

The Carmarthenshire Historian



Llysennewydd

THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HISTORIAN

Edited by
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Editorial

Before literacy became the inheritance of the masses, the begetters of local history by way of the written word belonged very largely to the gentry and the professions. Theirs were the letters, diaries, inventories and other manuscripts that would help to tell the long story of the parish and the county and, at the same time, provide memorials to their lives more intimate and revealing than brass or stone. Because they could read they were the heirs of the ages and because they could write it was given to them to be testators to posterity. But their unlettered fellows could leave little more than anonymous labour, and although some would be remembered for their deeds, most would pass through the last gate into the oblivion from which there is no resurrection in the memory of men.

One who escaped this oblivion was Thomas Skeel of Laugharne, who early in the last century 'went for a soldier' to see the world. Uncommon among his comrades, he returned from the wars with a book in his knapsack and, unafraid, he rushed into the written word, if not into print, with a crude but discerning pen. Unknowingly, he wrote not for his own time but for posterity, for his uncultured manuscript was of a kind that needed a century and a half to acquire the bouquet that would delight readers of the present volume of *The Carmarthenshire Historian*.

As a story-teller Skeel passes the test, for the events he relates persist in the memory long after reading about them. We may deride the quality of his literacy, but we cannot resist his story, and although we may condemn his orthography, we should remain mindful of his phonology. We may scorn his style, too, but we ought not to overlook his dialect. Even so, Skeel's crudities and oddities posed an editorial problem. Should they be corrected in the interest of easy reading? After much thought editorial decision, in deference to aural effect, favoured the printing of his manuscript exactly as he wrote it. Only in a few cases too puzzling to allow of fluent reading has his meaning been made clearer. This has been done in brackets and never has it replaced the original text.

For his time, Skeel was an exceptional soldier. Many officers recorded their exploits and much of the total product has been published in print, but few in the ranks could have aspired to a manuscript of their adventures. Yet, though he went a-soldering, it is significant that Skeel rarely writes about life as a soldier, and only occasionally does he mildly complain about his arduous duties. There is no barrack-room talk and he refers to his comrades in general only when they are involved in an episode irresistible to his

pen, most notable being the orgy that followed overseas enlistment. His is the inquisitive urge of the explorer and not all the promised rigours prevent him from being the first to volunteer for foreign service and all its adventures.

Skeel probably had no gazetteer or maps to aid him, but he was observant, knew exactly where he had been and marvelled at what he saw. With few exceptions, the place-names, though sometimes quaintly spelt, are easily recognisable and there is no difficulty in following his routes on a modern map. The pity is that the record of his adventures in Ireland, Portugal, Spain and France has not so far been uncovered, if it survives at all, that is. As it is, we can relish only the first volume of the record, the manuscript of which, by the way, is carefully bound, but whether at the instance of Skeel himself or of some later admirer we do not know.

It is said that there is a book in every man. Unlike most of us, Skeel managed to get his down on paper, and one hundred and fifty-six years later he has come into his own. He is in print at last.

Marching with Thomas Skeel

by Major FRANCIS JONES, C.V.O., T.D., F.S.A.,

Wales Herald Extraordinary

AMONG documents deposited in the Carmarthenshire Record Office by the County Council's Museum Committee is the autobiography of Thomas Skeel of Laugharne, a volume measuring 10cm by 16cm, and consisting of one hundred and fourteen pages. The title-page shows that he intended to write his "Life" in two volumes covering the period 1803-1815. Only the first volume, describing his military service in the Somersetshire Militia from 1803 to 1807 has survived. The second was to include an account of his service with the 40th Foot in Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and France, from 1807 until 27 July 1815. If he ever wrote the second volume it may still be somewhere in Laugharne or the neighbourhood, and should it come to light I hope that I may be favoured with a view of it. As the 40th Regiment of Foot played a distinguished part in the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns, Skeel's account should be of considerable interest to military historians and particularly to Carmarthenshire readers.

The autobiographer came of a stock long established in south-west Carmarthenshire. Rendered variously as Skeel, Scheel, Skyle, and Skele, the name is of Norse origin, and family tradition states that the Skeels came to Laugharne from Denmark during the days of the Tudors. As Laugharne was a busy port from medieval times down to the beginning of the present century, it would have been easy enough for anyone from the continent to have arrived, and for reasons of commerce or marriage, to have settled there.

Whatever truth resides in the tradition, there certainly was an ancient family of that name seated at Gammel Estrup in Jutland, represented today by Count Christian Scheel of Copenhagen. Belonging to the Danish nobility, it was said that the Scheels could ride for sixty miles over their own land, stretching from Grenaa to Viborg. They took a prominent part in national life. Edmund Scheel came to London as Envoy Extraordinary from the King of Denmark to our William III, while Count Christian Scheel, was ambassador to Catherine the Great of Russia, and is rumoured to have been poisoned in 1771 by the Empress's reigning favourite, the jealous Orloff, who saw in the ambassador's handsome looks a rival for admission to the delights of the royal boudoir. Gammel Estrup, one of the finest

examples of Denmark's older manor-houses, has been converted into a museum and contains numerous treasures of both family and national attraction. Many of the Scheels lie buried within Auning church where ornate monuments testifying to their terrestrial attainments are ornamented with heraldic ensigns—the white, red, and blue shield with an inescutcheon bearing two silver swans holding a gold ring in their beaks, and the motto *In rectu decus*.

The earliest reference I have found to the family in Carmarthenshire is in 1544 when David Skeel is described as living at Laugharne. This accords with the tradition of their settlement here in Tudor times. Thenceforward we find them as burgesses, traders, mariners, farmers, innkeepers, churchwardens of St. Martins church, and portreeves of the ancient township. Thomas Skeel was Portreeve in 1723, James Skeel in 1740, and Joseph Skeel in 1787. The family became extinct in the male line towards the middle of the last century, but descendants of female lines still reside in the county among them being the Morses and Colby-Evanses.

During the early part of the eighteenth century a branch of the Skeels of Branwast near Laugharne, settled in Pembrokeshire—Edward Skeel at Trewilym in St. Lawrence, Henry Skeel at Hayscastle, Erasmus Skeel and his son Essex in Mathry parish. Henry Skeel of Hayscastle and James Skeel of Trewilym were High Constables of the Hundred of Dewslan in 1759 and 1761 respectively. Another, a Nonconformist divine, the Revd. Thomas Skeel (1758-1836), gave his name to a farm—Tynwydd Skeel, while his cousin, the Revd. Ebenezer Skeel, was a respected minister with the Independent connection at Abergavenny. Perhaps the most remarkable member of the Pembrokeshire branch was Dr William Skeel who settled as a medical practitioner in London, and by shrewd investments became extremely wealthy, reputedly a millionaire. His daughter, Dr Caroline Anne James Skeel, M.A., D.Lit., F.R.Hist.S., took a double first in Classics and History at Girton College in 1895, and became Professor of History in Westfield College. Her books, *Travel in the First Century A.D.*, *The Council in the Marches of Wales*, and her numerous articles in learned journals, revealing an unusual grasp of historical techniques, remain standard works of reference. When she died in her 80th year in 1951 (leaving over a quarter of a million pounds sterling), the *Times* obituarist observed—“knowledge and humour combined with pungent expression to make her lectures famous in the University, and to many students she communicated the sheer joy of sound learning”. With her death the surname Skeel became extinct in the Pembrokeshire line, although numerous descendants of the female lines are still living, one of them being the wife of the present writer.

Of Thomas Skeel, author of the manuscript under review, we know all too little. He was the younger son of Evan Skeel by Rose Watts his wife, who lived in modest circumstances in Laugharne. Of Evan's five children, four sought their livelihood in England. The elder son, Evan, settled in Bristol, the two sisters Margaret and Mary went into service in private schools in the district, while Thomas became a farm servant at Tickenham some eight miles from Bristol, and it was from there that he “went a soldier”.

Thomas enlisted in the 2nd Somerset Militia on 14 July 1803, as a substitute for one William Backer, a farmer's son. He served continuously with the unit until 22 August 1807 when he volunteered to join the 1st Battalion, 40th Regiment of Foot, for a period of seven years. Readers may be interested to learn that a Welshman was associated with the origin of this regiment. In 1717 certain independent companies of foot which had done duty for a long time in the West Indies and the American plantations, were ordered to be formed into a regiment in Nova Scotia. Designated the 40th Foot, it was placed in 1717 under command of the man who had almost entirely raised it, namely, Colonel Richard Philipps, Governor of Nova Scotia from 1720 to 1730, and later a Lieutenant-General. Richard, the second son of Richard Philipps of Martletwy in Pembrokeshire, had served at the battle of the Boyne, and later went to America, and died in 1751 at the advanced age of 90. A direct descendant from the first commander of the 40th Foot, was the late Lord Kysant, whose daughter the Hon. Mrs Fisher Hoch, T.D., D.L., lives at Plâs, Llanstephan.

The 40th took part in the American war of Independence, and in the Napoleonic campaigns, fighting magnificently at Waterloo, an honour still proudly borne on the Colours of the Regiment. On the reorganization of the army in 1881, the 40th was grouped with the 82nd (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) as the 1st and 2nd Battalions of The South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers) which has continued ever since as one of our regiments of the line.

Intelligent and Observant

Judging from Thomas Skeel's calligraphy, spelling, and sentence construction, it is clear that his schooling had been of the scantiest. Yet he had amassed a rudimentary knowledge of the three Rs, and his narrative shows him to have been intelligent and observant, while the shifts and passes to which he was often put reveal qualities of initiative and a good deal of commonsense. He was a kindly young man, always glad to see his parents, his brothers and sisters, and old

friends, and ready to help army comrades. The few philosophical reflections he permits himself suggest a capacity for assessing actions in the light of moral precepts. The fact that he wrote a "Life" at all shows that he possessed capacities above the average run of private soldiers of that time. As Dr Johnson observed in another context, the wonder is, not that it was done well, but that it was done at all.

The "Life" concerns his service in England as a militiaman, and provides an excellent, often vivid, picture of a soldier's experiences in the humdrum conditions at home stations far from the excitements and exhilarations of active service. The first thing that strikes the reader is the constant and enormous amount of marching carried out by the troops. This prepared them for the fatigues they were likely to experience under campaign conditions, and helps us to appreciate the mobility and rapidity of manoeuvre carried out by our armies during European wars and often commented upon by both friend and foe. Skeel was clearly a good soldier, and his complaints were both reasoned and few. Marching, guard and escort duty, quartering, manoeuvres, field days, reviews, furloughs, are all taken in their stride. He liked the army. When an effort was made by a Londoner to persuade him to desert, he stoutly dismissed the idea—"I told him that I liked soldiering too well to desert my Colours". Uncomplicated, occasionally somewhat naive, his outlook is summed up in words he uses several times in the manuscript—"So I done according to orders".

He had an eye for antiquities and the unusual. In off-duty hours he visited Carisbrooke castle, and saw the window through which Charles I is said to have made his escape. He handled some relics of that monarch when he called at the parish church near Ashburnham House in Sussex, namely, his spurs, armour, the gold watch "he had in his pocket when he was beheaded", the shirt he had worn on that melancholy occasion, and the winding sheet, both bearing traces of blood, all of which were kept "in a chest in the church close to the Lord's House". The Lord in question was a temporal one, whose coachman afterwards regaled Skeel and his companion to a bucketful of strong beer: "we drank about a quart apiece and thanked him and wished him good morning, but before we had got half a mile from the park, the trees appeared to us double, for it was the strongest beer I ever drank in my life. The name of the place was called Ashburnham as the gentleman was called Lord Ashburnham". This was John, 2nd Earl of Ashburnham (1724-1812.) His ancestor, John Ashburnham had been Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles I, and was well-known for his close relations with that King, which accounts for the collection of relics that Skeel

saw. His grandfather, John, created Baron Ashburnham in 1689, was *custos rotulorum* of Breconshire from 1702 to 1710, having married Bridget daughter and heiress of Walter Vaughan of Porthamel, Breconshire, and Pembrey in Carmarthenshire; his father, yet another John, was Lord of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales (1728-31), and in 1730 was advanced to the dignity of Earl of Ashburnham, and Viscount St Asaph in the Principality of Wales. The second Earl, whose beverage Skeel had so freely quaffed, held several Royal appointments—Lord of the Bedchamber, Groom of the Stole, Master of the Great Wardrobe, Keeper of Hyde Park and St James's Park—was a Privy Councillor, and Lord Lieutenant of Sussex; his wife, Elizabeth Crowley, daughter of an alderman of the city of London, had a fortune of £200,000. The family took an interest in their Welsh possessions, and in 1883 still owned 5,700 acres in Carmarthenshire and 1,400 in Breconshire.

Skeel's regiment was reviewed several times by the King, the Prince of Wales, and other members of the Royal Family. He shows George III in a favourable light, for a monarch who met troops marching in column of route and ordered them to rest saying, "The poor men are tired after their long march, I am sorry to see them"—could not fail to command the affection of his redcoats.

Resourceful Hitch-Hiker

Perhaps nowhere is the shrewdness and initiative of the private soldier shown more markedly than in Skeel's methods of travelling while proceeding on leave. "Hitch-hiking" is clearly no new pastime, and the manner in which he and his fellows, with little in their pockets, moved about the country cannot but arouse admiration. The hostility towards soldiers shown by civilians, particularly ale-house-keepers, added considerably to their difficulties. Some publicans refused to serve soldiers or accommodate them in any way, so that Skeel had to threaten to report them "to the Mayor for denying to sell to us"; and of a certain London publican he says "We knowed that he did not like the sight of a soldier in his house". But on the whole they seem to have surmounted the difficulties, often with good humour.

Furloughs were too precious to be spent in dawdling. When, at the end of 1806 Skeel and a comrade, Isaac Ledbury, went on furlough, they travelled at an amazing pace, the latter being particularly anxious to reach Frome where a loving wife awaited him. "I was pretty good myself", wrote Skeel, "but he was better. For it makes a great difference when a man has got a wife, for he will do the utmost that is in his power when he has been a long time

from seeing his wife. Perhaps I might have done the same if I had a wife".

Skeel does not pull his punches, and the narrative reveals some of the less attractive features of some of his comrades. The sickening account of an orgy in 1807 recalls Wellington's scathing strictures on the quality of the troops he was later to command in the Peninsula. Probably this incident was exceptional, and generally the narrative does not show the soldier in a bad light. However horrifying, even bestial, their conduct could be at times, we must remember that these were the men who won Britain's battles, which, after all, is what a soldier is for.

