, to wit the sum of 4½d . . . was . . . evaded.

26th September. John Williams, Francis Well Gate, Carmarthen, toll collector, complained that John Jenkins, Tynant, Abergwilly did unlawfully assault and beat him.

Guardians of the Needy Found Wanting

A Study in Social Division during the Industrial Crisis of 1926

By DAVID JAMES DAVIES, B.A.

THESE is a plethora of local studies of the General Strike and mining dispute of 1926 yet, as a reviewer of the spate of books, which appeared to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Strike, was moved to point out, studies of attitudes towards events in rural areas are apparently few and far between.¹ It is impossible to discuss the history of the General Strike at the national level in any detail here. For our purpose it is sufficient to mention that the miners were locked out on the 1 May 1926 when they refused to accept a cut in pay. The General Council of the T.U.C. called for a 'partial' national stoppage on Monday, 3 May 1926. This 'general' strike lasted nine days from 3 to 12 May. The deadlock was broken by Sir Herbert Samuel, acting entirely as a private citizen and negotiating in secret with the TUC leaders. When the miners refused his proposed basis for the renewal of negotiations the TUC leadership called off the General Strike. The miners' strike went on for another six months until they were forced to return to work on the owners' terms by the lash of hunger.

As far as attitudes in Carmarthenshire in 1926 were concerned, these are best studied within the Poor Law context. The reasons for this will become apparent as this study unfolds. To begin with, however, although this is anticipating, it is necessary to take issue with writers, such as Paul Jeremy, who imply that because most of the poor law unions controlled by Independent majorities in South Wales—Carmarthen and Llandeilo-Fawr included—were located in the rural or semi-rural parts of the coalfield their history is less interesting and worthy of only incidental mention because the numbers involved were so much smaller.²

It is hoped to show later how the unique socio-economic characteristics of eastern Carmarthenshire and the Amman Valley in

1. T. Mason 'The General Strike', *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History*, 33 (1976), p.55.
2. P. Jeremy, 'Life on Circular 703: the Crisis of Destitution in the South Wales Coalfield During the Lockout' of 1926', *Llafur* 2(2) 1977, p.69.

the 1920s were instrumental in affecting the response of the Guardians concerned towards the mining communities in their area. In fact Carmarthen and Llandeilo-Fawr provide good examples of a situation in many of the semi-rural Welsh Unions where scales operated at considerably lower levels than those of Ministry of Health Circular 703, which was circulated to all the Boards of Guardians in England and Wales in early May, and set out the scales of relief to be paid to strikers' families.³ Although not quite as bad as Pontypool, the Carmarthen and Llandeilo Boards were just as ruthless in their own way.⁴ They are good examples of rural boards controlled by Independents largely made up of small farmers, though a surviving remnant of the aristocracy could make its voice heard in the case of Llandeilo.

Mention of Circular 703 is a reminder of the need to briefly outline the way in which the Poor Law system in 1926 was still closely modelled on the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which had been devised to cope with the poor in a totally different age. The Victorian age attempted to drive home the 'stigma of pauperism', which found its embodiment above all in the workhouse and the family test. The failure of an individual to find work was a moral one unrelated to any economic causes. It was for such individuals that the 'workhouse test' was devised: relief was only to be issued in a workhouse and conditions were to be made so unpalatable inside these places that 'malingerers' would be forced to find work. Nevertheless, in practice, out-relief, that is relief paid to the recipient in his home, was common after 1834 although it was doled out in small enough amounts to make sure that the recipients remained poorer than those in work. The system was administered by Boards of Guardians, who were responsible for areas made up of combined parishes to form Unions.

By the 1920s a degree of humanity had entered into the Poor Law's treatment of the needy as far as the elderly, the sick, children and widows were concerned, but the massive unemployment which followed the post-war boom brought a difficult problem to the fore as far as the administrators were concerned. The question was whether the long-term unemployed were now to undergo the tradit-

3. See P. Ryann, 'The Poor Law in 1926', M. Morris, *The General Strike* (1976), p.367.

4. In early November the Pontypool Board of Guardians scrapped all outdoor relief to strikers and were only persuaded by a Ministry of Health Inspector to reintroduce the 5/- scale for wives and 2/- scale for children after 500 angry miners had marched on the Board's Offices. —P. Jeremy, *loc.cit.*

ional tests of destitution or whether some other policy should be adopted. In 1921 the Ministry of Health tried to face up to this problem by informing Boards of Guardians that relief could be given but it 'should of necessity be calculated on a lower scale than the earnings of the independent labourer who is maintaining himself by his labour'.⁵ Thus, at a painfully slow pace, was the Poor Law Act of 1834 adjusted to modern conditions.

As far as poor relief to strikers was concerned Circular 703, which may be found reprinted in the *Western Mail*, Wednesday, May 12 1926, cannot be understood without serious consideration of its immediate antecedent. This was the Merthyr Tydfil judgement of 1900, which, in 1926, complicated an already confused situation with regard to the question of poor relief to strikers. The Merthyr Tydfil judgement was a legal ruling made in the Court of Appeal which was the result of the suing, by some South Wales coalowners, of the Merthyr Tydfil Board of Guardians for giving relief to striking miners. The judge, Lord Linley, had ruled that a Board of Guardians was not to give relief to strikers although they would be justified in giving relief to their dependents. Circular 703 reminded Boards of Guardians that there were limitations on their freedom of manoeuvre imposed by the Merthyr judgement.⁶ Not much stress has been laid on the fact, however, that it was possible to use the loophole whereby women were not regarded as subject to a labour test and hence increased relief could be paid to them. Thus the Merthyr Tydfil judgement made unconditional relief even easier than it would otherwise have been, especially in the revised form in which it appeared in Circular 703 in 1926.⁷

This legal loophole was a mandate for humanitarianism which many Boards in England and Wales, of widely differing political complexions, had chosen to subscribe to.⁸ The Carmarthenshire Guardians did not, and even on a strictly legalistic interpretation of Circular 703 many of their actions will be seen to have been of dubious legality to say the least. This wilful insensitivity to the very real suffering in their midst was not due to any political considerations relating directly to the General Strike as such, but by a way of thinking about industrialism, and its politics, which was conditioned by the unique social and economic background of eastern Carmarthen-

5. Parliamentary Papers, 1921, Vol. XIII, Ministry of Health Circular 240, to Boards of Guardians on Poor Relief to Unemployed persons. Quoted by P. Ryann, *loc.cit.*, p.359.
6. M. E. Rose, *The English Poor Law 1780-1930* (1971), p.302.
7. Rose, *ibid.*
8. P. Ryann, *loc.cit.*, p.360.

shire and the Amman Valley in the 1920s. This background will provide us with the key to the behaviour of the rural Boards of Carmarthenshire in 1926. First, however, this must be sketched in.

The whole of the east Carmarthenshire and Amman Valley region underwent a brief period of rapid and intensive industrialization in the post-1918 period. From about the 1870s to 1914 anthracite coal had been exploited on a very small scale. Many mines were owned by small farmers who drove drifts and levels into the hillsides and who employed the services of a mining engineer. More significant, from the point of view of this study, is the fact that, as James Griffiths has pointed out, 'When, from the eighteen seventies, the coal industry expanded . . . it was from the countryside in Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire that the new men came. Their nicknames, like Shoni Cardi and Twm Llandyfri, revealed their origin. The multitude of David Joneses revealed the essential Welsh character of the anthracite worker'.⁹ Because of the scattered nature of production 'the mines were sufficiently small for recruitment to be limited to the immediate locality'. The owner would know his men intimately and the chances were he would have attended the same elementary school, Sunday school and continued to go to the same chapel.