That Thomas Skeel possessed a good memory, particularly for detail, is amply demonstrated. Nevertheless, he could hardly have recalled events, places, dates, and mileages, with the precision shown in the "Life" unless he had kept some sort of diary or notebook. He wrote in 1815, yet describes the events of 1803 as if it were but yesterday. I doubt whether memory alone could have achieved this.

At first I considered omitting the more unimportant, seemingly trivial and irrelevant entries. However, it was clear that the flavour and atmosphere of the narrative, as well as some of the personality of the writer might suffer by such excision, and so I have transcribed it *in toto*. I have corrected the vagabond spelling and erratic punctuation in a few places, that clarity and readability might be maintained.

The "Life" is the authentic voice of the British soldier of Napoleonic times. Let Thomas Skeel now speak to us.

'A True and Corect Accompt'

THE LIFE OF THOMAS SKEEL, GRENADIER IN THE 40th REGT. OF FOOT; WITH ACCOUNT OF HIS TRAVELS, THROUGH ENGLAND AND WALES, IRELAND, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, AND FRANCE. JULY THE 27th 1815.
VOLUME THE 1st.

The Life of Thomas Skeel With true and corect accompt of his travels through England and Wales, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and France. In the space of that time he was 4 years and 9 months in French Prison, at that time he belonged to the 1st Battalion of the 40th Regiment of futt, July the 14th 1803.

The Beginning of this travel in the 2nd Somerset Militia. Thomas Skeel was posted in The 2nd Somerset Militia on the 14 of

July 1803, at The Star Inn, Bedminster, near Bristol. I went a sopsitute [substitute] for one William Backer of Backewell Coman in the barish of Backewell, Somerset Shire. I received 20 guineas bounty. I was quarterd night at the Angel in Ridclift Street in Bristol.

March away on the 15 at 5 a Clock in Morning with a small barty under the comand of a Sargant to Weels. 21 miles. Ther we joind a large barty of recriuts. I was quartard at the Starr Inn. We remaind in this Citty until the 9 of Augst when I march with 400 recriuts on Monday onder the comand of Majer Knott for Exeter in Devon Shier. March through Glastenbury 5 miles. Holted that night at Langport. We marched throuh Somerton 8 miles from Glastenbury. To Langport 5 miles. Holted there that night and was quartard at The Swan Inn.

The next day yearley in the morning we marchd for Ilmister. 10 Miles. Holted there one ower to refrish our self, then march [to] Chard, 5 miles. Halted ther that night, and I was quarterd at the Angel Inn. The next morning march off for Honiton in Devon Shire. We arivd there in god time. We marchd 12 miles that day. We holted in Honiton that night and was quartard at the Bell.

The next day we marchd to Exeter 16 miles. I was billeted at the Blue Anker in Castel Street. Exeter is a large citty, has 24 barish churches. We remained in Exeter untill Augt 17th. Then we marchd to Woodbury Camp 8 miles from Exeter. The 1st Somerset Militia laie in camp with us. We was revicwed several times by Gienerel Sinko durin the Campin and severel Feld dayes. We had a disagreecable Campain owing to Weet wether particular the last month. The watter was over our shoes in our tents, and a great number of our men fell sick. We remaind in camp untill the 17 of November wich [was] verry late to stop in camp. This was the forst campain I ever had. It seemd verry queer to me. I thought it great hardships. When we broock up camp we marchd into Exeter on the 17th of Novemper 8 miles. I was quartard at the Turks head in the Market Place.

We remaind in Exeter untill the 21, then marchd into cantoonments for winter quartars. The Lite Company went to Chidly [Chudleigh], 2 Company to Nutonbushel, 1 do to Brixhan, 1 do to Tinnmouth, 1 do to Dolish and Star Cross, 3 do to Berry Head Barricks. The 1st Company and the Grenadier wich was the Company I did belong to, went to Totness, wich was head quarters. We marchd to Nutonbushel the 22nd, and was quartard at the Mill Whell that night, 16 m. The next day marchd to Totness 8 miles, I was quartard at Totness at the Crownd and Anker for 6 months.

THE
LIFE
OF
THOMAS SKEEL,
GRENADIER.
IN THE 4th REG^t. OF FOOT;
With^{an} Account of his Travels, through
ENGLAND, AND WALES.
IRELAND, PORTUGAL,
SPAIN, AND FRANCE,
JULY THE 27th 1815;

VOLUME, THE Ist;

Totness is a fine town with a river running through it. There is two towns, the one called Totness, and the other Bridge Town, as the river parts it, and a fine stone bridge over the river. We remained in this town 8 months in the [w]hole, but we left the town for the fairer time. We march on Monday the 13 of May for Nutonbushel 8 miles, and march back on Saturday the 18 for Totness, and I was quartered at The Oxford Inn. During our stay in Totness I marched on command to Berry Head Barricks 11 miles, march through Brixham, a town one mile before I came to Berry head.

Berry head is at Barran Rock jutting out into the sea, with Barracks on it for soulders. I returned back to Totness on the same day the 13 of July on Friday. Nothing happened particular during our stay at Totness, only we were first to Parade in Marching Order twice in a week, and march in to the Contry 5 or 6 or 8 miles sometimes, as one day we march to Ashburton [] miles and returned the same day in heavy marching order. I will give this town the praise, for I spent many pleasant hours in this town as there was many smart young women in it.

The 16 of July we march from Totness for Plymouth. The first day march into Modbury 12 mile, billeted at the New Inn 3 miles in the country, which made that day's march 15 miles. The 17 we march through a small town called Plympton, 11 miles. Halted there one hour and a half to refresh our selves. Then marched to Plymouth 5 miles. Marched into Frankford Barracks. The 18 and 19 the remainder of the regiment march into Plymouth from their cantonments. Duty was very hard in Plymouth, every other day we are on Guard. We had to do duty in Dock 2 miles from Plymouth. The left wing of the Regiment lay in Millbay Barracks. We received the route very suddenly one morning when we was on Private flogging of a man. The route came at 11 a clock to march that night at 11 a clock for Waymouth camp. We marched on the 20 of August on Tuesday night.

The 21 we arrived at Ashburton 24 miles. I was quartered at The Golden Lyon, remained until the 22, then marched to Chidley 12 miles, but remained no longer though we had some refreshment, then march to Exeter 12 miles, 24 miles that day. I was quartered at the Ship in Goldsmith Lane. In Exeter there is a large bell which weighs 3000 pounds weight. It is in a tower by itself. While we lay in Woodbery camp I was in a small town called Topsham, and Exmouth, 4 mile each from the camp. The 23 we march to Honiton 16 miles, quartered at the Green dragon. The 24 march to Exminster [Axminster] 9 miles, billeted at the Gorge and dragon. Halted the 25 on Sunday in Exminster, and the 26 Marched to Bridport 12

miles, quartard at the White Lion. The 27 march to Dorchester 15 miles, billeted at the Queen's Armes. Bridport was the first town in Dorset Shire that road.

The King Commands

The 28, march to Weymouth camp 7 miles. The camp was one mile from the town of Weymouth. Before we came to the camp we was holted and foremd line in the road, as we soa the King coming on horseback and the Prince of Wales and Duke of York. We presented armes and saluted them. The King road up to our comand[ing] offeser, and gave ordars for us to sit down and rest our selves. He saies 'The poor men is tiered after thay long march. I am sorry to see them.' We march into the camp ground and pitchd out tents in les than half a ower.

The King cam up to camp every morning at 7 a clock to see the troops, on horseback. We had severl feald days with the roayel Famely, and severl times reviewd by them in the camp &c. Likewise by Gicnerel Fitzroay. Our duty was very hard at Waymouth. The Grenadiers had to mount gard over the Royal Famely. The 1st Somerset Shier Militia, and the Stafford shire Militia, and a Regiment of Henavarn Hors [Hanoverian Horse] wich laie in Ratepowl Barracks. The 3 Regments of Militias laye in camp, one mile from the town of Weymouth.

The 30 of October 1804 we marchd for Portsmouth. We marchd that day to Wareham. We had a verry weet day, rained all the way. We houlted in Wareham that night, 21 miles. I was quartard at the Hors and Jockey. The 31, march to Wimbourn 12 miles, quartard at the King Armes. The 1 of November we marchd to Ring Wood in Hamshire, 10 miles, quartard at the White Lion. The 2nd, marchd to Southampton 20 miles, quartered at the Bell in South Street. The 3rd, marchd to Farham 12 miles, quartard at the Red Lion. Holted the 4th on Sunday, and the 5th marchd into Portsmouth, marchd into Coalworth Barracks, wich was Headquarters. Part of the Regiment lay in Portesea Barrakes, and part at Ilsey Barracks and part at Fort Comberland Barracks, for our Regiment was strong at that time, about 19 hondred men.

Our duty was verry hard. In Portsmouth we cod scars git one night in Bead. Ginerel Hope had the comand there at that time. The 29th of November I went with a party to the Isele of Wait with 4 desartars. Inbarked at Point and landed at Woodin [Woolton] Bridge, 7 miles across the Harbour. Marchd to nere Newporte 5 miles, we give up the desartars to the Comanding Officer of the Depot 1 mile from the Town.

Then we returnd to Newporte and remaind there. That night I was quartard at the Newport Arms. The next morning I took a walk a mile in the contry to Casbroock Castel [Carisbrooke]. It is a verry ould castel. In it was King Charls the 1st confind for 6 weeks, and he made his escape oute through a window wich was in the castel. There is a well in this castel wich is one mile in depth. I returnd from the castel, and march to Ryde 10 miles from Nuport. I imbarked at Ryde in the evening of the 30 and land at Stokes Bay.

On the 22 of April 1805 I went to the Isle of Waite with 2 desartars. Inbarked at Portsmouth and disinbarked at Woodenbridge, and marchd to New porte and was quartard at the Corier Armes, and returnd the next day. The Isele of Wait is 22 miles in lenth and 16 in breath. It has 5 market towns in it. The 1st of December 1804 [1805 changed to 1804] went to the Isele of With with 9 desartars, 6 out of the 9 was Drumers wich did belong to the Sorry [Surrey] Militia. We inbarked in the morning at Point and landed at Wooden Bridge. We marchd to Newpoort and deliverd up the desartars to the depott. I and my command was quartard at the King Arms.

The 2nd, we went to Woodenbridge to Inbarck, but the sea was to ruff to goe over to Portsmouth. We remaind all day untill late in the evening at a pobelk house in the vilage. My comred's name was William Gay, and asked of me if I wod take a walk with him. He said that he had a onkel, a mother's brother, living in the Iseland at a place coald Peedcathad.

We had 8 miles to go. He and I set out on our journey to see his onkel. We did not know the road but we traveld untill night before we could meet with eney person to inquire the road. At last we spide a yong oman with a bondel of wood on her back going across a fild near us, but as soon as she spide us she toock to heels and tost the wood off her back and never loockd round untill she got oute of site. There was 3 roads and we did not know wich way to take but we went the middel road about half a mile and met with a contry man. We came close on him before he spide us or else he wood a gon back for he seemed very much frigtened. We asked him the road. He said we was in the right road and that was within 10 roads [sic] of the place. The man was verry right for we son came into the vilage, it was aboute 6 a clock. It was quite dark.

Strange Meeting

We inquired for the house that his Onkel leved in. His name was Thomas Pevat in the parish of Petheaden. We went to the door

of the house and knocked. Then came a woman to the door, and we inquired if Thos Pevat lived in that house. She stod with her arms across the door, and made ancer and said he was not in. Wat do you want with him? My comrade made ancer and said he was his onkel, his mother's brother. She sais I am his doter, and stod all the time with her arms extended across the dore. When will my onkel com home? I don't know. She ses at last, will you come in? So we went into the house.

She sate down by the fier and left us standing behind in the dark. Never asked us to set down. It was a very cold night but we sate down on a form some distance from the fier. We thought it was no use to wait untill she asked us or elce we might a staid untill this time. In the cors of half of a nower the old man came in, and my comrid made his self known to him that he was his sister's son. The old man shook hands with him, and tears came in his eyse. He saies, is my sister a live? William sed yes and in good health when I left hom, wich was not long since.

The old man said, My dear newew I am glad to see you and shod be glad to see your poor mother, but I am a fraid I never shall as I am verry old. I have not sen hear this 30 years. The old man went and fetch a long faggot of wood and made up a large fier, and orderd us to com close to the fier and warm our selves, wich we did. But his doater loock verry black on us all the time. The old man went out for some time, and returned with a bottel of brandy, warmed som watter and asked his doter if she had som shuger in the house.

She made answer and said she had got som to sell. He saide sell me one pound, and he paid hear for it, and made the grog, and put bread and cheese on the tabel and bid us eate and drink and be merry, for it all be longs to mee. His doater sate by the fier and a yong child, and never spoak one woord good nor bad. In a short time her husband came in, a carting fellow, but he had not got sence to say enething but to gase on us.

The old man said, Son and doater this yong man is my sister's son whom I never soa in my life, nor [have] you, so do not be so strange but com and drink with him and the other yong man and let us make them welcom for this is the last time I ever shall see them, as my days is all most spent.

So the son in loa and the dotar toock a glass of grog a peece because they knowd they did not pay for it, but never drank our health but loocked as black on us as if my comrad was a disgrase to

them, but they was a fraid we shod remain there all night, for the dotar spooke and said she got no place for us to lie. But the old man said, I will make place for them, for they shall sleep in my bead and I will be on the ground.

But what a rage she got in when the old man spok those woords. You know there is no room in my house for them. As she spook these words there came tears in the old man's eyes for he was trobeled to the hart. My comrid spoke these words, Cuson [cousin] but you are not worthy to be coald so. For my self nor my comrid do not mene to remain in your house all night for we wod sooner lie under the hedge then lie in your house. For we have got money plenty in our pockets to pay for our lodgins if we think proper. But if there was no other house in the island but youres we wood not stay here, for this is the first time that I ever was in your house, and it shall be the last, for you have no reson to dispise a souldier, for I think my self as good as you, and you have got shildren of your own, and you do not know what they will com to before they die. So the discourse ended, and she and her hosband went to bed and never wished us good night.