In such a context as the 1920s, however, all good things had to come to an end and 'the paternal relationship between workers and owners . . . was destroyed by the amalgamation of firms between the wars'.¹⁰ Concurrent with this amalgamation was a tendency for the anthracite export trade to shift from Llanelli and Port Talbot to Swansea.¹¹ From the point of view of our story it is important to note however that though 'the number of men employed in the counties of Brecon and Carmarthen . . . fairly steadily declined over the whole period from 1923-38' the period 1923-26 may be regarded as the peak of production in the western half of the anthracite coalfield, which took in the eastern Carmarthenshire and the Amman Valley region. It is only after 1926 that an absolute decline set in and 'from 1929 to 1935 the output from Carmarthen and Brecon declined by nearly 15 per cent, whilst the output from the eastern

9. J. Griffiths, '*Glo-Carreg: Memories of the Anthracite Coalfield*', *The Carmarthenshire Historian* 1968, pp.9-10.
10. T. Brennan, E. W. Cooney, H. Pollins, *Social Change in South West Wales* (1954), p.58.
11. A. E. C. Hare, *The Anthracite Coal Industry of the Swansea District* (1940). See also D. J. Williams 'Output Variation and Migration of Mining Intensity within the Western Half of the South Wales Coalfield (excluding Pembroke)', *Proceedings of the South Wales Institute of Engineers*, vol. XLVIII (1932).

section of the anthracite field was continually increasing to a record high level in 1935'.¹²

What was the direct relationship of all this to the behaviour of the Carmarthenshire Guardians in 1926? The first thing that may be said is that eastern Carmarthenshire was going through an industrial boom period, which had just reached or passed its peak in the period 1925-26. The over-riding anxiety of the indigenous farming population was that there should not be, as one ex-miner put it, a 'brutal industrialization of the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys and the countryside of east Carmarthen'.¹³ The fact that the boom period had reached its turning point in 1926 and that things were to work out differently with the closure of small mines and migration eastwards, was not readily appreciated by the population of east Carmarthenshire at the time, particularly the small farmer-dominated Boards of Guardians. These held no reasons to love the miners, and their actions in 1926 were dictated more by the complex socio-economic conditions which prevailed locally than by any directions that emanated from the central authority.

To add to this complexity, however, there was another development of equal importance. As the writer of the first significant synthesis of modern Welsh history has pointed out, the 1914-18 War had brought far-reaching changes in the Welsh countryside. The demand for agricultural produce spiralled and 'brought renewed prosperity to the upland farms of mid and west Wales . . . more money circulated in the farming community than ever before; rural banks did immense business'.¹⁴

Concurrent with this, and serving only to enhance the arrogance of the new men of the freehold farming community and to increase their numbers, was the accelerated break-up of the great landed estates, with sales becoming a flood in the 1918-22 period. These included the Abergavenny estates in Monmouthshire, the Bodclwyn estates in Denbighshire, those of the Powells in Cardiganshire, the Beauforts in Breconshire and of course the Cawdors of Carmarthenshire.¹⁵ This 'green revolution' was born of unprecedented economic prosperity on the part of the freeholders and the concomitant decline of the squirearchy. Fortunately its consequences in the field of local government were to be short-lived and make the assertion that 'Henceforth the countryside was to become the domain of the freeholding

12. A. E. C. Hare, *ibid.*, p.12.

13. T. H. Griffiths, *Welsh Outlook* 1927, p.250.

14. K. O. Morgan, *The Rebirth of a Nation: a History of Wales 1880-1980* (1981), p.170.

15. See J. Davies, 'The End of the Great Estates and the Rise of Freehold Farming in Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 7(2) 1974.

farmer' appear little more than hyperbole.¹⁶ This 'domination' was to be literally strangled in its infancy by the Local Government Act of 1929, which transferred important functions to the County Councils, among them those of the abolished Boards of Guardians. Yet even a bawling infant is capable of wreaking much damage if it is so minded: and the new freehold farmer class had time enough in the 1920s to do plenty of damage to the social fabric of the countryside of which they were briefly overlords. The case of Carmarthenshire will be seen to be a classic illustration of this.

So much, at this stage, for the attitude of the rural Guardians towards the mining communities under their 'care'. Detailed illustration to back up the general propositions regarding this attitude will be produced very shortly. For the moment let us consider the Carmarthenshire anthracite miner and his environment. How 'rural' was this environment and how did it determine his attitude to the primitive social policy of his time, which largely took the form of Poor Law relief?

The correlation between environment and social consciousness in south-west Wales was particularly well defined and has been summed up the following way: '[The] west Wales anthracite coalfield . . . had remained relatively thriving since the war and its peaceable Welsh-speaking miners—men very much in the mould of James Griffiths—seemed more tranquil than their comrades in the eastern valleys with their high rate of immigration from England'.¹⁷ Also, as far as the 1920s were concerned, the whole of the mining population were only second generation industrial workers. What this meant in day to day terms was that 'life is much slower and more free and easy than is to be expected in an industrial area; it is not uncommon for a miner to be a small-holder or to own a public house'.¹⁸ Then there was the problem of how 'to train them in the disciplined ways of industry . . . [and to get them] to work a correct number of shifts in the week . . . [all of which were] signs of a rural approach to work not yet adapted to new conditions'.¹⁹

The sum total of what should be by now the obvious correlation between the environment and the social consciousness of the anthracite miner was that, as a contemporary put it, it helped 'the miner to maintain his very independent outlook on life . . . As the last

16. K. O. Morgan, *op.cit.*, p.172.

17. Morgan, *ibid.*, p.283.

18. Brennan, *ibid.*, p.16. Cf. the statement of a contemporary ex-anthracite miner: 'Many of them [the miners] have the proverbial' three acres and a cow' and a larger number still own their own villas and dwelling houses'. T. H. Griffiths, *loc.cit.*, p.24.

19. T. Brennan, *op.cit.*, p.17.

few years have proved he will stand for social justice as he conceives it'.²⁰ Whatever course subsequent developments took, in 1926 this sturdy independence on the part of the anthracite miner represented to the farming community a social challenge.

As was pointed out earlier these small farmers were the latter-day replacements of the squirearchy which had dominated the countryside from the 16th down to the close of the 19th century, and until the Local Government Act of 1929, they were able to exert a strong influence on the lives and well-being of many of the rest of the community. Dependence on the Poor Law for the anthracite miner would have been a more humiliating experience than for his counterparts in the rest of the South Wales coalfield. The social challenge that the miner represented resulted in conduct on the part of the rural Guardians in 1926 which bordered on malice. It is important to bear in mind that, until very recently, the anthracite miners and the Guardians had been independent of each other, but when a one-way relationship of dependency was established between them, it was inevitable that this antipathy on the part of the rural element should have come to a head and found appropriate expression. It is to the detailed consideration of this that we must now turn, with the case of Llanelly being discussed briefly to provide a contrast with the actions of the rural Boards.

The first thing that may be said is that even the most superficial examination of such evidence as survives establishes beyond all doubt that the behaviour of the rural Boards was unequivocally discreditable. It is not necessary to hold—to use a phrase which was much in vogue in the editorials of the time—'socialistic leanings' to appreciate how mealy-mouthed was the behaviour of the men who controlled the dispensation of Poor Law relief in the rural and rural-cum-industrial areas of Carmarthenshire and the Amman Valley. When the authority of the central government was invoked it was usually only in order to buttress positions which had already been taken up for reasons connected with narrow self-interest at the local level. Indeed, the Guardians were prepared to take a very flexible view of the law and even bend it to breaking point when it suited them. In Carmarthenshire—unusual as an industrialized area in the 1920s, where support for the Strike was on the whole not very strong—it was the strength of local autonomy which gravely threatened the morale of working class communities in 1926, not the Chamberlainite 'oppressors' of central authority.²¹

20. T. H. Griffiths, *loc.cit.*

21. Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) was Minister of Health in Baldwin's Conservative Government of 1924-29.