But we and the old man eate and drank all the grog. Then we got up to wish the onkel good night, for it was a past 9 a clock and it was time for us to go to see for some lidgins. His onkel said there was no puplick howes within 1 mile of us and it was late, so he desiered of us to remain there. That we woud not, but we thanked him. He said I would goe part of the way with us, bu we desiered of him to not come as it was could and a dark night, but he wod com. On the roade we hade a littel discoris about the dotter and son in loa. The poor old man said I was onc well to do but that he give all that he had to his doater and son in law at thayr marage as she was his onley child, but after they got all thay could thay slited me verry much and do make me pay for all that I do have to eat and to drink and likewise for my lodgins. They keep a small groocers shop but I paies for all I have. I have nothing but what I am forced to work for my daily labour, but my labour is all most don, then I must go on the parish. That I got by my good will.

Turned Out in Snow

The old man came with us half a mile. He wod insist on coming with us all the way, but we wod not leve him com any fardar and forced on him going back. So we shoock hand with him and parted. With the thears in his eyes he said, I shall never see you eny more, my dear yong men good by and God bless you both for ever. William Gay, and I travald on untill we came to a small vilage, a

littel better than a mile from the old man's house. The first poplick house we came to we coaled in and coaled for a Pott of Bear and sate our selfs down. The landlordde of the house sate by the fier. She loocked like a old witch for she had a hump on her back and loocked verry frifful. There was a fine yong woman in the house wich was her doatter, and a sailor wich was her sweetharte as we did suppose.

The landlord came in in a shoart time afterwards. We asked if we could git lodgins for that night, wich the ould oman mad ancer, No you cannot for I have but one bead in the house, and it is better for you to go loock for lodgins to som other place. I made ancer and said, The inhabitants of the vilage is all gon to bead for it a past 10 a clock. She saies No, there is a alehouse a littel fardar up on the left hand will give you lodgins, for they are not gone to bead. I said to William you stay hear and I will goe and see if I can get lodgins, and I will return back and let you know.

She says go both of you and shure to get lodgins. I said no you remain untill I return. She wanted us both to quitt the house and so lock the door, but I was up to her chime. I went all over the vilage but every door was locked and every one in bead, so I returned. It snowed verry hard and verry could night it was. When I came into the house I tould my comerd every person was in bead, and there was no lodgins to be gott. So he said we must remained hear as we have got money to pay for our bead. The old woman said No you shall not stay hear uppon no consideration what so ever for I will not keep a souldier in my house.

I made ancer and said Mistress do you count your self a Christian. She saies yes I am. you are, I do not coall eny person a Christian if they turn poor souldirs oute of doors in a could snowey night like this, for we have no other vow [*sic*] than to be frose to deth before the morning. What is that to me if I have no place for you, I cannot keep you. The sailor spoke at last and said you must goe from hear for the people have no roome for you. William made ancer and said we will not goe from hear this night nor yet you nor all the peppel in the house shall not make us go. For we did not vallew them.

The old man spok for the first time, we can lett them sleep in the hay loft. We agreed to goe to the hay loft, but wen we went there the top of the rooffe of the house wall all in hoals and the snow entering in. William steps oute of the straw and said, I b-d. if I stope hear, for if you have no beade we will site by the fire side. So we made the best of oure way to Woodinbridge. We arrived

wod lock the door and keep us oute. So we went into the house and remained there. So we coaled for a nother pot of bear, and they semed to be more reconciled.

The sailor by this time was begining to gitt merry and asked us if we cod sing a song or 2. So we sang 3 or 4 songs and pleased the company verry well. Then thay drank to us and we was all goodfrinds. Aboute 12 a clock the old woman broate us up staiers and shoude us a good beade and we slepted well all night, and the next morning we paide for our lodgins and wished them good morning, it being a Sunday morning and the snow verry deep on the ground. So we made the best of oure way in Woodinbridge. We arrived there before the party was gone. We inbarked in the small boate and landed at Portsmouth.

Marchd from Portsmouth the 10th of July for Waymouth camp. The 11th on Thursday we inbarked in small boats and went over the rever to Gosport and marchd to Southampton 19 miles, billitad at the gorge. The 12th, march to Ringhood, 20 miles, quartared at the Fish. The 13th, march through Wimbourne, holted there one ower to refresh our selfs, 10 miles. Then marchd off for Wareham 12 miles. Marched 22 miles that day. I was quartared at the Bishop Blase. The 14th, holted on Sunday. The 15th, marchd to Waymouth Camp 19 miles. The camp was 2 miles from Waymouth Town. We had to do duty in Weymouth over the Roayell fameley, the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales and Duke of York and the Duke of Comberland and the Duke of Clarence and Duke of Gloucester and 3 of the Princes, and we was reveud by the Roayel famely severl time.

King's Daily Visits

We had 3 fild days every week and 2 captell (?capital) sham fites 8 miles from the camp. We had verry plesand wether during our camp pain. The King did use to come to the Camp every morning with Ginerel Fezroay (Fitzroy), a coppell of servants. His Majesty is a verry yearley riser. He did go verry often in his yott a pleshierin. He went out to sea one day, and the wind changed and he was untill a 11 a clock at night before he come in. I was on sentry the same time at the King Stoeps [steps] when he landed. The poppel was afraid he was lost. I am going to menshan a fue words about Portsmouth I forgot.

The 3d Roayal Lankey Shier Militia laic with us in Portsmouth. April the 16th a voluntering took place in the Militia Regments. We had 400 men that volinterd oute of our Regiment for different

Rigments of the line and Futt Guards and Attelery [Artillery] and Marrens [Marines]. The whole of the volinters marched to Winchester on the 18, 1805, wich was head quarters for the hole of the volinters in that districk. On the 17th of March, a partey of our Rigment guarded 7 waggons loded with money from Portsmouth to London. The money was taken from the Spaniers [Spaniards] at sea. The 4th of June we marched to Porthdown Hill, the King's Bearth day, and fiered a fute de joy. 6 mile from Portsmouth with all the volinters, 1805.



A Private in the Somerset Militia,
circa 1812

In Way camp the different Rigments wich lay with us, first, the 21st North Britches [British] fusiliers, the 31st or Yong Buffs, the 35th Rigment of futt, of the line, the 15th Light Horse and 2 Rigments of Hanevarn horse, part of the Roayell train of Hevey Atelery, and som of the fline [Flying] Atelery, the North York Shiers Militia, and the first Roayill Lankey Shiere Militia, the first Somerset Shiere Militia, and the 2nd Somerset Shiere Militia the Rigment wich I did belong to. The number of men wich was in camp amounted to a 11 thousand and 5 hondards, a fine boddy of men as I ever soa at that time. The camp began to breck up on the 28th of September. Our Rigment march of the camp, October the 12th, in 2 devishons, the 2nd Devishon went to Weymouth that night, the 1st Devishon wich I did belong to, marched the first day to Dorchester, 6 miles. I was quartered at the Antlope.

The 13th, halted on Sunday. The 14th, marchd to Blandford, 16 miles, billited at the Ship. The 15, marchd to Salsbury in Willshire 23 miles, quartared at the White Swan. Salsbury is a citty with the highist spier to the cathedral in England. The 16th marchd to Stock Bridge in Ham Shier, 15 miles, quartard at the King Armes, 3 miles in the contry, wich was 18 miles, I marched that day. On the 17 marchd to Winchester, 9 miles, billited at the Blue Bell. The 18th, marchd to Horsford [?Alresford], 8 miles, we holted there one ower to git som refreshment, then marchd to Petersfild, 16 miles, quartard at White Hart. The 19th, marchd to Meadett [Midhurst] in Sussex.

Holted to get som refreshment half a nower, 10 miles, then marchd to Piteworth [Petworth], 8 miles, marchd that day 21 miles, quartard 3 miles in the contry. The 20th, holted on Sunday. The 21, marchd to Harlington, 7 miles, holted there one ower to refresh ourselves, then marchd to Staning [Steyning] 16 miles, quartard at the Gorge and Dragon, marchd that day 23 miles. The 22 day, marchd to Lewis 18 miles quartred at Blacksmith Armes 3 miles in the contry. 23rd, marchd to Hailsham, 13 miles, quartard at the Britchis [British] Grenadier. The 24th, marchd for Silver Hill Barricks. I was on the baggage guard that day, so I hard there was som curiosities to be sen at a Lords house, a littel distance from the road, so I and two men more got leave of the Sargant of the Guard to go and see thies quiroseats [curiosities].

Royal Relics

When we came to the Gentelman's seate we inquired of the sarvants if there was enthing worth seeing. The dairey maid informed us there was, and that it was her privelege and that she wod

goe and show us. Immedley the yong oman broat us to the Church whare these things was to be scene. You most understand that it was som wearing aparel &c wich wance did belong to King Charles the first which was beheadd. The 1st thing we soa was a gold watch witch he had in his pocket when he was beheadd. It was very large. I had it in my hand and did examming the insides works, the main spring, and the chain was very fare and strong and all the workes was suprising strong, quite dirfent to the workes in watchies at this present time. The 2nd articels we soa was his shirrt wich he had on when he was beheadd. The 3rd was a paier of irons, the 4th a white sheate wich he was laid oute on. There was severel spoots of blood on the shurt and sheete. The yong woman towld us that they was washd severel times and the blood never could be washd out unto this day, wich was very suprising. There was a paier of spures and his armer to be sean. These things was locked up in a chist in the church close to the Loards house.

After we had sen all that was to be sen, we asked the young woman what we had to pay. She made ancer, Nothing for soldiers. Peppel that could afoard it she made them pay. When we came oute we mett the cochman. He towld us to follow him, that he wod show us a much plesenter site. So we don acording to oarder. He broat us into the stabell and gave us a stabell buckett of strong bear wich he had coverd up. The bear was 7 year old. We drank about a quart apiece and thanked him and wishd him good morning, but before we had got half a mile in the Parke the trees apeard to us dubell, for it was the strongest Bear I ever drank in my life. The name of the place was could Ashburnam and the Gintelman was coaled Lord Ashburnam, 3 miles from Battel.

We arived at Battel bifore the Baggadge Gard came in. Battel is a small town 14 miles from Hailsham. In this town there was a great battel foute in former times. There was no town there at that time, but they bilt this town in the place the battel was foute and so coald the name of the town Battel. Hear the best gun powder is made, wich takes its name from this town, the Best Battel Gun Powder. When the baggage [came] to the town they hoalted there one ower to reffrish themselves, and in the [evening] we did arive at Silver hill not till 12 a clock at night, and it rained verry hard all the way. We was like drowned rats before we came to Silverhill Barracks. We had no beds to lye down on that night, but was foared to lye in my wett cloos all night.

Silver Hill Barracks is on a hill allmost seerounded with woods. It is on the boarders of Kent, no town nier to it then Battel wich is

8 miles. 22 miles I marchd that day. There is 2 vilages near it, Roabarts Bridge 2 miles from it, Hurs Green 1 mile from it. We had but lettel duty to do hear.

Towards the foall of the year they began to give out forlos [furloughs], so I got one granted me. William Russell and I got our forlos on the 25 of November 1805. We began our jorna [journey] that night so far as Tonbridge. We passt a small town coald Tonbridge Wells, a great place for the qualitey in the sesen for the benefitt of their health, as there is so fine hott springs in this town. It is in Kent, 14 miles from Silver Hill. We lodge that night at Tonbridge a town 5 miles from Tonbridge Wells. That was 19 miles we traveld that evening. After 4 a clock we arrived at the town about half past 9.

An Hour In London

The next morning we began ouer road at 3 a clock in the morning it bing verry dark, so we went oute of ouer roade 3 miles wich [was] a great horte to us. We went through Sevenoaks 7 miles, then came to Bromley 9 miles. Then came to the cittey of Westminster joining London 12 miles. We arrived in London at 1 a clock in the middel of the day.

We stopt in London one ower to reffrish ouerselves, then marchd to Brantford 5 miles. From that to Hounslo 5 miles. It being then night, and we was tiered, we went to git lidgins for the night. But we happened to foall in with a roade waggen wich was just going off. We agreed with the waggoner to take us up for 6 pence apeace and share of a pott of bear. Went in the waggen and lay down as it was a covered waggen. We arivd in Coalbroock [Colnbrook] at a 11 a cloak at night and went to the inn whare the waggen did put up at. We could not gitt a bead in the house, and there was no house oppen in the vilage. We was forest to sitt up by the fier all night. At 4 a clock in the morning we began our journey. We arived at Maidenhead yearley in the morning, 9 miles. We stopt hear half a nower, to breckfast, then marchd to Reading in Bark Shire, 13 miles, remained there one ower to diner, then marchd to Newbury 17 miles. I never was so tiered in my life. At that time I was allmost nock up before we reatched the town. We got lodgings in Newbury that night and did not rise oute of bead untill 8 a clock next morning, for we came the day before 39 miles.

When I got up in the morning I could hardly put one futt before the other. We was resolved not to goe far that day, we travald on to Marlborough in Wilts Shire, 17 miles. We holted

there one ower to gitt something to eat, and in the publick house there was 2 gentelmen drinking, and the fell into discourse with us, and wich way we was travlin to. We towld them, to Bath. So there came a coch to the dore wich they had hiered to goe to Devizes. Thay said, soulders we will give you a lift. We thanked them and I got up into the coach and my comrad got up behind, and we drove away in greate hast, and ariyd at Devizes in less than 2 owers and a half. We let at the head inn and thay orderd us in and gave us a pott of gin hot to drink. I forgot to menshan that it came verry hard rain on the road, and thay orderd my comrad to com inside that he nedent get wet, so we was so thick in the coach that we could not stur. We thanked them very kindly and took oure leefe of them, for we was resolved to goe to Millsum [Melksham] that evening.

We arivd at Millsum just at dark, 6 miles. We went into a poblick house to git som lodgins, and in the time there came a return chaise to the doore and the coachman came in to gitt a pint of bear, and he asked of us wheare we was going to. We towld him to Bath. He said I am going to Bath to night, and if you like I will take you for 6 pence apeace and share a pot of beer. So we agreed with him, and got into the chease and drove off.

Assault on Turnpike Gate

We came to a Turnpike Gate not far from Bath, and the man wod not open the gate without payment. The cochman said he had paid in the morning and wod insist on going through without paying the 2nd time, witch was nothing but right. But the man wod not open the gate on eney acount without paying agen. The cochman turned about the chaise and went back to hondered yards and wipped the horses to force open the gate but could not do it the first time, he tried the 2nd time and failed, the 3rd time he went back 3 hounded yards and so came up to the gate at full speed, and as the horses came close to the gate he did cutt and slash the horses and forsed open the gate in quick time. So we left the gate kepper cursing and swering. We arrived in Bath at 7 a clock, a 11 miles.

We lodged that night at the White Lyon tapp, and the next morning went to inquier from my comarade's sisters as he had 2 sisters in Bath. My comerade's name was William Russell. We spent the best parte of the day with them untill night. We gave 1s 6d to ride on the maiel to Bristol. We arivd at Bristol at 6 a clock that evening. It was to late for me to goe to my brother's or sisters that night, for I had a misfortain on the roade from Bath to

Bristol—my cap fell of my head and the whele went over it and churst it up in a lomp, so I had work to clean it before I could go enether ware. William and I slept at the [lacuna] Tunbell Street that night, and the next morning William went off for Axbridg to see his father and mother wich was about 18 miles from Bristol.

Then I took a walk to see my brother and sisters wich livd in Bristol. My brother was married, and kept house, whear I made my house. My sisters was in sarvis. One lived at Clifton at a Boarding her name was Margrett. My other, name was Mary, she lived at Rownam at a Gentlemans house. They all behaved remarkable well to mee.

After I had bin there a fue days I took a walk in the contry to see my old master, at Tickenham, a place where I did use to work before I went a soldier. This vilage is 8 mile from Bristol. Durin the time I remained at Tickenham I went to see Mr. Backer the farmer I went a substitute for. He was verry kind to me and when I came away he gave me half a giney to dring his helth. My old master, Mr and Mrs Westcott behaved remarkable well to me, and likewise Mr Edgar and his famely and Mr and Mrs Semins, and all the naibours round that part of the contry. Mr. Simens is daughter Salley was ill in a delirium, a smart yong oman. I had the blesher of seeing the yong oman before she died.

I left the vilage the next day and returned to Bristol. I had acount that the yong woman Sally Simens was dead, so I went oute to the contry to hear Funeral and returned to Bristol and spent the remain of my time with my frinds.

I had a great wish to goe to Wales to se my father and mother, but I could not as I had but 1 month to be absent from my ridgment. The 21 of December I left Bristol. I went on the coach from the Appel Tree in Broad Mead. The faier was 11s 6d from Bristol to London. There was a yong man, a Corporal wan of the same Regiment, whent a passenger with me. He had bin on forlo to see his friends. We stopt at Bath to chang horsis. We changed horsis 4 times and the coach and coachman twice, between Bristol and London. We went through Chipenham, a town in Wilts shire, 13 miles from Bath. Bristol is 12 miles from Bath.

After we left Chipenham we went through the same towns as we did in coming down. Marlborough was the next town we went to, 19 miles, then to Newburry, then to Reading, both towns in Berk Shier, and Maidenhead, likewise, Coalbrock is a vilage in Buckenham shier, hounslo and Brentford is in Middlesex. The 22nd we

enterd London about 3 a clock in the evening. It rained very hard. We was weat to the skin on the coach. The inhabitants of London made great sporte of us because we was so wet, for the rain did power down as we went along the streets. Som did pittu us, and others did make funn at us. We came to Charing Crooss where the coach did stop.

Soaked and Unwanted

When we lit of the coach we cod scarce stand, for we was almost benomed with cold. We mad the beast of our way to som bobleck house to dry our selves. The first we came to we went inn but the landlorde loocked verry black and said there was no place for us in his house. So we went to a nother house and thay was worst for they wod not let us enter into the house upon eney considershon watsoever. So we went to the 3 Bobeleck house and they was so bad, but the corporal and I was resolved to go inn on force. So we mad for the fier and coald for a pott of portar, but they said they had got none. We asked them what was the men drinking that was in the house. It is the last we have. Well we will waite a leettel and see. The men wich sat by the fier made room for us to com to it to dry ourselves. We towld the landlord if he did not sell eney to eney other person while we remaind in the house we wod report him to the Maier for denieng to sell to us. We had not bin in the house long before he broat us a pott of portar, and we staid there 2 owers and got quite dry. He kept gromlin all the while because we toock up the fier place, but we did not care for him, for the men in the house was on ower sides. He said that he had no place for us to sleep. We knowed that he did hate the site of a solder in his house. So when we had dride our selves middling we left the house and went to a nother where we was intertained verry well. My comred happend by chance to meet with his brother at that house. He was Captan of a Merican sloop, so he went with his brother, and I did not see him until the next day.

So I was left with a lot of fisherwomen 3 parts drunk. There was 6 gintmen drinking in the parler, and I sen them take great notis of me siting and drinking by my self, and loocking at the drinking women. One of them called me in to the parler and bade me sit down and drink with them as my comered was gone and left me. They did discors with me and give me plenty of ponch untill 10 a clock, and wod not let me pay enething. So I thanked them kindley and wished them good night and went to bead.

The next day I went to dine at a coock shop along with a black sailer wich I had fel in acquaintance with at the popeleck house,

the fore part of the day. While we both was at diner in a room by ower selves there came a proud fop into house and asked the oman if she had got no place to sit down. The omen made ancer and said yes sur, there is 2 gentelmen in this littel roome; you are welkom to sit with them if you pleas. He looked in at the doore and soa the Black and me. He made a stand as if he had bin fritned. Is these the Gentelmen wich you recommend me to? He sed no more but went out. He thought a Black and a soulder was 2 queer gentelmen. The Black was verry much afronted about.

A Chance to Desert

After diner was over we returned to the pobelick house. There was a man drinking in the house, and he fell in discorse with me. He asked me severl questans. Wher I was on forlo or discharge. I towld him on forlo. He overhoald me many ways, thinking I was a disartar. I did not like to show him my forlo because it was up that day. At the same, my comrade came inn and his brother, so we sate all together at the tabel drinking. So the man did not quistion me eney more that time. We sat drinking together for half a nower. Then the captain tock his lefe of his brother, as the vesel was going to saile that evening.

In a short time afterwards this same man as I spoke of before coald me a one side to speak with me. I went with him. He towld me if I wod desarte and go with him, he had a sute of colered cloes and that he wod give them to me to put on, and throw the Redgmentals away, but I towld him that I liked souldring to well to desarte my Colers. I knowd that he was one of London sharpars, for if I had consinted he wod a bin the first that wod a taken me up for disarter, and got 50 shillins by me. That was what he wanted.

The Corporal and I went to bead that night, and in the morning made the best of ower way for the regiment. We went through Deptford a village 4 miles from London, in Kent, then march to Bromley, 8 miles, stopt there to have som refreshments. Then traveld to Sevenoaks, 9 miles. My comread fell sick in that town and coued not goe eney further so I was forced to go and leve him behind. I traveld on to Tonbridge, 7 miles. I could into a Pobelick house to have a pint of portar, then marchd to Lambhurs [Lamberhurst] a 11 mile further.

I was very tiered. I could in to the first pobelick house I came to, to loock for lodgins, for I had traveld that day 39 miles. In this house ther was two of my Regment drinking, there was a detchment [detachment] of the riment in his town doing duty over a Magsene,

and these 2 men was quartard in the house. They was drinking and singing and was verry merry as it was Crismas Eve. The landlady towld me I should lodge there. I was glad of it. I got plenty of drink, the 2 soulders for they nowd I was poor coming off forlo they sed. They was verry right, for I had but 6 pence in the world. I paid 3 pence for my lodgins and went to bead. The next morning I got a glass of brandy and paid the other 3 pence and began my journa.

I arived at Silverhill about a 11 clock in the fore non, 8 mile. So I had my Crismas diner with my old frind Allick Jordain. Shortly afterwards my old comrad the Corporal came in 2 days afterwards. William Russell was at the Rignent before I was. I had not bin with the redgment long before I was taken sick in the fever and ague. It was the wetting I had going to London was the cause of it. Marchd from Silverhill Barricks the 30th of June 1805 (?1806). the 2 divishon march the 1st of July. I was in the first divishon. The first day march to Battel 8 miles. I was quartard 3 miles in the contry at the Black horse, 11 miles marchd that day. The 1st of July, march to Hailsham, 14 miles, had no billet that day. I was quartard 8 miles from the town with 19 more and when we came to ouer billats they had 20 men before hand. So we was forced to lie in stabels of eney place we cod. For it was too far to go back to the town for we had marchd 22 miles before.

The next day, July the 2nd, marchd to Blatchington Barracks 14 miles. The 12th of July 1806, William Gay and I went to Lewis on a littel biseness 10 miles, and from Lewis went to Brighton 8 miles. We went on the coach from Lewis to Brighton, for it we paid one shilling and sixpence. We remaind in Brighton that night and in the morning returnd to Blatchington Barracks 17 miles. The 11th of August, the 2nd Somerset Militia and the 88th Rignent of futt and the North thumberland shire Militia and the East Devon shire Milita and the 17th Light Draghoons was reviewed by the Duke of York and the Prince of Wales at Beachey Head.

Blatchington Barracks is built close on the sea beach, half a mile from a small town coald Seaford. It is a no market town, but a Cinque Ports town. There is no market town nigher to it then Lewis and that is 10 miles. [On] October the 10th forloes began to be given oute in the Rignent. All the men cast lotts to se wich wod goe first, but the men that was on forlo the last year was not to go. So I was one of that number, but there was a man by the name of William Hurlle one of the same Company wich droade the 3rd number, wich was to goe on the 10 of December, and he offerd to sell his chance to eney man that wod give him 10s and 6d, wich I

give it to him, immedulenty [?immediately], and share of a poat of bear in the Bargan, as I had a great inclinashon to goe to Wales to see my father and mother, as I had not bin in my own contry for 4 years and 8 munths. All the way was verry far, about 300 miles, and only 1 months [?absence], to go and to return in.

On the 12 of December 1806, I and one Isack Ledbury, one of Frome in Somerset shier, wich was my comred at the time. We began our jorna. After Brickfast we traveld to Brighton wich was 14 miles. Then we holted half a nower to git som refreshment. Then marchd on to Shoreham 8 miles. Did not remain there but a short time, to take a pot of bear, it being late, but we was resolved to goe to Arendel that night. When we was with[in] 3 miles of the town I was all most nocked up with fatuge [fatigue]. I could harley reech the town, but with great difficulty I did rech the town with Isack, as I was not willing to be left behind. It was 9 a clock when we did rech the town of Arendel 16 miles. We traveld that day 38 miles. We got lodgins that night in a pobelick house. We was verry tiered. We got som supper and went to bead. Ouer bead was on a loft over head a stabel. There was no staiers to go up to it, but a lader.

Yearley in the morning about 4 a clock on the 13th we got up and dond ouer cloes, and was going down the lader, but I had forgot of the opening that was in the loft, I bing formost, but I mist my step and fell to the bottom of the lader on the ground. I fell on my right side of my hip. I laie some time on the ground before I could moove my self. My comred thoate I was dead. Isack came down the lader as quick as bosebel to my assistance and tock me up. I did not horte my self so bad as I did expect, but the frite was the worst. The stabel was beach with poppel [cobble] stones but ther was a lettel hors dong in the place wher I fell wich saved me a littel. I fell about 7 feet from the loft to the ground. Isack coald the land-lord and toweld him that his comred was allmost dead. So he got up and broate me into the dwelling house and bathed my hipp with warm vinger wich done it a deal of good.

So we remaind in the house untill 5 a clock and got ouer brek-fast. Then began ouer jorna, but I was very stiff for some time until I got warm. At Chichester, a citty, we stopt half a nower to reflash ouer selfs, wich was 10 miles from Arendell. Then we traveld on to Emsworth a small town 7 miles, then to Havent a small vilage 3 miles. Stopt there to have a pint of bear, then traveld on to Farnham [Fareham] a town, 9 miles. Stopt there to have a littel refreshment, then marchd to Southampton a large town in Hampshire. Farnham is in the same county. Southampton is 10 miles from

Farnham. It was between 7 and 8 a clock when we came to Southampton. I forgot to tell that we had a lift 8 miles in a waggon that day. We staid in a poblick house half a nower to give the waggener something to drink.

A Wet Deception

Isack said that it was best for us to go on to Rid Bridge that night, a small vilage 3 miles from Southampton as we shod be farder on ouer road the next day. But before we had scarce gon one mile from Southampton, when Isack and I was walking along the road, it being darkish, the roade was verry weet and dorty as it had rained a deal that day. Isack said, Thomas come to the left, there is a nice road a lettel to the left, it appears nice and dry. I said go on, I will follow you. He made the best of his way to the nue road and I was following him as fast as posebel, but all of a sodan he foals into a frish watter river, over his head.

He cries out, Thomas help me, help me, for God's sake for I am in the middel of a river. I went immediately to his assistance and pulled him oute. He had not one dry thread on but what was weet. The rever was not verry deep, but he fell in from a high bank, so he was all onder watter. He was verry much fritend that [he] could not stand for som time. I braote him to the first poblick house we came on the left side of the road. As it happend there was one verry handey, so we got in to it and got lodgins. We had traveld that day with the lettel we road in the waggon 40 miles. This was a verry sivel house, we had verry good useage of it. The oman of the house broate a sute of her husband's cloes to my comred to put on while his was put by the fier to dry.

We had som super and went to bead, and rose up in the morning to proceed on ouer jorna. Isack's cloes was quite dry so we got ouer brekfast, and paide the landorde for our lodgins and returned her thanks for her sevelery [civility]. It being then a Sondag morning on the 14th day of December 1806. We travald to Saulsbury 21 miles. We came in to the cittey at one a clock, so we went in to a poblick house to get som vittels and drink. During the time we was in the house it came to hard rain and likely to be a wet evening, so I tried to perswade my comrade to stope in the house untill Monday, as it wod be bad travelling if it continued raining all the evening, as there was no other likehood. But he did insist upon going and I did made up my mind to stop. So he and I did parte for that time. I never soa a better traveler than he was. I was pertey good my silf, but he was better. He sed he wod be a tome [at home] before he slept, along with his wife. For it makes a

great drefrence when a man has got a wife, for he will do the oute-most that is in his power when he has bin a long time from seeing his wife. Praps I med a don the same if I had a wife. I made my self verry comfortabel in the house all the evening. It was a wet evening for it rained all the time.

Saulsbury is a citty in Will shire. It has the highest speer to the Cathedral of eney in England. I went to bead after super and slept verry comfortable. In the morning of the 15th after brekfast I was going to begin my jorna by my self, but ther came a one Corporal Wale of the same Company, and a nother soldier of the same Rigmment, in to the house jest as I was going oute. So I went in with them to take share of a pott of bear. Then we 3 began ouer journey. We went as far as Warmster a town 22 miles. Went over part of Saulsbury Plaine. Ther is one road over this plain, 21 miles, and onely one house, half ways, it is coald the hutt.