Of the two rural Boards in the county, Carmarthen had a far worse record with regard to the payment of outdoor relief to the families of locked-out miners in 1926. This Board held its meetings at fortnightly intervals and the details of its first meeting after the outbreak of the General Strike were reported in the local press on May 14. At this meeting they had to decide on a scale of relief and Circular 703 was read out. Although much was to be made later on by this Board about the necessity for toeing the line with regard to Ministry of Health directives, the Carmarthen Board ignored the recommendation in Circular 703 to pay 12/- a week to the wife of a locked-out miner and 4/- for each child.²² At a subsequent meeting, one person on the Board described the relief paid as 'amazingly inadequate' and proposed that it be increased from the pre-May 1 rate of 10s and 2s to that recommended by Circular 703.²³ The result of this was to provoke one farmer into stating a position which was to be held by the majority of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians throughout the Strike: Who is the poor-man today, he asked. It is the little farmer who sells what he produces at much less money than he used to get . . . Such men do not come to the Guardians but fight their own battles and suffer in silence.²⁴

The motion to increase relief was amended by a proposition to reduce relief for the wife of a miner with children from the pre-strike rate of 10/- to 7/6 and this was carried by a majority.²⁵ As for the wives of miners without children, the Chairman of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians, a worthy man, put the matter in the following perspective: 'If they have not brought up children they should have saved . . . If they have not they should suffer.'²⁶ The person who had attempted to get the level of relief raised up to the Circular 703 scale was shouted down when he tried to raise the awkward question of why, as the Relieving Officer had confided to him in private before the meeting, it had been already decided secretly beforehand to withhold relief from miners' wives who had no children, while officially maintaining a pretence of 'treating each case on its merits'.²⁷

A fortnight later a deputation of miners was received from the Pontyates and District Sub-Area Distress Committee, a spokesman of which pointed out that the area from which he came was 'up in

22. *The Celtic News*, May 14, 1926. Hereafter *C.N.*

23. *The Carmarthen Journal*, June 11, 1926. Hereafter *C.J.*

24. *ibid.*

25. *ibid.*

26. *ibid.*

27. *ibid.*

arms' over a decision by the Board to deduct relief in cases where a miner, who had a family, received food vouchers from the Distress Committee. He described such action as 'callous and absolutely indefensible'.²⁸ Of course they got nowhere. It was revealed at a later meeting that, with dependents taken into account, the Pontyates Distress Committee represented possibly as many as four thousand people.²⁹

By August 20, the knives were really out. One member proposed that the miners' dependents be put on the same level as the local workhouse inmates. His motion was put to the meeting 'and on a show of hands was carried by a large majority'.³⁰ The same person, not content with this, then said, 'I make a further notice of motion to reduce the relief still more'; he wanted to put the wives of miners on a level below that regarded as appropriate for paupers.³¹ While the first motion was being discussed one of the very few members of the Carmarthen Board who was sympathetic to the miners pointed out that 'not a single penny had been spent by them on boots for the children'.³² The Carmarthen Board of Guardians were not prepared to issue boots even on the undertaking that the cost of the boots was to be deducted from relief. Such was the antipathy of the small farmer to the fairly recently established mining communities under their care. The Chairman of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians was a moderate man, but he was unable to exercise any real influence on the decisions taken. Nevertheless, even if in an antiquated manner, he summed up the situation well in saying that he could 'not understand the attitude of the farmers to the miners. They had a good harvest before them and Providence had been very kind to them'.³³

Even the Llandilo-Fawr Guardians came out better than this. During the lockout they issued two hundred pairs of boots to the children of miners, largely in the Ammanford area. What is more significant, they decided that 'the cost of the boots with that for food was not to exceed the scale prescribed by the Ministry of Health'.³⁴ That is, in cases where boots were not provided, the

28. *C.N.*, June 25, 1926.

29. *C.N.*, November 12, 1926.

30. *C.N.*, August 20, 1926.

31. *ibid.*

32. *ibid.*

33. *ibid.*

34. Llandilo-Fawr Board of Guardians Minute Book, 2 September 1922-29 August 1929, pp.380, 414, (Dyfed County Record Office, Carmarthen); *Amman Valley Chronicle and East Carmarthen News*, July 8, 1926. Hereafter A.V.C.E.C.N.

policy of the Llandilo-Board was to pay 2/6d for each dependent child, as opposed to the Circular 703 scale of 4/-. Where boots were provided, the *total value* of relief for one child, that is food allowance and boots, probably approached the Ministry scale, but, of course, only for the one week during which the boots were issued. Though not generous the attitude of the Llandilo Guardians was not as totally uncompromising as that of the Carmarthen Board. This was almost certainly due to their greater proximity to the volatile Ammanford area, which had experienced riots in 1925, rather than to any surge of humanitarian sentiment.³⁵

The behaviour of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians is of course explained by an historical awareness of the social and economic background of eastern Carmarthenshire in the 1920s, as described earlier. It is interesting to note that the Editor of *The Celtic News*, whose general attitude towards the miners case was unfavourable, could see the decision of the Carmarthen Guardians to treat the dependents of miners on the same basis as paupers in the following light: 'Carmarthen is hardly touched to the extent of other big industrial centres . . . [and] can afford to be a little more tolerant and humane . . . Our view is that the Carmarthen Board of Guardians on which there is a preponderance of farmers should tread cautiously and be free from the accusation of antipathy'.³⁶ The next week saw the appearance of a letter by a member of the public which censured 'those Guardians who have little knowledge of industrial affairs except the sale of their produce in the towns'.³⁷ Also, at a meeting of the Carmarthen Board reported on September 1, a letter was referred to from the Secretary of the local branch of the National Union of Railwaymen censuring the Guardians for their cutting of relief to the wives of locked-out miners and pointing out the danger to the Board of allowing 'political views to interfere with their duties'.³⁸ The whole point, concerning these contemporary expressions of opinion, is that the actions of the Carmarthen Board were not politically motivated by any partisan indulgence in the politics of the General Strike as such. The excessive concern with local autonomy ensured this.

As far as Carmarthen was concerned the boots issue came to a head on 1 October. But more interesting than the issue itself were the sentiments to which it gave rise. The issue came out fully into

35. On the Ammanford riots of 1925 see H. Francis 'The Anthracite Strike and the Disturbances of 1925', *Llafur* 1(2) 1973.

36. *C.N.*, August 20, 1926.

37. *The Welshman*, August 27, 1926.

38. *C.N.*, September 17, 1926.

the open because by this stage of the strike a large number of applications had been made and had even prompted the Board previously to apply to the Ministry of Health for clarification of the issue. The reply they got was that boots were to be issued in cases 'where they were urgently required'.³⁹ One of the two or three members of the Board who were sympathetic to the miners pointed out that it was quite legal to issue boots and grant relief in kind up to the limits set by Circular 703 and moved that boots be issued without a consequent reduction in relief.⁴⁰ His motion, predictably, was heavily defeated. It may be pointed out that it was common practice at Llandeilo and elsewhere to deduct the cost of boots from the relief paid. What must be borne in mind here, however, is that the Carmarthen Guardians had already decided to put the wives of miners on a par with paupers by giving them 7/6d and each child 3/-, the cost of boots to be deducted from the pauper scale adopted by them, not that fixed by the Ministry of Health.

A fortnight later, a deputation of the Pontyates Distress Committee appeared before the Carmarthen Board of Guardians for the third time, on this occasion to warn the Board that they had had to use all their efforts to prevent a thousand miners from coming to Carmarthen to protest against the Board's decision on the boots issue. The clerk told the deputation that not to deduct the cost of boots from the relief paid would be 'to go against the Ministry of Health'; this was a perversion of the truth.⁴¹ One member of the deputation pointed out that this only held true in the event of the Board adopting the Circular 703 scale prior to the issue of boots, but was shouted down. With the deputation still present, another member of the Board proposed a notice of motion to discuss an increase of relief at the next meeting and this was agreed to, but only after the voicing of much petty abuse on the part of the other members of the Board.⁴²

The final meeting, during the lock-out, of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians took place in the second week in November, with the Pontyates Distress Committee in attendance for the fourth time.⁴³ During the preliminary discussion about whether or not to admit members of the deputation, the tone was set for the rest of the meeting by the condescension expressed in the following remark: 'even the highest grade of people give a hearing to the lowest grade'.⁴⁴

39. *C.N.*, October 15, 1926.

40. *ibid.*

41. *C.N.*, October 29, 1926.

42. *ibid.*

43. *C.N.*, November 12, 1926.

44. *ibid.*

The leader of the deputation pointed out the desperate plight of the four thousand people dependent on the Poor Law in his area and another member of the deputation observed that the relief granted by the Board was the lowest in the area.⁴⁵ On a comparative basis the Carmarthen Guardians certainly came off very badly, as shown by the following table ⁴⁶ indicating scales operative by major Boards of Guardians in the South Wales coalfield in 1926:

Board	Adults	Children
Pontardawe	12/-	4/-
Llanelly	12/-	4/-
Cardiff	12/-	4/-
Swansea	12/-	4/-
Merthyr	12/-	4/-
Gower	10/-	3/-
Carmarthen	7/6	3/-
Pontypool	5/-	2/-
Llandeilo	10/-	2/6

With the exit of the deputation the notice of motion put forward at the previous meeting to consider an increase of relief came up for discussion. The motion was overwhelmingly defeated, with only two supporting it. During the course of discussion prior to the vote, one of the very few Carmarthen Guardians sympathetic to the miners had asked how many of them were ex-Servicemen and a Trelech farmer replied, 'I worked as hard as any soldier in the trenches during the war', while another, from Abergwili, was reported as saying that he 'was afraid people were too apt to regard the farmer as a rich man, because he had a few cattle and sheep. He could assure them . . . [that] farmers . . . had to work 12 and 15 hours . . . and yet they never went on strike'.⁴⁷ The want of human sensitivity to the sufferings of others manifest in such remarks is truly remarkable, but it summed up the attitude of the Carmarthen Board of Guardians to the miner and his family. There was very little difference in the case of the Llandeilo-Fawr Guardians, to which consideration must now be given.