We staid in Warmster one hower to have oure diner and then pursued on ouer jorna to Froom, a large town in Somerset shier, 7 miles, 29 miles we marchd that day. We put up at the sine of The Lam. The next day wich was the 16th, the Corporal and the other yong man went a nother roade, so I was left alone agen. My old Comred gave me directions to coall at his house when I did com through Froom. I mean Isack Ledbury wich parted from me at Saulsbury a Sunday morning. I soon found him out and was invited to brekfast with him and his wife. She was a desant oman and behaved verry kind to me. I asked Isack when he reched home that night or not. He towld me that he did about a 11 a clock at night, so he marchd that day 50 miles. He could hardly move the next day.

I remaind in Froom untill one a clock, as it was a weet morning. I mitt [met] in the street 5 soldiers of the same Rigmment wich was going to Wells, the next town. So we hied a covered cart, and baid 1s 6d a peace, to ride to Wells. We arivd at Wells between 5 and 6 clock in evening. 15 miles. We all put up at the Star inn, as it was my old quartars. All my comreds was recolvd to go home that night, but they was going a different road to what I was going. They had 8 miles to go, so they tock theyer leefe of me and proceeded on theyer jorna.

I got my sopper and went to bead, and the next morning being the 17th, I proceeding on my jorna towards Bristol, but my 2 sisters Margaret and Mary had removed from Bristol to a small vilage coald Chumagna [Chew Magna] 7 miles from Bristol, so I did

inquier at a bobelick house on the road for this vilage. The landlord towld me I was but one mile from it, so in a short time rechd the vilage. I went in to a pobelick house to refrish my self. I towld the landlord of the house that I had 2 sisters living in sarvis in the vilage. She asked of me their names and with who thay lived. I towld her they lived at a boarding school with one Miss Epsler. She towld me she knowd them verry well, so she sent her littel girl to coall my sister and in a short time she came, but did not expect to see me. She thought I had bin my brother Evan which livd in Bristol.

She was overgoayed to se me, and likewise my sister Marrey. I spent that day with them, and the best part of the next, as the scollars was gon home for the holidays. Chumagna is 12 miles from Wells. Late in the [lacuna] on the 18 tock my lefe of my sisters and came to Bristol 7 miles from Chumagna. I whent that night to my brother's, and the next day, the 20, I went to the contry to Tickenham to see my old master and old acquaintances. They was glad to see me. So the 21 I returned to Bristol 8 miles.

Hazardous Channel Crossing

I remaind in Bristol untill the 23 with my brother and sister-in-loa, waiting for a visel to go to Wales. I agreed with on Captan Loide, wone of Tenby. I went on boarde the slooppe on Sunday the 23rd of December 1806.

At 2 a clock in the evening I was to pay 5 shilins for my passage from Bristol to Tenbey in Pembrock shier. We went down the river that evening to Pill, and came to anker to waite for a faier winde. We ad on board 2 men passengers, and 2 woman, beside myself, wich made 5 passengers altogether. On the 24 we waid our anker, and set sail, but had a bad wind. On the 25th came to anker onder the English shore.

On the 26th we waid ouer anker and set saile but the wind kept still against us. Wat we thought tidee it down the chanel, but on the 27th at night we had som high winds. We was then below the flats homens [holms], the sea ron verry high, and our bowsprit broock off cloes to the bow. So the Captan trid to make for the Harbour of Penarth, but we had hard work to reach to harbour becoas of ouer boulsprit being gon. But thank God we rechd the harboer at 8 a clock on Friday morning the 28 of December.

The Captan was going on shore to Cardiff to buy canvas to mend som of his sailes as they were much toare with the wind, so I went on shor with him to proceed on my jorna by land as I was

tiered on bord becoase the winds med brove contry [might prove contrary] for 2 or 3 weeks, and before that time my forlo wod be expiered. So I landed at Cardiff the 28th, and was resolved to march by land. The Captan wod not bate me one farthing of the 5 shillings, so I paid him the money and began my jorna and had not traveld above 2 miles before 3 soldiers of the Glamorgan shier Militia overtock me when I [was] getting of a pint of ale in a pobelick house, they came from Bristol by land, thayer regiment lay there. They where going to Swansea on forlo, that was just right for me as it was the same roade that I was going, as it is much better to have company along the road then to go alone, as the time passes away much beatter.

We traveld to Cowebridge, a town 12 miles from Cardiff. Cardiff is 3 miles from Penarth. In Cowebridge we got a return chaise for 1 shilin apeace, to a Inn on road coald Pile, 18 miles from Cowbridge. We went that day on the coach 22 miles. We got lodgins that night at Pile. The people was verry sivel to us. We had ouer soper and went to bead. We was charged verry resenably for everything that we coald for. The landlord towld us that there wod be a return chaise there about 12 or 1 a clock in the night and that for a trifell we might have a lift. We desiered to give us a coall when the chaise did com, and according to oardars he coall us about 12 a clock, so we got som ale to treat the coachman as he did [not] charge us enething.

We arivd at Bruton ferry before day, 15 miles. Aberavon is 20 miles from Coebridge. We past by Aberavon that morning. Bruton ferrey is 3 miles from Abaravon. The coach was going to Neeth, as it was the main road. But he towld us the highest way was for us to go across the fierris to Swansa. So we lit oute of the coach and thanked the coach man, and went to Bruton ferry, but could not go over as it was not 4 a clock in the [lacuna]. Whe went to a pobelick house near the Ferry, but could git no entrance, so there was an old house near it with stroa in it. So went into it and covered ouerselves with stroa, for it was verry could. We slept in the stroa untill 7 a clock when there cam an old man into the house and waked us. The people of the pobelick house was up at that time, so we went in to have somthing to drink, for we wher jost starved with could.

Then we went across the ferry and went over the sands to Swansa 6 miles. We arrived at Swansa about 10 a clock in the morning. One of my comrades was a Corporal, so we all went to the New Inn to have som refreshment. The other 2 yong men lived 6

or 8 miles in the contry. When we enterd into the pobelick house, the Corporal's wife was very glad to see him. She was a sivel oman and made us all welcom. It cost me nothing in that house. I stopt there untill one a clock. Then whent on my jorna by myself. They cam with me oute of the town to see me on my jorna. I came to a small town coald Llughore [Loughor] 8 miles from Swansa. I had to cross a ferry. I went from there to Llanely a small town in Carmarthin shire, 4 miles. Jost before I came into the town I mit with an old man, so I fell into discorse with him. He towld me that there was one James James a shoemaker worked in that town, I asked him if he could direct me to his lodgins. So he did, as that man was a perticuler aquaintance of mine.

I whent to his master's house where he worked, and found him at work. He was glad to see me. As soon as he had finished his work he went and got lodgins for me and went to a pobelick house to have som vittels and drink, but James was verry poor as I soon understod, so rather treated him in the room of him treeting me. After super I went to my lodgins and James coald me up yerly in the morning. So I paid for my lodgins and proceeded on my jorna, it being Sondag morning. I was resolved to go home that day, James came to company me 2 miles out of the town.

I came to Cidely [Kidwelly] a smal town. I stopt there to refresh myself for one ower at the Nue inn kept by Richard Thomas, an old aquaintance of mine. He was glad to se me and to eate som vittels, wich I did. Cidely is 8 miles from Llanely. Then I went on my jorna to Pillglase where I had to waite 2 owers for the ferry boate as the tide was oute. In the evening I crost the ferry to Llanstufon 4 miles from Cidely.

Balked In Sight of Home

I did not stop in Llanstufon, but made the best of my way to Llaugharne Ferry to save the forde, but I was too late as the tide was jost before me, when I came on the scar [Black Scar].

I waited on the scar 2 full owers expecting the ferry boats to com to fetch over, but all to no purpass. For I hailed them severl times but they wod mak me no ancer. It was then dark night and came to hevey rain, so I did not know what to do. It grieved me verry much to think that I was within half a mile of my father's house and could not git home. I returned back to a farm house coaled Pantowin to see if I could git lodgins there, and if not, I shod bin forced to go back to Llanstufon. I got to the door and nocked and a sarvant girl came to the door and towld me to please to com in.

The girl semed fritened at the aperince of a soldier after night. I got into the Citchin and in a short time the master of the house came to the Chitching. So I asked of him if he could let me lodge in one of his stabels for that night. He said that he did not like to turn out eney person in a bad night like that was, but he said that there was so maney poppel that did com to ask for lodgins that it was anuff to tier aney one. I said that there ortobe [ought to be] a bobelick house bilt on the scar for that purpos. He did not know me, but I knowed him verry well. His name was Mr Jones. He asked me if I was one of Larne. I toyld him that I was. He asked my name. I towld him my name. Then his wife came oute. She and he nue my father and mother extreemlly well. Mr Jones towld me that he sin my father last market day and that he was in good health. So I was asked into the barlor to supper with them, and I had a good bead to sleep on all night.

So the next morning the farmer went with me to the ferry, so in a short time I got over to Larne. I had bin absent from home 4 years and 8 months. In going down the town I accidentally met with my father. I new him, be he did not know me att forst, untill I spok to him, wich broate tears from the old man's eyes. I found all my frinds as wel as I left them. My mother was in a bad stat of health for severl years before and so she do remain at this time. My yongest sister Martha was atome with my father and mother. All my old aquaintans was verry glad to see me, particularly my old master and mistres, Mr and Mrs Hughes. I shant trobell the reader with the particulars during the time I remained in Larne, but I spent a Merry Crismas. My time was allmost expired, but I got my forlo renude for a fortnid by the Justice of the Peace.

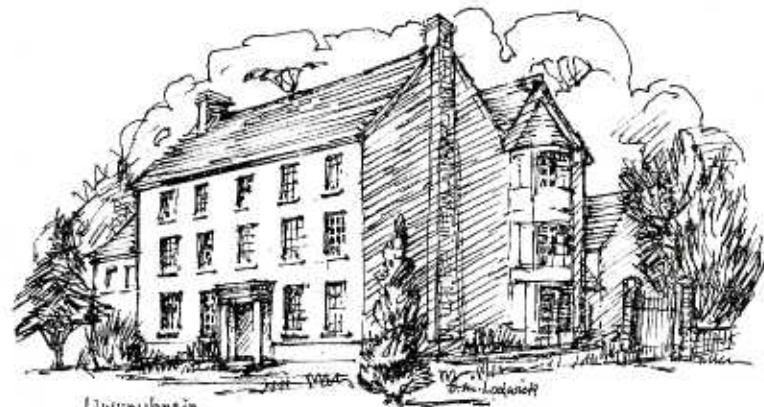
I left my home on Thursday the 13 of Janewarry 1807. After leving my frinds in great grife as they did never expect to see me eney more. I had severl yong men and yong woman came to company as far as Saint Clears, a vilage 3 miles, and likewise my sister Martha. I being loth to part with my frinds and old acquaintance wich mad me stay in the vilage untill night. Then I barted with them and got into a road waggon wich broate me to Carmarthen that night. I lodged that night wheare the waggon put up at. Carmarthen is 9 miles from Saint Clers. Larne is 3 miles from Lanstufon. Carmarthen is a larg town.

On the 14 it came to hevey rain wich did contin[ue] all week. Obliged to remain in Carmarthen that day. I had severl acquaintances in that town. That day I fell in with 2 solders of the Carmarthen shier Militia going to forlo to the opper part of the county,

as their Rigmēt laie in Havordwest. So the 15 we began ouer jorna. We halted at Llandilo-voure to refrish ouerselves, 15 miles from Carmarthen. Then marchd on for Llandufery, but after bing a boue 6 miles from Llandilo-voure my comreads parted from me, as they was going a nother roade. I went on verry lonsom untill I came within 2 miles of Llandufery, it being almost night, and I so a larg gentelman's seate on the left side of the roade.

Bed and Breakfast at a Mansion

I met a woman in the roade, so I inquierd what was the name of the seate. She towld me it was Loineabrain [Llwynybrain] and knew a young oman wich did live ther. So I made bould to coal to see her. So I was made verry welcom and remaind there all night as the famely was gon from home, only she and one servant besides. She wod make me to stop to have my breckfast the next morning before I barded with her. I must own I never was dealt with such civility before in my life. So after breakfast I barded with them and returnd them thanks for their civility. I had 2 miles to go [to] Llandufry. Llandufry is 12 miles from Llandilo-voure. I went on alone as far as Trecastel in Brecknock shier 9 miles. When I enterd Trecastel I went into a boblick house to have a pint of ale. There was a yong man dressd in colored cloes. I fell into discors with him. He towld me that he was a officer's sarvant belonging to the Monmouth and Brrocknock shier Militia, and that he was on forlo to see his frinds at Brecknock. He sed that he was going to Brecknock that evening and he wod bear me company if I wod wait a coppel of owers, as I do expect to have a lift in a return chaise.



Llwynybrain as it was in 1860

So I waited and we dind together, and after diner, he spoke to the driver of the return chaise, to give him and me a lift to Brocknock. The driver towld us to git up behind the coch, that he wod take no notis of us, if the pasageners did not, for there was 2 gentelmen wich was to join the coch. So we don according to orders, and in a fue owers arrivd at Brocknock 11 miles.

Jest before we came in to the town we leet from behind the coach and went in to a boblick house in the town, the sine of the Shoulder of Muton. In a short time cochman came in, so we gave him a pott of bear a peace. During the evening there was severll gentelmen drinking in the house. They asked me severl questans and when they found that I had so far to travel, they treated me all the night, with what I wishd to eate or drink.

On of the gintelmen towld if I had a mind to have a lift on the Maill coch I must git up at 12 a clock at night as the maill did set off at that ower. He said that he wod speck to the driver as he was the [?passenger] of the coch, and that I must get uteside of the town, and that he wod take me up. I thanks him and went to bead and at half past a 11, the servant maid could me up and I ask she what was to pay for my lodgins. She towld me nothing, so I don according to ordars, and went oute side of the town and in a short time the mail cam by and took me up. There was a soldier on the coch, belong to the Carmarthen shier Militia. He was going on forlo to Bristol as he had married a wife there when the Rigmēt lay there.