By the time the mining dispute was so many weeks old the Llandeilo Guardians were aware that the adoption of a hard line by them would aggravate the already prevalent suffering in their area. It was admitted at a meeting reported in the local press on 10 June

45. *ibid.*

46. Figures taken from a report of a meeting of the Llanelly Board of Guardians, *The Llanelly Mercury*, October 28, 1926.

47. *C.N.*, *loc.cit.*

that 'the majority of the residents of one street' were amongst those in receipt of relief as a result of the strike.⁴⁸ Despite the readiness of this Board, with reservations, to distribute boots to children, the necessity to protect the agricultural interest overrode all humanitarian considerations, as in Carmarthen, and the small farmer mentality triumphed here as well. If anything the antipathy in the Llandeilo Board felt by the agrarian elements towards the small and scattered industrial communities was even greater than that of the Carmarthen Board.

From a social and humanitarian view (not political it is stressed) the Llandeilo Guardians did not directly reveal their basic attitude until well on into the strike, though it had existed, below the surface long before 1 May 1926. Details of a meeting were reported in the local press on 3 September and it appeared that a suggestion had been made to allow a man seven days to repay relief he was alleged to have obtained fraudulently before court proceedings were instituted. The suggestion was shouted down. It was obvious that the Llandeilo Guardians were determined to make a test case of this particular issue. And so they did.⁴⁹ When details of the court case were published later it emerged that the man concerned was charged with claiming relief while in receipt of National Insurance benefit. The Bench decided to convict and imposed a fine of 10s., while making pompous noises about the 'seriousness' of the offence. This despite the fact that, as the defending solicitor pointed out, the man had obtained the relief by way of loan and had signed a declaration promising to pay the money back.⁵⁰ Of greater interest, from the point of view of what has been argued so far, is the claim by the defence that the Llandeilo Board of Guardians had a preponderance of small farmers, some of whom farmed in the industrial areas and were party to the proceedings which had been instituted; these were the people who spoke derogatively about 'yr hên golliers' at Saturday markets.⁵¹ The response of the rural community to this pejorative allegation was summed up in the weekly 'Man About Town' column of *The Amman Valley Chronicle* written by 'The Watchman': 'The agriculturalists resent to the core the utterances of one of our leading advocates in a case recently heard at Ammanford . . . He laid stress on the point that the Llandeilo Board of Guardians was constituted in the main by farmers . . . The Chairman of the agriculturalists - so it appears, hit out at the last meeting of the Guardians and reminded his colleagues that the decision to prosecute

48. *A.V.C.E.C.N.*, June 10, 1926.

49. *C.N.*, September 3, 1926; *A.V.C.E.C.N.*, September 2, 1926.

50. *A.V.C.E.C.N.*, September 23, 1926.

51. *ibid.*

was arrived at almost unanimously . . . Let me remind my readers that we owe a good deal to the vigilance of the agriculturalists in the North districts'.⁵² The implication was that the decision was shared by some who did not represent the agricultural interest. In the final analysis, however, the case serves to encapsulate the attitude of the Llandeilo Guardians to the mining community.

Judging by the largely apathetic response to the relief issue throughout 1926, the actions of the Guardians must have received broad communal support. This holds equally true of Carmarthen. But in Llanelli one has to search very hard indeed for letters and editorials which advocated a tougher line by the Guardians towards the miners' rights under Circular 703. Such support for the miners by the community at large was indicative of a social response to the events of 1926 in east Carmarthenshire and not a political one set in train by promptings from the central authority, or anywhere else for that matter. Developments in Llanelli therefore took a very different course, and it only now remains to throw into relief the actions of the rural Boards by considering the record of the Labour controlled Llanelli Board of Guardians in 1926.

In Llanelli the political motivation behind the actions of the Guardians was immediately demonstrated by the manner in which they issued relief to as many as possible. They also stirred up a hornet's nest by their liberality; indeed, a miniature 'Red' scare in some quarters, as evidenced by the following newspaper observation: 'It is part of the Communist programme to make the administration of public affairs as difficult as possible, and Communist speakers are urged to tell these unemployed people to apply to the Guardians on every possible occasion . . . A steelworker who spoke to our representative yesterday said he was simply astounded to see so many of the higher paid men in the queue waiting for a ticket. The position, he added, is simply scandalous'.⁵³ This contemporary view is confirmed by the fact that, as Hywel Francis has pointed out, 'the already well-established communist party in Llanelli succeeded in trebling its membership during the course of the strike'.⁵⁴ Not only this; the local Trades Council was converted into a Council of Action which virtually took over the running of everything and 'went beyond TUC instructions in immediately calling out steel, gas, electricity and brewery workers. The police stations and market were commandeered. Food was distributed to the needy whilst the police

52. *A.V.C.E.C.N.*, September 30, 1926.

53. *The Llanelli Star*, May 22, 1926. Hereafter *L.S.*

54. H. Francis, 'South Wales', J. Skelley ed. *The General Strike* (1976), p.237.

received instructions from the Council of Action and actually conformed to their orders for the turning back of the lorries of black-legs . . .⁵⁵ Of more immediate relevance was the fact that the 'extent of the Council's influence was such that the local Board of Guardians made the unprecedented decision of relieving all strikers at full rates'.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, by 23 October the Llanelly Guardians were forced by Ministry of Health pressure to reduce the relief scale from 12s. and 4s.⁵⁷ This was, however, only a week before the end of the dispute. But significant was the attitude of the Editor of one of the two Llanelli newspapers—he had been the most vociferous in the campaign against relief abuse—towards the question of whether to reduce relief or not, when it came to the fore from the beginning of September. He wrote, 'it is difficult to see what the Guardians can do except to maintain the present allowance. The scale is not over generous, and while it cannot be increased, it is barely sufficient to provide the necessities of life. It allows twelve shillings a week for wives and four shillings a week for children'.⁵⁸ The broad communal attitude which such an utterance represented was diametrically opposed to that of the Boards of rural Carmarthenshire. And to impute the reason for this divergence of views between the Llanelli and the rural Boards merely to their different political make-up would be a gross over simplification. It is hoped that this study has made that quite clear.

In conclusion it may be said that in the middle of the 1920s there were about 15,000 miners, excluding their dependents, concentrated in the western part of the South Wales coalfield. At the real height of the mining dispute there were 8,338 people on relief in Llanelli and these were made up predominantly of the dependents of miners.⁵⁹ This total of dependents represented 1,959 applications.⁶⁰ As far as Llandeilo was concerned, by the beginning of September a total of 1,165 people were in receipt of relief.⁶¹ No

55. Information derived from an interview with Enoch Collins (Llanelly) by Hywel Francis, November 6, 1969, quoted by Francis, *ibid.*, pp.238-239. See also the report of the interview with James Griffiths (miners' agent at Llanelly in 1926) in the work (p. 60) by Margaret Morris cited in note 3.

56. H. Francis, *loc. cit.*

57. *Llanelly Argus*, October 23, 1926, hereafter *L.A. L.S.*, October 23, 1926.

58. *Llanelly and County Guardian*, September 16, 1926.

59. Figures taken from an unsigned article in the *South Wales Press*, May 19, 1926.

60. *ibid.*

61. This total is based on figures for the various sub-districts of Llandilo-Fawr presented by the Clerk to a meeting of the Llandilo Board of Guardians, *A.V.C.E.C.N.*, September 2, 1926.

figures of this nature are available for Carmarthen, but it is unlikely that the total of miners' dependents exceeded some hundreds.