We went through Crickhowell a town 12 miles, and yearly in the morning went through Abergavenny in Monmouth shier 8 miles. We came on as far as a Garge Inn on the roade where we was to turn of, 2 miles befor Abergavenny. That was 32 miles we came on the coch, in 7 owers, beside what time we holted to change horses on the roade. We paid the cochman 1s 6d each of us, and remaind in the inn for one ower to have som reffishment. Then my comrade and I set out on ouer jorna, and arrived at Shepstoe [Chepstow] about a 11 clock, 8 miles. We holted there one ower, then march to the old basage 3 miles. Jost before we came within a mile of the passage we mitt with a gentelman. He towld us to make great hast as the boat was going off in the coars of 10 minets.

So we made the best of our way, and when we came with site of the boat it was gonoff about 200 yards. Thay towld us thay wod not com back without we give them 2 shilens a piece. The fare was but 10 pence. So we considerd with ouerselves it was better to give the money then to remain at the inn until the next day, as they charge

an extronery prise for everything at shuch places as that, because they know well we cod go no place else. So we towld the boat man that we wod give the 2s, and in the corse of 20 minutes we got safe over. It is one mile and a half across the passage. When we landed on the other side we was in Gloster shier in England. We coaled at the Inn to have a pott of bear and in the mene time the coch was going off to Bristol. So we got on the coch and paid 1s 6d each of us for the faier. We arivd at Bristol at 4 a clock in the evening, 12 miles. After coming 55 miles since 12 a clock the night before, it being then Saturday the 17th of January 1807. I lodged that night with James Jordain.

The next morning, being Sunday, I went to Chumagna to see my sisters 7 miles from Bristol. I remaind there untill Monday evening, so took my leefe of my sisters and returned to Bristol. I was not verry well at that time so I went to a surgan of the North Gloster shier Militia and reported myself sick. I was admitted into the Regiment Hospital in Castel Green. My brother and sister in Bristol came several times to see me, and likewise sent to my sisters in the contry to let them know that I was ill. My sister Margret came to see me as soon as she could get liberty, but the day she came I was lett out of the hospital. The next day I went 3 miles with my sister to company her part of the road home. So toock my lef of her. She was verry sorry to parte with me, but littel did I think that I should be more then 7 years before I should see eney of my frinds agen.

I returnd to Bristol and went to Gienerall Thampan as he command [ed] in Bristol at that time. He gave me a route of discrishon to join my regment at my lisher [leisure] and to draw billats on road the route specefide, that I was to draw eney money I should want on the road. I recivd 1 Pound at that present time.

Aboard The London Coach

I whent to the Coch offices that night and boocked my self for Louton [London] for wich I paid 11s 6d for the faier, 100 and 20 miles. I could not travel it for that money for it would take me 6 dayes to march it, and it did not cost much for expences along the road for wint in so short a time. There was a yong man, an oulde acquaintans of mine wich was going to London, he boocked his self the same time. His name was Bangman (Benjamin) Wilkin.

We both set off from the Apel Tree in Broud Mead, about a 11 a clock in the forenoon on the 3rd day of Feberry. Ben bing on the coach between a hors soldier and my self for fear of the Press Gang,

as he was a sailor and in a sailor's dress. If he had bin atacked we meand to say that he was a desartar from the 10 lite Hors Rignent and that we had him in charge. Ther was a officer of the Gang came down the street while we was on the coch waiting for the inside Pasagers to git ready, but seeing him betwin 2 soulders he said nothing but loocked verry hard on him.

Nothing hapand extronery durin ouer jorna only about 12 a clock at night Ben fell asleep on the coch and jumped up in a frite on the top of the coch and said Let me walk on the deck. He was just slipping off the coch when I laid hould of him by the legg, and puld him back. If he had a stept over the side of the coch, the weels wod a sartly gon over him. He lost his hatt he said overboard, so when we came to Brentford we advised Ben to site for fraid of the Gang, wich he did. He was going to see his father wich lived in the country near London. I let Ben have my hat, for I had a hat and cap. Went in to London aboute one a clock on the 5th day of the month. The coch but up at the White Horse Siler in Pickedely.

I remained in London untill the 8th as I had som aquaints to see. The Lite horse man and I slept together that night at the White Horse in the Strand. The next day he parted with me, to go to his Rignent, as he was not going the same road as I was going. I went to see a fue ould nabours of mine wich livd in London wich beaved [behaved] verry kind to me, butciler [particularly] Elizabeth Griffis and Hester Howell and William Howell and Elizabeth Lewis. They where all glad to see me but sorry to see me a soldier.

I left London on the 8th and marchd the first day to Croidon, 10 miles. I droad a bilate in that town. I was quartard at the sine of the Roayel Oake. Croidon is in the county of Surry. I had verry bad quartars in that town. The 9, I marchd to Godstone 10 miles, quartard at the Hare & Hound.

Gin and Slap

The 10th, marchd to East Greensted 10 miles, in the county of Sussex. I was quartd at the Ship. I had so good a quarter in this town as ever I had in my life. When I went into the house there was an ould miler drinking there. He semed to be a droal cind of a fellow. He said that there was no man that could stand before him, he said that he wod give eney man the first slap in the face for one giney. He gave me a slap in the face. Before I could loock round, the landlord coald me a wan side and toweld me to pretend to be verry much offended and that he wod give me plenty to drink, as it was his way all wayes to strangers. So I pretended to be very much

afrontid with him. So he said if I wod make it up I should have 2 glasses of gin. So I got the 2 glasses of gin and we was good frinds for somtime untill he forgot what was past. He gave me another slap in the face. So I was more afronted then ever. So I wod not make it up withoute 2 glasses for me and on for the landlord. So drank 2 glasses more, and the landlord one. He allways drank one his self, as the gin bottel was allways handy. He had blinty of money. There was another soldier quartard in the house and he served him the same. So he got on so fast with the slaps in the face that the gin bottel whent round pretty quick and likewise his money bagan to wast. He kept on in that maner for 3 owers untill he got too drunk to act eney more. I drank about 12 or 13 glasses of gin and likewise the other soldier, and the landlord had his bellyfull for he left one bottel full on the tabbell before he went to sleep allrdey paid for.

After supper I went to bead and the next morning I got a good brekfast before I bagan my march. I asked what I had to pay. The landlord towld me nothing. I had 3 good meals, vittels, 2 pints of beer and glass of gin in the morning before I started all for nothing, besides what the ould miler gave me. So I think I came off well in that house.

I travald that day to Lewis, a large town 30 miles. Billated at the White Swan, it being could wether all the way as there was a good deal of snow on the ground. The 12, I march to a vilage coaled Newhaven 7 miles. I lodge at the White Hart, a verry sivel house, the next day bing the 13 of Febary 1807 joind the Rigt at Blatchington Barracks 3 miles. Thay where in the same place where I left them. I had bin abstant 2 months.

I gave in my forlo and my vou[cher] to the Command Office, everthing was well, I bing on [duty] for som time after having my liberty so long. I thought it hard to be compeld to time but at oare [it wore] off by degrees. The 7th of Aprel I went with a detachment to Crockmare [?Cuckmere] Barracks, 3 miles, to do duty there over smuglars. Remained there 1 month, then returnd to Blatchington. On the 23rd of June I went with a eascord to Brighton with one desartar. Was quartard at the Gray-Hound, and returned the next day to Blatchington, 14 miles. The 8th of July recivd the route to march to Stening Barracks. We marchd on Wensday the 15 of July. The first day marchd to Brighton, 14 miles. I was quartard at the Nue Inn. Holved the 16. The 17, marchd to Steyning Barracks, 10 miles, through a small Sinquin [cinque] town called Brembow [Bramber], 2 miles before we came to Steyning.

Steyning is a small town in the county of Sussex. On the 11 of August 1807 we marchd to Brighton camp 10 miles. When we marched on the camp ground it came to a verry hard shuer of rain, that before we could be dismist we was well to the skin wich made it verry disagreeabel to us to pich ouer tents. The Rigmets wich lay in camp with us was the Roayel Barkshier Militia and the 3rd or King's Dragoons Gards. On the 12 was revoude by the Prince of Wales and Duke of York near Brighton. All the regments wich was revoude was the Roayel lin Atelerry, and Roayel Navey Atelerry, and the 1st and 3rd Kings Dragoons Guards, and the 14th Light Hoarse, and the Roayel Bark Shier Militia, and the Roayel Chesher Militia, and the South Gloster shier Militia, and the 2nd Somerset Militia the regment wich I did belong to.

Broock up camp August the 13th and marchd to Steyning Barracks. Brighton is a verry poppoles town, for this late years the Prince of Wales most comonly resorts here for the batheing seson, likewise a great number of qualatey for the benefit of thay health.

A Worthy Prophecy

On Sunday the 16th of Augt William Gay and I went on Liberty to Worghing, a fine vilage on the sea coast of Sussex for batheing, 7 miles from Steyning. We had the blesher of seeing the Princis of Wales, as she mosely resorts at Worthing for the batheing seson as it is a most pleasand vilage I ever soa, and I dare say it will be a large place in the coars of time as there is a great deal of bildings going on there. We returned to Steyning in the evening after a plesand walke.

About this time there was great talks of a volentering in the Line out of the Militias. I had a great inclination to volenter as I did wish to see som foring parts, for what is ordained for a man to go through he must goe. On the 21st of August 1807 the orders came to the ragment for volentering. The order was read in front of the ragment, so I and William Gay gave in our names to volenter in the 9th Regiment of futt. We was the 2 first men in the ragment wech gave in our names.

On Saturday the 22nd we was all to be soiring [sworn] in. I hard that my ould Captan, Captan Clark, had volenterd in the 40th and that he had paid a wager with the offecers in the Mess room that he wod git more men to goe with [him] in the 40th Ragment than Captan Broaten wod git to go with him in the 9th Regiment. There was a yong man that had voluntered in the 40th, and afterwards his brother volenterd in the 9th, so he went to the officers to try to git

off from the 40th to the 9th with his brother. So he got liberty to chang with any person. I went the same time to Captan Clark to try to go with him in the 40th, so the Captan was verry glad, and I and the other man changed. I was dested [?attested] in the 40th Rigmment of futt, and he went in the 9th Regment of futt. So I parted with my ould comred William Gay. He was verry sorry to bart with me, and I with him.

My ould townsman Alick Jordain offered me 3 gines if I wod not volenter but I towld him I would not droa back from my [w]ord, if he was to give 10. He was [troubled] verry much about me. He did not know what to do. He said my frinds wod blame him for me volentering. I towld him that I did lay no blame to him. It was my own wish to goe, and go I wod. We(11) he said if it was my intension to go, he wod go along with me. So he went to try to goe but he wod not be aloude to go becoase he was a taylor, for they [want] all the taylors to make the clothen for the regment, expecting [?excepting] som poor hands they left goe.

I was dested on the 22 of August 1807 in The 40th Regment of futt for 7 years. Had 10 gines bounty. On Sunday the 23 of Augt the hoale of the volenters marchd to Horsham wich was abointed for the randvose [rendezvous] of all the volenters in the district. All the prisent regment wich ouer Regt had to volenter in was the 9th, the 11th, the 13th, the 40th, and 74th.

In the 9th we had volenterd 122, in the 11th 2 men, 13th, not one ; 40th 164, and the 74th 1 man. 290 Privats, 4 Sargants and 5 Corprels, and 3 officers wich volenterd out of the 2nd Somerset Militia at that time. On Sunday morning the 23rd we march off for Horsham 14 miles. Horsham is the county town for Sussex. We had the band to play us 2 miles on the roade, and almost all the Regment to wish us well as they were all sorrey to part with us. We receved one half of ouer bounty, the remainder we was to recivd wen we joind the rigt. Alicksander Jordain came to Horsham with me and severl more of my ould comreads to see the last of us.

Durin the time I remaind in Horsham there was som live dever-ishon [lively diversion] as the men was full of merth. Every Gentel-man's carage they could find thay took Boseager [passenger] off, som got inside wile others acted as horses to ron through the street, with all kind of musock, some men start naked with thayer skinn painted difrent colers, some boate severl lites, and eate it for a wagger, others roasted a catt alive and eate it, som roasting a goos fethers and guts, and eats it as it was. Everry popelick house in the town was open for one week day and night. One day there went one

drole fellow with a fue of his comreds to the house of Corectshon and beged of the jaylor if he wod grant him one favour. The jaylor asked what it was, he made ancer and asked of him if he wod be so kind as to hang him as he wanted to die. The jaylor desiered of him to wait a littel wile longer as it was not his turn yet. He said that he could not waite no longer, so he went to a shop and boate a nue roape, and went in to a bobelick house and one of his comreds torned hangman. He hong for a long time untill he was 3 parts dead. Then they cott him down and laide him out like a dead man. He lay for half a nower and never moved, as pale as deth. I thought really he was dead. At last he jompt up all at wance, and said he was verry dry, that he wod not be dead . . . er, oute all the drinking, there was no fiting all the time, nothing but brotherly love.

On the 1st of September we march to Petworth 18 miles, quartard at the Half Moon. The 2nd marched to Chichister a city in Sussex 14 miles, quartard at the White Hart. On the 3rd marchd through Emsworth a town of 7 miles, then to a village coald Havant 3 miles, then to Hillsea Barracks near Portsmouth 4 miles, that was 14 miles marchd that day. We had to wait at Hill Sea for som time untill the transports was ready to take us to Ierland. Now my trobels begins to com on for I nowed but littel aboute souldiering at that time, for after I had bin abroade for som time I countid all the time I was in the Malitia nothing but blesher to what it was to be a Regeler Soldier. So I think I shall be abel to give the Reader a littel more intertainment in the next vollom wich will be the largest.

Capn Clark gave us Eight gines to drink at Portsmouth.

THE END OF THE MANUSCRIPT

A Saint and His Progeny

By E. VERNON JONES

IN the summer of 1871 a boat glided pleasantly down the river Tywi from Carmarthen to Llanstephan, bearing with it young Tom Brigstocke who was playing host to his boyhood friend home from Dover. It was a happy occasion—not the last of its kind—which the home-comer had impatiently looked forward to and would remember throughout an eventful life far removed from his native town of Carmarthen, though many times he would come back to visit his relatives, meet old friends and revitalise himself to face the challenges of the calling to which he had dedicated himself even as a boy.

The visitor from Dover belonged to a notable Carmarthen family, for his grandfather had long before established a reputation throughout Wales, and his father, although his repute would be much less widespread, was already a respected professional man in the town and would soon become one of its most important public officials. But the young man home on holiday would be the most eminent of them all—though his younger sister would vie with him—and his fame would run beyond the boundaries of his native Wales.