The whole point of this is that the majority of these miners did not turn to the Poor Law on behalf of either themselves or their families. Also, the Labour Exchange offered little comfort: as a member of the Llanelly Board of Guardians pointed out, 'It should not go out that the people in the mining districts were receiving more money than the people of the town. Workmen unemployed in Llanelly could go to the Labour Exchange but the miner was debarred'.⁶² As in the eastern part of the South Wales coalfield, most miners and their dependents survived on sporadic strike pay from the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and the communal kitchens which were organised and run by the miners themselves, who obtained goods largely on credit from local shopkeepers.

The amounts collected by local fund raising activities were so meagre, judging by reports in the local press, that they may be dismissed as genuine but limited gestures by a tiny minority—as far as the areas covered by the rural Guardians were concerned, at any rate. Yet there does not appear to have been any cases of starvation or severe malnutrition in the mining areas of eastern Carmarthenshire and the Amman Valley. Undoubtedly there was suffering, but to nowhere near the same intensity as in the rest of the coalfield, say east of Swansea. This is certainly a reflection of the peculiar, yet far more stable, agricultural-cum-industrial social and economic structure of eastern Carmarthenshire in the 1920s, the nature of which was discussed in the early part of this study, and the way it directly affected the attitudes and actions of the Guardians in 1926. Of equal significance was the way in which the new elite of rural capitalists, who had largely replaced the landlord class in the post-1914 period, reacted to the miners' actions in claiming their legal rights unconditionally, which they saw as a social challenge to be confronted head on. The forms of social control which had passed into the hands of the recently triumphant freehold farming class were to be snatched away from them, with the passage of the local Government Act in 1929, before they had time to learn how to use them properly. Nevertheless, they had had time to do plenty of damage to the social fabric of their communities before 1929, and, on balance, the story of the relationship of the rural Guardians and the miners in 1926 is representative of one of the unhappier aspects of Carmarthenshire history.

Aberystwyth 1981.

62. *L.A.*, August 28, 1926.

An Historical View of Iscoed

By D. GERALD JONES, O.B.E., Q.F.S.M., B.Sc.

ON an eminence, commanding unrestricted views of beautiful Carmarthen Bay and the picturesque village of Llansteffan, with its historic castle, is situated the dilapidated mansion named Iscoed, Ferryside. Once the centre of an 800 acre estate, it was the chosen retirement home of Peninsular War hero General Sir Thomas Picton, who went to live there in 1814. His stay was unfortunately very brief, for when Napoleon escaped from his island prison on Elba, the Duke of Wellington recalled Picton to the colours. He was given command of the 5th Division and reserves, and left London on the 11th June 1815. A week later he was killed at Waterloo on the 18th June 1815.

Historically, Iscoed lay in the commote of Cydweli outside the castle and borough of Cydweli lands. It was, like Carnawllon, predominantly peopled by free tribesmen. In charge was the beadle, with the responsibility of collecting dues to the Norman lords at Cydweli Castle. In this commote the administrative areas in the 14th and 15th centuries included Iscoed and Uwchcoed. The first charge mentioned in the account of the beadle of Iscoed Moris was a sum paid by the community to be relieved of the responsibility of supporting the sergeants of the peace. Rent of assize was also paid and represented commuted dues and services. The major payments were the great and small commorth, payable every third year on the first day of May. The commorth was, in origin, a tribute of cows and assessment passed from the kindred to the holding. Iscoed was divided into ten cow units (*vaccæ*). The tenants of each unit were jointly responsible for the price of a cow (5s.) in the great commorth. This due had increased to 6/8d in the 15th century. Many of these units are still identifiable, e.g. Vacca Ithole (Idole), Vacca Kelly march (Oilymarch), Vaccade Treflymsy (Trellymsi), Vaccade Kelthctese (Gellideg). The small commorth did not bear any apparent relationship in amount to the larger payment; it was described as "money with these cows".

Cwm Mill

The tolls from corn ground at the lord's mills in the commote were farmed out for considerable amounts. The only two mills mentioned in the bedelry of Iscoed Moris in 1400 were at Pibwr and

Tryscyrch (near Llangyndeyrn). According to the Duchy of Lancaster Survey of 1609-13 these mills were confined to the tenants of Maenor Gunnor (Llangunnor), but Maenor Iscoed Moris had two other mills, one at Morleis and the other at Melyn Y Cwm (Cwm Mill, Ferryside). The survey records that Cwm Mill was in the possession of Francis Mansel Esq. of Iscoed, farmer, who paid 20s rent to James I. In 1761 the rent of £10, duty £2-6s and heriot 5s was paid by the tenant of Cwm Mill, William Moris, and covered the year ending Michaelmas. A water-powered flour mill was in full operation here until World War I.

A survey plan by John Lewis, commissioned in 1851 by the owner of Iscoed, John Picton, M.D., shows an ingenious arrangement to control the water from the Cwm stream, supplemented by a brook from Iscoed wood and a local spring. A steady water flow in the mill-race was maintained to drive the mill-wheel by closing a sluice gate across the Cwm stream. This created a large upper pond and when milling operations were required a small sluice (location still existing) was opened, giving access to a channel under the road and leading to the lower pond. This fed the mill-race. A tavern, built on this site in 1852, remained open until 1937. In the early 1920s an electric generator powered by the mill provided the village of Ferryside with its first electricity supply. A modern service garage is now located at Cwm Mill and still carries the name.

The Duchy of Lancaster survey also records fixed salmon traps on the river Tywi at Ferryside in the tenure of Francis Mansel Esq. of Iscoed. The traps were made of willow in a V shape, and were mounted on poles with the large end of the trap facing the incoming tide. The trap was termed *Gored*—a name which is still used today by the Ferryside fishermen for a stretch of the beach. The following traps are recorded:—

1. Gored Jany—rent 6/8.
2. Gored Abbot—Previously owned by the Abbey of Whitland, rent paid for the year 1606—10s.
3. Gored Fach—rent 2/-s.
4. Gored Shilly (decayed).

The Mansels of Iscoed

The Iscoed estate, with its headquarters at Iscoed Farm, was built up and developed over many centuries. The earliest records of the inhabitants of Iscoed include reference to Thomas Sutton of Haythog, who married Gwenllian, daughter of the illustrious Sir Rhys ap Thomas, Abermarlais. Their daughter, Ann Sutton married

Owain, the second son of Trahaiern Morgan, Mortlysgwm, (Muddlescwm). A descendant of this marriage, Catherine, daughter and co-heiress of Rhys Morgan, Iscoed, married Sir Richard Mansel. The Mansel family became one of the most prominent in South Wales. Philip Mansel was one of the followers of William the Conqueror, and the first Mansels in Wales settled at Oxwich in Gower. Sir Rice Mansel of Oxwich was granted the demesne of Margam Abbey when the monasteries were dissolved by Henry VIII. His grandson, Sir Francis Mansel, created a baronet by James I in 1621, married Catherine, daughter of Henry Morgan, Muddlescwm. The Iscoed and Muddlescwm estates thus passed to the afore-mentioned Sir Richard Mansel.

The beautiful stained glass windows of the Parish Church of St. Isfael, Ferryside commemorate members of the Mansel family. On the left side of the altar is a large elaborate marble plaque surmounted by the Mansel coat of arms. It commemorates the death of Catherine Mansel (wife of Sir Richard Mansel of Iscoed) who died 27th January 1631, and records her affection for her large family, her kindness to friends and her generosity in charity to the poor. The large three-part stained glass window above the altar carries the initials W. M. and M.M. and the arms of the Mansels, viz. Argent, a chevron between three maunches sable, the motto being *Quod Vult, Valde Vult*. The maunches represent sleeves of a kind worn by medieval ladies and are thought to allude to the Mansel name.

On the low stone seat surrounding the chancel are two carvings. On the left is an impaled shield with the Mansel arms on the dexter half and a rampant Welsh dragon on the other. The carving on the right side consists of a shield bearing a rampant Welsh dragon. The first stained glass window in the north transept is the work of Charles Gibbs, senior, 148 Marylebone, London. It is in three parts, each with a quotation in Welsh—above, "Eiddynt yw teyrnas nef-oedd"; on the left, "Y Bugail Da"; and on the right "Duw cariad yw". The window commemorates "Lt. General Robert Christopher Mansel, Knight of Hannover, Colonel of the 68th Lt. Infantry who died April the 8th 1864 aged 75 and was buried near the camp at Shorncliffe where he so ably commanded for several years". He was born at Iscoed in 1789. The second stained glass window is on the eastern wall of the north transept. It is a double lancet bearing a coat of arms and records the death of Richard Mansel Phillips in 1844 at 16 years of age. The church suffered some bomb damage in World War II and a plain glass window replacement now surmounts a brass plate on a window-sill in the north transept wall,

which has the inscription, "In memory of Isabella Mansel, widow of the Rev. Lort Mansel, D.D., Minsterworth, and eldest daughter of Rt. Rev. William Lort Mansel, D.D. Bishop of Bristol and Master of Trinity College Cambridge, died 31st July 1866 at Tenby aged 76. Resurgam".

Iscoed Mansion

Throughout their occupation of Iscoed the Mansel family gradually expanded the farm building into an impressive three storey stone-built house. It has ten bedrooms with a large lounge and extensive kitchen with direct access to servants' quarters. It is in good condition and is fully used today.

Following the 18th century trend the seventh baronet, Sir William Mansel (1738-1804)—he unsuccessfully contested the Parliamentary election of 1790, against J. G. Philipps, Cwmgwili—decided to build a far more elaborate home more suited to his family and social status. A local brickworks at the Morfa, Ferryside, was used to provide the pinkish bricks for his new mansion, the clay being mined at Morfa Uchaf on his land. Work commenced in 1792 and the completed mansion was approached through a magnificent archway, which was decorated with three very large iron cannon balls.

The main building, with a large forecourt, was of three floors:—

Ground floor—double drawing rooms, a large dining room with folding doors opening into a morning room, conservatory, large billiards room, smoking room, housekeeper's room, sitting room, pantry, kitchen, scullery, larder, dairy, lavatory.

First floor—six bedrooms, two dressing rooms, two lavatories.

Second floor—seven bedrooms and lavatories.

North Wing—five large rooms.

South Wing—ten rooms.

Outbuildings—a large stable, coach-houses, harness room, cow houses, piggeries, calves' cot, carpenter's shed and a fine range of farm buildings.

The outbuildings were surrounded by large gardens, an orchard well stocked with fruit trees, a large glasshouse and a peach-house.

The Pictons at Iscoed

The imposing new building was occupied by Sir William Mansel and his family for only a few years. Sir William died there in 1804 and was succeeded by his son, Sir John Bell William Mansel, Maestilo, who sold the property to Sir Thomas Picton. A letter (dated May 1812) at the Carmarthen Record Office has this note,

"General Picton has purchased Iscoed, Iscoed Ucha, Bronyn and Cwmbwri for £30,000". General Sir Thomas Picton was born at Poyston, Pems. on August 24th 1758, one of a family of five boys and seven girls. His great military achievements are well-known; here it is sufficient to say that after the capture of Badajos on the 2nd May 1812 in the Peninsular war, Lord Liverpool paid a glowing tribute in the House of Lords to Picton's prominent and gallant leadership in the battle. Ill-health (mainly malaria), coupled with wounds received at Badajos, caused him to take a long rest. He purchased the Iscoed estate and described it as being "certainly one of the most beautiful places in the Principality, combining all the advantages of woods, water and diversified scenery".

But he could not remain inactive for long, and rejoined the Peninsular army in the early spring of 1813. Following a successful campaign an armistice was signed on the 18th April 1814, and Picton, after announcing his intention of retiring permanently to Iscoed, soon took up duties as member of Parliament for Pembroke. He enjoyed country pursuits and became seriously interested in farming. When Napoleon escaped from Elba on the 1st March 1815 and marched to Paris, the Duke of Wellington was given command of the allies. Picton having set his affairs in order, as he had a premonition that he might not survive the campaign, embarked on the 12th June 1815 at Ramsgate and was soon in action. On the 16th June he engaged at Quatre Bras, where he suffered two broken ribs. He concealed his injuries, however, and strapped up and padded by his servant, he resumed his command at Waterloo on the 18th June, when he was killed instantly by a bullet in the head whilst leading a bayonet charge which shattered the French ranks. He was buried in St. George's, Hanover Square, London on the 3rd July 1815, his remains being removed on the 8th June 1859 to the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, where they lie a few yards from Wellington's.

Picton was a bachelor and bequeathed the Iscoed estate to his younger brother, the Rev. Edward Picton of St. Brides Major, Glamorgan, who on 17th December 1789, had married Charlotte Maria Browne, the widow of Cadwalader Browne of Ffrwd, Llangyndeyrn. Having settled in retirement at Iscoed, he was appointed a justice of the peace and nominated a deputy-Lieutenant of the county. As the parish church of St. Isfael was located over two miles south-west of Iscoed, he built a new chapel-of-ease in the centre of Ferryside village and only one mile from his home. The building, with its round tower, was set upon a north-south axis, but over a period of 50 years it became very dilapidated and had to be demolished. A new church

was built in 1876 on a traditional east-west orientation. The Rev. Edward Picton presented a full length portrait of his distinguished brother, painted by Sir Martin Shee, to the County of Carmarthen and this can still be seen in the crown court room of the Shire Hall, Carmarthen. He died without issue at Iscoed on the 26th August 1834, aged 75 years, and was buried in Llansaint churchyard, south of the tower. His widow, Charlotte Maria, died on 4th March 1840 and was also interred at Llansaint.

The 1844 St. Isfael Tithe Schedule records that the Iscoed estate was owned by John Picton, M.D. and included nine farms and other properties. He was not a Picton on his father's side. His mother, Jane Picton, married Colonel F. Williams, who commanded the light troops of her brother's division at Waterloo. John Picton was born in 1807 and on inheriting Iscoed was appointed a justice of the peace. He was succeeded by his cousin, Major J. Picton Beate of Prince Edward Island, Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada. He became known as J. Picton Picton and his eldest son, Francis Picton Picton, who lived for many years in Prince Edward Island, eventually succeeded his father as owner of Iscoed estate. His sister Lucy Eleanor Picton, who had married James Brogden, FGS (born 1832) inherited the estate on the 19th May 1903. An earlier James Brogden, M.P. had coal-mining interests in the Gwendraeth Valley and had subscribed to the construction of the Kidwelly and Llanelli Canal early in the nineteenth century.

The older inhabitants of Ferryside, some of whom worked on the Iscoed estate, remember Mrs. Brogden with great respect, except for one custom. She kept a pack of ten large Irish staghounds and twenty Bloodhounds around her when walking in the village. The result was sheer terror, especially for parents. Over many years the Brogdens expanded the well known pedigree herds at Iscoed. These included blood stock horses, cattle, pigs and poultry. There were regular sales of surplus stock and these were attended by dealers and gentry representatives from all parts of the United Kingdom. Details of these sales (with original auctioneer's catalogues) are available at the Record Office, Carmarthen, e.g. "A select stock sale of Pedigree cows and heifers from the celebrated herd at Iscoed at the Boars Head Carmarthen on Saturday 4th of August 1894", announced by auctioneer, John Francis. Sale prices included—Bay mare 70 guineas, Jersey cow 20gns, Cart mare 30gns, ewes 3gns. Mrs. Brogden established a good relationship with her tenants. Their rent was standardised at £1 per acre, payable to her agent, John Jones, Brooklands, Ferryside, every six months, the occasion being celebrated with a lunch and drinks either at the White Lion Hotel or the Ship Inn. A turkey was usually provided in June and a goose at Xmas.

The last of the Pictons at Iscoed, Lucy Eleanor Brogden, and her daughter Mary Caroline, authorised the sale of one half of the estate (430 acres) at the Ivy Bush Hotel, Carmarthen, on the 27th June 1914. The sale catalogue lists the following lots:

1—Tresilwood Farm; 2—Building site at Tresilwood; 3—part of Tresilwood land; 4—Panteg Farm; 5—Bryncochbach Farm; 6—3 fields part of Panteg Farm; 7—1 field part of Panteg Farm; 8—Bronyn Farm; 9—Rotten Pill Farm; 10—3 fields part of Rotten Pill Farm; 11—6 fields part of Trecor Farm; 12—3 fields part of Trecor Farm; 13—1 field part of Ffynon Ynyd Farm; 14—1 field part of Trecor Farm; 15—Garden at Greenfield House Ferryside; 16—Field adjoining Tripenhad Farm; 17—2 fields part of Trecor Farm; 18—2 fields part of Trecor Farm; 19—Ystrad House and attached cottage Ystrad Fach; 20—House and garden, Millbrook near Cwm Mill tavern; 21—Garden of Ystrad Fach; 22—2 fields part of Trecor and cottage Penybont; 23—2 fields opposite Rotten Pill Farm; 24—Meadow part of Rotten Pill Farm; 25—Freehold marsh adjoining Muddlescwm Farm, Cydweli; 26—51 freehold building plots.