The story of this family has one of its beginnings—another goes back to Frankfurt-am-Main—not in Carmarthen but in the village of Llannor in Caernarvonshire, where old Hugh Hughes, the grandfather already mentioned, was born in 1778. He started his working life as a gardener and after a sojourn in gentleman's service at Bristol, not entirely beyond reproach, he followed his brothers into the Wesleyan ministry. From 1807 onwards Hugh Hughes worked many circuits throughout Wales, arriving at Llandeilo in 1814 and at Carmarthen in the following year for the first of his three ministries there. In 1817 he went to Cardiff and thereafter the family moved to Machynlleth (1819), Caernarvon (1821), Denbigh and Llanrwst (1824), Llanidloes (1826), Carmarthen (1828), Brecon (1831), Swansea (1834), and Merthyr Tydfil (1837), before returning again to Carmarthen in 1840. He retired in 1843 as a supernumary and spent the rest of his life in Carmarthen.

Revered as a Saint

His name is an important one in the history of Welsh Wesleyanism and it has been said that he was 'revered throughout Wales as

a saint' and that 'men spoke of him only in love'.¹ He founded many new chapels in the Principality and was chairman of the Welsh province of South Wales from 1829 to 1843. In 1834 he became the first Welsh minister to be elected to the Legal Hundred.² Hugh Hughes contributed frequently to *Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, which he edited for a while, and collaborated in a Welsh translation of John Wesley's 'Notes on the New Testament'. Among his other writings was an autobiography, which was published after his death, the work having been edited by his son-in-law, Isaac Jenkins.

Hugh Hughes died of chronic bronchitis at Tabernacle Row, Carmarthen on the 17th December 1855 and was buried in the graveyard of Ebenezer Welsh Wesleyan chapel with his son Hugh, a draper who had died of phthisis in Guildhall Square on the 12th January 1848 at the age of 27 years.³ The tombstone still survives to announce that Hugh Hughes 'having spent forty-eight years of his life in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ through the Principality finished his course with joy'.

During his ministry at Brecon from 1812 to 1814 one Elizabeth Price had gone to hear Hugh Hughes preach, was greatly impressed and surrendered herself to his charms, and although she was of good family she was content to forfeit the gaieties of social rounds to become his wife. But perhaps she was not cast to be the ideal help-meet of a minister, though there is nothing to suggest that she was unsuccessful in her role. Nevertheless she was an aloof person who could never be like others, and although she had married a husband who had started life humbly, she could not bring herself to talk intimately with lesser folk like gardeners. She was appalled by the ill-mannered behaviour of the plebeian part of Carmarthen's population and she considered there were few children in the town fit to associate with her own. The little girl who was escorted home for failing to curtsy was not an exception and the dumbfounded mother who received a lecture on the proper upbringing of children was only one of many whom she felt to be sadly in need of such a

1. Rev. Dr. Maldwyn L. Edwards writing in *Wesley Church, Carmarthen 1861-1961 Centenary Handbook*. See also *DWB*.
2. "He [John Wesley] could not see among his followers anyone sufficiently outstanding to be worthy of the full task of leadership. He therefore, by legal 'Deed of Declaration' lodged in the Court of Chancery, appointed a Conference of a hundred specified men, and made that Conference his successor, with power to fill up its ranks as death diminished them. This body was always thereafter known as the 'Legal Hundred'."—Rupert E. Davies, *Methodism* (Penguin Books 1963), p. 127.
3. *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography* and the gravestone say he was 27, but his death certificate gives 26.

correction. Yet she prayed thrice daily, insisted on the household joining her and never failed to attend service at Ebenezer, the little chapel at the back of the town.⁴ She died of natural decay in her eightieth year on the 18th January 1871 at 6 Waterloo Terrace, Carmarthen and was buried with her husband and son.

Another Bismarck

Surviving was a son, John, and a daughter, Elizabeth.⁵ The son was born in 1817, the year Hugh Hughes was transferred to Cardiff, and although he never achieved renown anything like as far-flung as his father's, he nevertheless distinguished himself in his own community in Carmarthen. For nearly fifty years, Dr. John Hughes, as he was to become, played an indispensable part in the life of the town, filling many official and voluntary offices with a notable administrative flair. He was Coroner, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Chairman of the School Board, Borough and County Magistrate, Income Tax Commissioner, member of the Board of Conservators, member of the Burial Board, surgeon to the Artillery Militia stationed in the town, Factory Surgeon, Police Surgeon, Governor of the Grammar School, Surgeon of the Railway Provident Societies and President of the Literary and Scientific Institute. In addition, he was medical officer of health for Carmarthen Borough. At the time of his death it would be said that he was the last of the civil surgeons of the Army, who once received the personal thanks of the Duke of Wellington (then Commander-in-Chief) for successfully coping with an attack of scurvy in the Carmarthen garrison.⁶

In the discharge of his public duties he was feared yet respected for his integrity and for his gentlemanly bearing. As a committee chairman he was especially efficient, insisted on punctuality and never tolerated lax behaviour. Because of his many offices and the firm discipline with which he exercised them, it is not surprising that he came to be known as Bismarck, a sobriquet which his granddaughter has recorded was prevalent in 'certain slack quarters of the town'.⁷ But this view of him was not always confined to the lower orders, a fact of which he was not unaware, yet it did not worry him

4. Ebenezer 'was built in 1824. Prior to its erection the site it occupies was part of a marshy swamp called the "Wild Ocean" or the "Wilderness", the draining of which has been of great benefit to the town.' W. Spurrell, *Carmarthen and Its Neighbourhood*.

5. Thus the *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* in the entry concerning her husband, Isaac Jenkins, but in notifying the death of her brother Hugh she signed herself Eliza Jenkins, Green Gardens, Carmarthen.

6. *Carmarthen Journal*, 12th November 1897.

7. Dorothea Price Hughes, *The Life of Hugh Price Hughes* (Hodder & Stoughton 1905), p.4. The family history in this biography by his daughter has been freely used in this article.

because he was confident in the assurance that he was doing his duty to the best of his not inconsiderable ability. That this was so he himself revealed, for in his annual report to Carmarthen Borough Council for 1876 he stated: 'I have sometimes been made aware that my conduct has been considered officious and unnecessary, especially where there was a medical man already in attendance. I therefore feel it right to state that I cannot avoid acting in this manner without neglecting my duty as laid down by the Local Government Board.'

Dr Hughes held the office of medical officer of health to Carmarthen Borough Council for seventeen years, being the first to be appointed following the setting up in 1873 of an urban sanitary district under the Public Health Act 1872. That he had a high sense of responsibility concerning his duties has already been indicated and it is evident that he never courted popularity or even esteem at the expense of the proper discharge of his office. If he ever came to know that he was called Bismarck one feels that he would have accepted the fact as a compliment to his dedicated purpose, for much of his effort was directed against public ignorance and official lethargy. Time and again his annual reports reveal an unwillingness, even a refusal, on the part of all too many to believe that pestilential visitations could be eliminated by proper precautions and right behaviour.

Battle Against Ignorance

His reports⁸ provide an invaluable if depressing picture of personal and public health, or lack of it, in Carmarthen during the 1870s and 1880s, when scrofula was the biggest killer, and scarlet fever, typhoid, small-pox, even typhus and cholera, were dreaded enemies to guard against. Repeatedly he appealed for measures to be taken to ensure dry and warm homes in order to combat scrofula and other consumptive diseases that were encouraged by dampness resulting from flooded pavements and absence of downpipes on most of the town's dwellings. For more than twelve years he protested annually and doggedly about the lack of cross-channels to drain water from the pavements and thus prevent it seeping into foundations to cause dampness. In wet weather, he complained, it was more comfortable to walk on the roads than on the pavements. Over and over he warned about the dangers of insanitary conditions. 'I have again to call your attention to the very prevalent practice of burying the contents of emptied cesspools in small gardens close to houses,' he lamented. 'Many persons throw the contents of their cesspools over the Quay wall. The people living in Water Street and its neighbour-

8. These have been the subject of an article by David Owen, J.P., M.B.E., in the *Carmarthen Journal*, 27th August 1965.

hood empty theirs in the small stream of water crossing that street near the Turnpike Gate.' Disposal by such methods meant that the town stood on a site saturated with sewage poison and until there were adequate sewers and every house had a water closet the battle against disease could not be won, nor could the expectation of life be prolonged beyond the average of 33 years, 11 months and 16 days, which was the mean reported for the year 1873, an expectation about six years shorter than that in the country districts immediately surrounding the town.

Domestic conditions were no better. Frequently he drew attention to cases of fatal diseases in overcrowded houses. 'In one case of Typhoid Fever,' he reported for the year 1877, 'the father, mother and four children lived entirely in one room, 14 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 6½ feet high. They all slept together, with the sick child, aged seven, in one bed.' Earlier he had reported to the Council: 'In 1874 I was in a small room in this town where the body of a young woman who had died from scarlet fever was laid out on a bed. There was another bed in the room, and on it a young seamstress was sitting making mourning clothes. She had never had the disease, and, on my remonstrating with her on her imprudence, she was evidently quite satisfied that I ought to have felt much reproved when she said that she was in God's care.' Ignorance and carelessness assumed a religious aspect, he observed, as many people preferred 'to believe that taking ordinary precautions against contagious disease manifests a want of faith in Providence, forgetting that it would be as well and reasonable to expect that if they threw themselves into the fire or into the river they would be protected by Providence from the natural consequences'.

Hastened Burials

Often he saw dead bodies lying uncoffined in overcrowded homes, the victims having died from highly contagious diseases. He got them coffined immediately and the coffins filled with fresh charcoal or disinfectants, and arranged for burial to be hastened. Frequently he requested day and Sunday schools not to admit children suffering from infectious diseases. Peremptory instructions like these inflamed the sensibilities of bereaved relatives and offended the solicitude of indulgent parents, but the good doctor remained undeterred in the face of selfish ignorance that would continue to destroy many lives until such time as he hoped the law would render every householder liable to punishment if found guilty of not reporting the presence of contagious disease.

The fifty-three public bakehouses in the town in 1873 received his special attention. In one bakehouse he found an open privy in

the same room as, and close to, the oven. In another a donkey was kept. Henceforth he was to insist that every one be kept clean and the law as to white-liming walls and ceilings strictly enforced.

The performance of an important duty in the presence of so much ignorance, prejudice and indifference demanded a man of purposeful character and the town of Carmarthen was fortunate that it found him in the person of Dr John Hughes. Anyone less resolute would have surrendered to despair, but Dr Hughes soldiered on and by January 1882 he could report to the Council: 'Within the last 26 years you have spent Thirty-five Thousand Pounds in removing nuisances, and in works intended to improve the sanitary condition of your District, and it would be very unsatisfactory if you could not be assured of some definite amelioration of the public health. I am sure that I can testify to the general elimination of sickness in the District, and I am not solitary in that belief. At any rate it is an uncontested fact that for the seven years 1842-8, that is, before any sanitary works had been commenced, the average death-rate in the District was 26.2, and the death-rate for the last seven years 1874-80 was only 21.2. This means the saving of about fifty lives every year, the avoiding of a vast amount of sickness and of the poverty and other miseries resulting from it, as well as an improvement of the general health.' The saving of this much life and a lot of misery to boot justified for him the new health legislation, though none knew better than he that the battle was only partly won. His last report is dated 11th January 1890 and he retired in the autumn of that year.

A Salute for Everybody

If the official view of him suggests a martinet, in private life Dr Hughes was 'retiring and unassertive to a fault'.⁹ He would never have sought publicity even had he not been known to everybody in the town and in the district for miles around. This reticence may have sprung, partly, from consciousness of his physical stature, but it is likely, too, that he inherited some of his father's gentleness, which manifested itself in a pathological reserve. He was a tall, commanding man with a shock of iron grey hair¹⁰ and deep set eyes, and would have been a conspicuous figure in any street scene, acknowledging almost everybody with a wave of his stick or hand. When an inquisitive grandchild enquired why everybody knew him he was able to reply with truth that it was because he saw 'most of them

9. Dorothea Hughes, op. cit., p.6.

10. Mrs. Sarah M. Hebb, Waterloo Terrace, Carmarthen, the oldest member, recounting at the age of eighty-eight some recollections in *Wesley Church, Carmarthen 1861-1961*. Mrs. Hebb added: "He always attended us when we were ill. I remember him very well when as a small girl I was ill for a long time with fever."

into the world'. And he would see many of them out of it. But though he saluted all, he never doffed his hat to anyone, a gesture which he seems to have associated with servility, whereas he was possessed of an independence that refused to admit that he was anybody's inferior. There was one exception, however. He readily took off his hat to Bishop Thirlwall, whose learning and character he greatly respected. A tale is recorded that on one occasion he was sent for by the Bishop to attend a nephew. This so alarmed a local clergyman that he felt obliged to warn the Bishop that he was dealing with a dissenter. Unimpressed, Dr Thirlwall replied: 'I have sent for Dr Hughes to supply me, not with theology, but with medicine.'¹¹



No. 36 Spilman Street, Carmarthen

11. *Carmarthen Journal*, 12th November 1897, quoting from the *Methodist Times*.

His home at 36 Spilman Street¹² was more than ample to accommodate a large household and to provide him with a peaceful retreat of his own, for his study was separated from the rest of the house by the surgery and a long passage. Here he relaxed in a favourite jacket of indeterminable age, on his head a crownless straw hat, and all the while smoking his pipe and drinking the cold tea which would be sent him by the jugful.

In his religion he was a true son of his father, being a regular attendant at the Wesleyan chapel. For him, a disreputable fellow was one who got drunk on Sundays instead of going to chapel. He was equally mindful of his Welsh heritage, passed on to him by a father who liked to claim an ancient lineage as the result of his excursions into family genealogy, which were the delight of his old age. And if the son had any doubts about the father's boast, he had none about the antiquity of his race. 'We can trace the date of the first Olympiad,' he averred, 'but no one knows the date of the first Eisteddfod. The beginnings of our race are lost in the mists of time.'

When young John Hughes returned from London after qualifying as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, he was soon to fall in love at first sight with a vivacious beauty.¹³ He was among the eligible beaux of the town; she was the grand-daughter of an immigrant Jew. At first she rejected his advances, but soon succumbed and like her Aunt Sarah before her settled down to married life in Carmarthen. Her father was Philip Phillips, son of Samuel Levi,¹⁴ who was probably born at Frankfurt-am-Main in Germany. Levi, by way of London, arrived in Haverfordwest, where he settled. Here he and his brother Moses were befriended by one Phillips, whose surname they eventually took for their own and both became baptised at St. Mary's Church, Haverfordwest. Samuel, a prosperous jeweller, became one of the founders of the Haverfordwest Bank and the Milford Bank. He had several children, who, besides Philip, included Sarah. This daughter married the Rev. David Charles I.