Most of the farms were purchased by the sitting tenants. The remainder of Iscoed estate (including those lots not sold in 1914) were for sale at the Ivy Bush Hotel on 9th June 1917. The lots were: —1—2 fields, part of Bronyn Farm; 2—“The delightful Mansion known as Iscoed, together with the charming grounds, excellent pasture land and woodlands, containing in all 159 acres”; 3—Trecor Farm 30 acres; 4—Field, part of Tresilwood Farm; 5—Iscoed Home Farm 99 acres; 6—Millbrook House and gardens; 7—Portion of field O.S. 486 part of Fynnon Ynyd Farm; 8—11 Building sites.

This sale marked the end of an estate managed by many generations of gentry and left the area, especially the village of Ferryside, without their long established leadership.

Iscoed mansion was conveyed to Harry Dawkin Evans on the 6th March 1919. He was a Llanelli coal exporter, with major interests in France. He spent a great deal on repairs and modernisation of the mansion, but the severe depression in the coal business resulted in his bankruptcy, while the mansion, land, park and garden buildings were under mortgage to Barclays Bank. Thereafter the mansion was leased to well known personalities, including Mr. Tregonning, the Llanelli industrialist, prior to his removal to Portiscliff, Ferryside. In the meantime, Iscoed Home Farm had been purchased by Mr Joseph Thomas and on the 11th January 1936 he also purchased Iscoed mansion and lands (totalling 94 acres) from Barclays Bank.

The mansion was requisitioned for ARP purposes during World War II and was a general store for gasmasks, clothing and bedding. After the war it was let into flats for local people awaiting the construction of Council houses in Ferryside. The lead was stripped from the roof and the beautiful building and its substantial fittings were vandalised. Within a year it was a ruin except for the South Wing which is now owned and occupied by Mr Anthony Jones.

At a meeting of the Carmarthenshire County Council Planning sub-committee on the 11th September 1957 no objection was raised to an application by the owner, Joseph Thomas, to demolish Iscoed mansion. The Ministry of Housing and Local Government however made a provisional preservation order, and decided to hold a local enquiry at County Hall, Carmarthen on the 18th September 1957. A letter from the Welsh Office dated 4th October 1957 stated that the Minister had come to the conclusion that it would be unreasonable to resist the proposed demolition of the building by the owners and that the provisional order had now elapsed. This report was approved by the full Council on the 5th November 1957. No action was taken, however, as Joseph Thomas died on the 19th April 1959, at his daughter's home 3, Pale Cottage, Ferryside and his children then sold the properties.

On the 23rd February 1973 Iscoed Home Farm was sold to Mr William Euan Wallace, Bognor Manor, Newbury, once mentioned as a friend of H.R.H. Princess Margaret. Two years later the farm was purchased by Mr John Davies, a Llandybie industrialist. The driveway to the farm was conveyed to Susan Mary Davies, wife of John Davies, on the 6th November 1975. Iscoed mansion gardens, farm buildings and stables were sold to John and Valerie Rogers, Tor y Mynydd, Ferryside on the 6th December 1976 by Mr Euan Wallace. Mr John Davies, the owner of Iscoed Home Farm, has taken a step towards re-establishing the ancient Iscoed estate by purchasing Tresilwood Farm and Cwmbychan Farm. The mansion, however, remains sadly ruinous and its future has been the subject of planning consideration for some years. But following the intervention of the present Duke of Wellington, whose interest had been enlisted by Mr Richard Goodridge, Carmarthen, the mansion was listed as a Grade II building of special interest in 1982.

Note: Pictures illustrating Iscoed mansion appeared in *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, vol. X, pp 80-2.

A Devil Who Cared for His Own

The Dolaucothi Murder Viewed Anew

By SUSAN BECKLEY, B.A., D.A.A.

MORE than a century ago, John Johnes of Dolaucothi in north Carmarthenshire was murdered by his butler, Henry Tremble. The gruesome story is well-known, but less familiar is the documentary evidence, written by Tremble himself some days before the murder, which is now preserved in the Carmarthenshire Record Office. Before quoting this letter, it is worth recalling the story of the murder, in reference to which "The Daily Telegraph" commented:

"There is a horrible completeness, compactness and thoroughness in the history of the detestable deed of assassination, followed by the suicide of the assassin, which has just been accomplished in Carmarthenshire . . . A harrowing simplicity from first to last pervades this tale of blood, and the motives of the murderer are as palpable as the means which he adopted to perpetrate his crime, and subsequently, by self-slaughter, to elude the grasp of justice".

(Wednesday, August 23rd, 1876)

Thus, during the summer of 1876, Carmarthenshire made headline news in the local and national press, with the assassination of the respected country gentleman, barrister, Deputy Lieutenant and magistrate, John Johnes of Dolaucothi aged 76. On the morning of Saturday 19th August, Mr. Johnes was in his study at Dolaucothi when Henry Tremble, his butler, entered the room and shot him in the stomach. The butler then proceeded to the kitchen where Mr. Johnes's daughter Charlotte, then the widowed Mrs. Cookman, was giving instructions to the servants, and shot her at point-blank range. While Mrs. Cookman was seriously injured—she did eventually recover—her father had received fatal injuries and died shortly afterwards.

Threatening any servants who crossed his path, Tremble then left Dolaucothi and went to the village of Caio where he threatened a local police constable, and visited the Caio Inn with the intention of murdering John Davies, the inn-keeper. Fortunately, Mr. Davies had gone to Carmarthen that day. Tremble then went into his own house, Myrtle Cottage, Caio and shot himself.

Henry Tremble, aged 36 at this time, had been employed by the Dolaucothi household for 17 years prior to 1876. Mrs. Cookman,

formerly Charlotte Johnes, was the widow of Captain Cookman who came from Ennisworthy, County Wexford, bringing Tremble with him as his valet. Shortly afterwards, Captain Cookman died, and Tremble remained at Dolaucothi, working as stable boy before becoming coachman, and finally butler. He appears to have always possessed a somewhat violent disposition and on several occasions John Johnes would have dismissed him, but was dissuaded from doing so by his daughter, who felt that this would betray the memory of her late husband who had commended the care of his favourite servant to her. Latterly, Tremble had applied to John Johnes for the tenancy of the Dolaucothi Arms which was soon to become vacant, but this had been refused him, it seems, on the grounds that his wife drank heavily. John Davies of the Caio Inn was expected to be the next landlord of the Dolaucothi Arms. In addition to this, Tremble had finally tried the patience of the Dolaucothi household too much, and he had received his notice to leave. This was due to expire on Saturday, 19th August, 1876.

These factors, together with a suggestion of domestic unhappiness and jealousy with regard to his wife, had according to one newspaper report "soured and darkened his disposition" and "provoked his already irritable nature beyond all bounds".

Strange events surrounded the burial of Tremble. In accordance with the coroner's warrant, the body of the murderer and suicide was buried in Caio churchyard in silence at about eleven o'clock at night. Shortly before this the vicar had held a service at Tremble's home in order to intercede for mercy for his widow and children. John Johnes too, was buried in Caio churchyard, and there was widespread concern that his murderer had been interred in the same burial ground. Arrangements were made to exhume Tremble's body, and it was taken at night to Llandulas churchyard in Breconshire. However, when the inhabitants of Llandulas discovered this, they took exception to having a murderer's body forced upon them by another parish and decided to send it back to Caio. In the words of one chronicler:

" . . . they planned a night descent, but lost their way, and arrived with the dawn at Caio Churchyard, so they hurriedly left the coffin on the pathway leading through the Churchyard, placing a sheet of paper containing the reasons for their action upon the lid. They then journeyed homewards, throwing out the straw which had covered the coffin . . . into the ditch near Aberbowlan where it remained for years a "Bwgan" to frighten timid persons and children".¹

The coffin was discovered in the morning and was again buried in Caio churchyard.

John Johnes was buried in the family vault in Caio and messages of sympathy poured in to his daughters from people of all social ranks and from near and far. He had not only been an eminent figure in local government, having been chairman of the Carmarthen-shire Quarter Sessions, the County Roads Board and Caio School Board, but, as a Welsh-speaker, he had supported and promoted cultural activities too. At the 1876 National Eisteddfod in Wrexham the Reverend John Griffiths, Rector of Neath, expressed sympathy with Mr. Johnes' family, and the president asked the audience to stand in silence for a short time, as a gesture of respect. The Dolaucothi correspondence deposited at the National Library of Wales includes letters of condolence from sources as varied as the Bishop of St. Davids, the Town Clerk of Carmarthen, the Cambrian Archaeological Association, and Siloh C.M. Chapel Llandovery; and from as far afield as London, Hampshire, Manchester, and Italy. But perhaps the letter appreciated most by the bereaved sisters would be the one they received signed by 32 tenants of the Dolaucothi estate:

"We the undersigned being Tenants on the Dolau Cothy Estate in our great sorrow occasioned by the untimely decease of our good and kind Master, beg to offer our most sincere sympathy with Mrs. Cookman and Miss Johnes in their unexpected trial"²

The evidence that the murder of John Johnes was premeditated and the result of a deliberate plan by Tremble is worthy of consideration. Firstly, of course, the events took place on the day that Tremble's employment at Dolaucothi was due to be terminated. This date must have been known to him for some days, if not weeks, beforehand.

Secondly, Charlotte Johnes (she assumed her maiden name in accordance with her father's will) recorded in her diary how she and her sister Betha had previously been threatened by Tremble:

"... I should say that one morning before she (Betha) had left home, about the time that Henry Tremble was making application for the Inn, he said to her and me at the diningroom door, 'Now you are both together I tell you that as sure as God's in Heaven you shall repent the injustice you have done me.'³

Further, when giving evidence at the inquest on Tremble, Arthur Sturdy, footman at Dolaucothi, stated that Tremble had spoken to him at supper on the evening before the murder took place. He had told him that after he left, the house would be all broken down and

that all the servants would soon have to leave. Another witness at the inquest stated that, by his own admission, Tremble had planned the murder. William Morgan of Albert-mount, Caio, had pleaded with Tremble, when he went into his house prior to shooting himself, to give himself up to the police, as a jury might only bring a verdict of manslaughter. Tremble replied that he planned it, and intended it, and that he knew it was not manslaughter.

Perhaps the most notable piece of evidence as to the calculating manner in which the murderer acted is the letter, already referred to, which Tremble wrote to the Reverend Charles Chidlow, at that time vicar of Caio. It is dated 15th August 1876, four days before the murder took place, and in it Tremble makes provision for his six children after his death. It appears that he was concerned to murder Mrs. Cookman as well, as he was afraid that she might influence the Reverend Chidlow against caring for the well-being of his children. The letter reads as follows:

"I Henry Tremble Butler at Dolecothy in the County of Carmarthen do hereby authorise the Rev. Charles Chidlow Cayo Vicarage To take up my Money that is now in the National Provincial Bank Carmarthen and to pay the said Money quarterly at the rate of from £30 to £40 per year to my Dauter Elizebeth Susan Tremble for the maintenance of her selfe and her Sisters and Brothers Namely, Susan Louisa Tremble, Charles Henry Tremble, Alice Jane Tremble, John Tremble, Frances Sarah Tremble.

I will leave all the Money that I can in a little Box, and the Bank Receipt also, the key of which I will inclose to you that you will be able to judge how long that Money will last before you draw on the Bank.

Sir I hope you will excuse me taking this liberty as I have no Friends in this Country or do I know any one that would be likeley to take any interest in thy child except you as a Christian Clergy Man. Hoping at some future time that you will be found amongst the Good Shepards is the earnest wish of your obedient servant.

Henry Tremble.

To the Revd. Charles Chidlow
Cayo Vicarage

There will be about £8 in My pocket.

H.T."⁴

morning and never failed to squeeze every advantage out of his waking hours.

Before the appearance of *Hanes y Bedyddwyr*, Joshua Thomas had published in 1751 a pamphlet containing an answer to Griffith Jones's 'Twenty Reasons' concerning infant baptism. Although it was largely a translation of an English work, Thomas added material of his own.

Despite its occasional errors, some of which were corrected in a later pamphlet, *Hanes y Bedyddwyr* remained a work of sufficient eminence for Thomas Rees to claim, in his *History of Protestant Non-conformity in Wales* (1861), that it was the "best work on the history of Non-conformity in the Principality ever written". Rees also wrote that Joshau Thomas took more interest in the history of religion in Wales than any of his contemporaries. Claiming for him a rightful place in the role of Carmarthenshire worthies, R. T. Jenkins was moved to say that Thomas's "*History of the Welsh Association and his famous Hanes y Bedyddwyr* add lustre to the history of the county" (See 'Non-conformity after 1715' in *A History of Carmarthenshire* (ed. J. E. Lloyd), vol. ii, 1938).

His *History of the Welsh Association, 1650-1790*, which had previously appeared as a series of articles in the *Baptist Register*, was published in 1795. Earlier he had published in 1791 a new translation of the *Confession of Faith* issued by the London Assembly of 1689. There followed *Remarks*, a spirited response to an attack which had belittled the Baptist cause. Upon his death on 25 August 1797, after a short illness, he left in manuscript 'A History of the Welsh Baptists', an English version of the Welsh work, and 'An Ecclesiastical History of Wales'. These and other material were eventually deposited at the Bristol Baptist College, where his son, Timothy, became a student before ministering for forty-three years in Devonshire Square, London.

Joshau Thomas was too timid by nature to be a forceful preacher, but what he lacked in this respect was more than balanced by his studious qualities. As an historian of the first order he strove scrupulously to ensure accuracy, in which he was generally successful within the limits of his research opportunities. Unlike most historians of the period, he possessed an impartial mind and his work is remarkably free from prejudice. In particular, his *Hanes y Bedyddwyr*, a distinguished contribution to the treasury of Welsh historical literature, revealed among Welsh practitioners the judicial qualities of a new type of historian with a scientific approach. Such was his reputation as an historian that it spread even over the Border and he was quoted with respect by English writers on religious history.

E.V.J.

Joshua Thomas 1719-97

JOSHUA Thomas, one of the most distinguished historians of early Nonconformity in Wales, was born the son of Morgan Thomas, Tyhen, Caco on the 22 February, 1719. He was the eldest and ablest of three brothers, although the other two, Timothy and Zacharia, also served the Baptist cause with distinction.

In 1738, Joshua Thomas went to Hereford to be apprenticed to his uncle, Simon Thomas, a mercer and minister who was author of *Hanes y Byd a'r Amseroedd*. For some time he attended the Presbyterian College at Hereford, but because there were no Baptists in that city he was obliged to walk thirteen miles to worship at Leominster, where he was baptised in 1740.

After completing his apprenticeship, he returned to Wales in 1743 to spend the following two or three years with his parents. In 1746, he married a Lampeter lady who was closely related to the celebrated David Davies of Castell Hywel and in the same year they settled at Hay. Joshua Thomas was later ordained as assistant pastor at Maesyberllan.

When he received a call in 1753 from the parent chapel at Leominster he was reluctant to accept, as he was inexperienced at preaching in English. However, yielding to persuasion, he started work at Leominster in 1754 and ministered there for the remaining forty-three years of his life. To augment his income, he kept a day school, which he carried on with success for many years. He became an influential figure in the Midland Baptist Association and was also a frequent visitor to the Welsh Association. In a Baptist crusade in north Wales he exerted a powerful influence.

Joshua Thomas entered the book world by translating into Welsh English works which defended the Baptist faith, but it was as an historian that he became famous with the publication of *Hanes y Bedyddwyr*, printed by J. Ross, Carmarthen in 1778. He had already started collecting material in 1745 before going to Hay, in which area he recorded information given him by old people who remembered traditions which had come down from pioneers. From 1752 onwards he devoted himself to the task in earnest and this entailed a special journey to South Wales in order to pursue his researches. He even went to great pains to secure evidence from America to substantiate claims about the beginnings of the Baptist cause in Wales. A man of unrestricted industry, he rarely rose later than five o'clock in the

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the advice and assistance of Major H. J. Lloyd-Johnes, Cirencester, and Mr. Tudor Barnes of the National Library of Wales, in the preparation of this article.