A Woman of Quality

Anne Phillips, who was to become the wife of John Hughes, went to a superior school at Brighton and was known for her brilliance and vitality. The raising of a family left her with delicate health so that her vivacity mingled with whims and moods, but her quickness

12. The family moved to Spilman Street sometime between 1851 and 1855.

13. 'A very handsome woman', said Mrs. Sarah Hebb, loc. cit.

14. Francis Green. 'Early Banks In West Wales', *W. Wales Hist. Rec.* Vol. VI, pp. 155 ff. See also *DWB*.

of mind and facility of speech were never impaired. No one walked or talked quite like Mrs John Hughes, and she always managed to be distinctive in her dress. The doctor and his wife made a striking couple, but it is likely that she was the intellectual superior of her husband. Certainly the doctor's wife was more than a match for her formidable mother-in-law ; anything old Mrs Hughes could do the young Mrs. Hughes could assuredly do better. She regarded herself as a woman of quality, could never travel anything but first-class and always insisted on the best of everything. But for all that she drove a very hard bargain at Carmarthen market, where she would go with a faithful man-servant in attendance, but at a regulation distance behind his mistress. When she wished to sample the butter and cheese displayed for sale she called upon her retainer for her own knife in preference to the unwiped implement proffered by the vendor. In the market-place she must have been an unwelcome terror for some, but for those who were not the victims of her ready tongue she was very likely the eccentric object of suppressed giggles. But it was this doting mother's perceptive mind that would be the legacy she would bequeath to the most brilliant of her talented children.

John Hughes and his wife lived into old age. Dr Hughes died at the age of eighty on the 27th October 1897 at Penrheol, Barry, the home of his son Arthur,¹⁵ a few years after leaving Carmarthen because of failing health. His wife, bed-ridden in her last years, died early in the year 1900. They were survived by two sons and three daughters.

Anne Hughes had several children. The first and third of her sons she lost, and even the second boy was scarcely expected to live. This second son, Hugh, was born on the 8th February 1847 and when a few weeks old a dubious doctor hazarded the prediction that the child would not survive his seventh year. Hugh was so tiny that he had to be carried on a pillow, but a mother's tender and unceasing care saw him through a delicate childhood. He grew up to be the young man who boated with healthy joy down the Tywi with Tom Brigstocke in the summer of 1871.

This boy, who was to win fame by the name of Hugh Price Hughes, was born in a 'little house', No. 10 King Street, next door to Carmarthen's Post Office.¹⁶ Though he inherited the patronymic

15. Col. J. Arthur Hughes, C.B., C.B.E., V.D., D.L., as he became, was a solicitor and clerk to Barry urban district council. See *Who's Who In Wales* (Western Mail 1921).
16. Dorothea Hughes, op. cit. The house has long disappeared, the site now being occupied by an extended Post Office, but the number is still shown on the door of the eastern entrance to the premises.

of his paternal grandmother, Hugh was the son of his mother, whose scintillating qualities and power of speech he derived in generous measure. Often during his life he would proclaim his Jewish blood with defiant pride. Like so many undersized children, he was a lively and agile lad who was never still. When he went to Carmarthen Grammar School at the age of nine he showed himself from the outset to be a leader both in studies and in games, particularly cricket, a game he would love all his life. In winter he was an enthusiastic skater whenever opportunity came. The young Hugh was sure to be among the first at Bishop's Pond in Abergwili when winter was agreeably hard enough to afford the necessary facility for that most graceful of leisure activities.

Although the family worshipped at the little chapel of Ebenezer,¹⁷ occasionally the young Hugh accompanied his friend Tom Brigstocke to St. Peter's Church, especially when the assize judge, with the mayor and corporation, attended in state. At such times he indulged a secret envy and regretted the Wesleyan lack of ancient tradition. But despite its high pews and unadorned interior, Ebenezer was a friendly place, for which the family had a great affection.

At the age of eleven Hugh departed from the Grammar School to attend Colston's, a Methodist boarding school at Swansea which later moved to Mumbles. His father had given careful thought to the choice of school, but his decision was partly influenced by Mrs Hughes's desire that it should be one where delicate boys might receive motherly attention. Such care Mr Colston's wife was able to give and during his early terms she did, as it turned out, sit up with the young Hugh through one or two nights. Here the lad continued to excel both at work and at play, for whatever he undertook he applied himself with an energy which ensured that he came first among his fellows.

The Boy Preacher

When he was but thirteen Hugh was overwhelmed by a religious experience which set him on the course he was to take through life. One summer morning some Cornish fishermen sailed into Mumbles and betook themselves to the chapel on the cliff where Mr Colston and his charges were attending service. In the prayer meeting that followed they prayed with a fervour that moved Hugh to a highly charged religious feeling, which was repeated after a second visit by the fishermen. Weeks later he was again greatly moved, this time

17. Thus Dorothea Hughes, but there are other reports that John Hughes was a stalwart member of Wesley Chapel in Chapel Street. Probably the family attended both. See *Wesley Church, Carmarthen 1861-1961*.

by an American visitor who came to preach at the chapel. From that day he knew what he wanted to do. Dr Hughes had nursed a wish to see his son become a barrister-at-law, an ambition which the boy appeared to share, but now Hugh knew it must be otherwise.

Encouraged to become a lay preacher, Hugh took to the cottages about the Mumbles coast, preaching to humble folk while still only fourteen years old. Soon he would go into the pulpit of the Wesleyan chapel in Swansea. But when he wrote to tell his family of his decision to become a Wesleyan preacher, it must surely have been the briefest letter of his life: 'My Dear Father,—I believe it is the will of God that I should be a Methodist preacher.—Your affectionate son, Hugh.'

Though the news was received with expressions of outward joy, there lurks the suspicion that the parents' more secret sentiments were not without a measure of disappointment. Mrs Hughes wept, hers being ostensibly tears of joy, but in a woman's tears lies a mystery sometimes too deep for understanding. In his study, Dr Hughes wrestled with his own feelings, which he found hard to diagnose. Perhaps he, too, suppressed a vicarious ambition in generous deference to his son's decision. Whatever his true feelings, he wrote at last to tell young Hugh: 'I would rather you were a Wesleyan preacher than Lord Chancellor of England.'¹⁸

Although he had already preached around Mumbles and in Swansea, Hugh postponed preaching in his home town until he felt master of himself, and in advancement of his apprenticeship he filled engagements in the surrounding countryside, notably at Llanstephan and Laugharne. At Llanstephan he preached 'to all the gentry and to Lady Hamilton, for she would come to hear him like the rest'. And whenever he was home he would pester the caretaker for the key to Ebenezer. Here he would rehearse before an imaginary congregation, watched unbeknown to him through a window by his father on one occasion. When he was still not seventeen years of age, Hugh preached his first sermon to his own people at Ebenezer. The date was the 21st December 1863. His mother and sisters were present, as well as his grandmother, the widow of Hugh Hughes, and his friend Tom Brigstocke. There was one notable absentee: Dr John Hughes. Never once did the reticent father face the ordeal of listening to a gifted son preach before a congregation; perversely, he could not rid himself of the fear that he and his son would make fools of themselves before the whole town. But after it was over Mrs Hugh Hughes trembled with excitement at the thought that the

18. 'A reply known now to every good Methodist,' according to the Rev. Maldwyn Edwards, loc. cit.



Ebenezer Chapel, Carmarthen.

grandson would follow in the illustrious steps of the grandfather. And Tom Brigstocke was to remember to the end of his long life¹⁹ his friend's self-possession and the flow of words that came forth so abundantly. The success of the occasion was repeated the following year, this time at the English Wesleyan chapel, where he preached his first sermon on the 31st July 1864.

Inquisitive Youth

Young Hugh Hughes left Colston's school before he was sixteen, there being little more that he could learn there. He had secured his Oxford senior certificate while he was still a junior and for so long had he been foremost in his studies and a leader in games that he suffered not a little from boredom, and there had been occasions when he had appeared to his fellows to be impatient and even dictatorial. He therefore returned home to Carmarthen, where his father deemed it advisable that the youth should spend a couple of years in preparation for his entry to college. This interlude proved to be mildly trying for the father, who had a daily tussle with his son for possession of *The Times* and from time to time was concerned

19. T. E. Brigstocke, who lived at 10 Spilman Street, Carmarthen was born in the same year as his friend and lived until 1934. See *Who's Who In Wales*.

over the youth's abounding self-assurance, which sometimes came near to rashness, and an inquisitiveness about other people's affairs that offended the more sensitive elements in the community. Even years later, he would find it necessary to try to persuade his argumentative son to control this latter propensity. 'My dear Hugh,' he would admonish, 'there is one book you really must read and that is the book called *Mind Your Own Business*'. But it could never be a successful persuasion in respect of one who held the conviction that everything was everybody's business.

In preparation for his entry into college Hugh habitually studied at his grandmother's house in preference to the family home in Spilman Street, which was too lively a place to encourage the pursuit of serious work without interruption. Evidently he could not command the luxury of a private study like his father. It was his fond grandmother who facilitated his studies by affording him her own best room²⁰ until he entered the Wesleyan Theological College at Richmond in Surrey in 1865 at the age of eighteen. At the entrance examination he had again distinguished himself, but for once he did not come out top. Even so, he came second out of a hundred and forty-six candidates, of whom he was the youngest save one.

At Richmond he quickly moved into a position of leadership, and the governor, the Rev. Alfred Barrett, whose daughter Hugh would one day marry, soon predicted that Hughes would achieve fame. Inevitably he became captain of the cricket eleven, but he failed in his endeavour to have a barrel of beer available so that his men might quench their thirst during matches. Much as this may have affronted the college authorities, it seemed a most natural request to one who had been accustomed to taking a glass of beer every night with his father at home, and in his third year it was equally natural that he should refuse, though almost alone, to join the newly formed temperance society, which he quickly labelled the Insane Society. Similarly, he had little sympathy with revivalist and evangelical attitudes. This masterful independence did not endear him to his colleagues and during his four years at Richmond he made few intimate friendships. Although he may on occasion have won admiration for his undoubted talents, he was more generally the object of resentment. Many thought him conceited, a charge from which he exonerated himself by claiming that he simply had a just appreciation of his abilities. But despite his self-assurance and easy manner, qualities which he inherited from the womenfolk of his kin, he yet had his

20. So we are informed by Dorothea Hughes. It is therefore likely that Mrs. Hugh Hughes had by this time (c. 1863-65) moved to Waterloo Terrace, for with one exception the houses in Tabernacle Row, demolished in 1970-71, were too small to afford this facility.

fits of depression, which may have sprung from an awareness of the deficiencies in his character.

The Hierarchy Offended

His progress through college at Richmond was not uneventful and more than once his strong convictions led him into trouble with authority. On the most serious of these occasions, although he got the approval of the younger element, he offended the hierarchy of the Methodist movement and escaped drastic punishment only by the skin of his teeth. But nothing could impede his academic progress and predictably he took his B.A. at London University in 1869. Before the year was out his college days were behind him and he found himself at Dover in his first ministry.

During his three year stay at Dover he did something less predictable. He signed the temperance pledge. This change-about resulted from the fact that his chapel was in the middle of the poor quarter of the town and he came to believe that, for the masses, total abstinence was the only way to control intemperance in a society where drunkenness affected almost every family. As a minister, he thought that by his own example he could best persuade others to abstain. Thus Hughes was prepared to make a personal sacrifice in order to help others. But he never became a fanatic in the temperance cause and justified his action on humanitarian grounds. In the spring of 1870, the young man who had been a Tory not averse to a glass of beer could surprise Tom Brigstocke by writing in a different though flippant guise: 'You will be deeply grieved to hear that I have now developed into a ferocious and revolutionary republican. This, added to my temperance vagaries, should lead you to put up your shutters when I come home to Carmarthen and go into the deepest mourning.'²¹ But Tom Brigstocke never did put up the shutters and it is not recorded that he went into mourning over the news.

In 1872 Hughes was moved to Brighton and it was during his ministry there that he married, on the 20th August 1873, Katherine Howard, the daughter of Alfred Barrett, governor of Richmond College. His best man was his dearest friend, Tom Brigstocke, to whom he had written a month earlier saying: 'Your special duty will be to keep me from fainting in the extremity of my terror, and from over-sleeping myself on the awful morning, if I sleep at all.' It was a joyous occasion attended by all the family from Carmarthen and unmarred by the fact that the wedding carriages got mixed up with

21. Brigstocke's wine merchant's business established in 1840, survived in King Street until 1970, when the shutters were put up for the last time.

a funeral procession. The honeymoon was spent in Switzerland, which the couple toured extensively, only narrowly missing Tom Brigstocke when their itineraries crossed at Thun.

Hughes's next moves were to Tottenham in 1875, Dulwich in 1878 and Oxford in 1881, the year he took his M.A. degree at London University. So marked was his success that in 1884 he was transferred to London as superintendent minister at Brixton Hill. Here he soon became the leader of the 'Forward Movement' as a result of the enthusiasm with which he introduced new ideas and new energy into the Methodist connexion. It was a natural consequence that Hughes should be chosen to set up a West London mission, which was to be imbued with a social as well as a religious life. The mission was opened at St. James's Hall in Piccadilly in October 1887 and the first service was conducted by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.

'The Nonconformist Conscience'

The remainder of his life was spent in London leading the work at St. James's Hall and of the Forward Movement. But these activities engaged only part of his enormous energy. In 1885 he had been largely instrumental in founding the *Methodist Times*, of which he was editor from the outset. Hughes threw himself in the venture with all his ardour and considerable journalistic ability and although it came into being to advance the policy of the Forward Movement, the journal became much more than a denominational newspaper. If it was a 'Hughesful paper', as his critics described it, the *Methodist Times* did nevertheless become a powerful influence far beyond the sphere of Methodism. Hughes never hesitated to enter the lists of controversy and the views of his journal were awaited with respect by the more thoughtful of the reading public; at the peak of its influence it is said 'to have been an object of anxious attention to Cabinet Ministers when it next appeared after a debate on social issues.'²² In a long and bitter controversy, he supported his friend Dr (Sir) H. S. Lunn, who had contributed articles attacking missionary methods in India, but he made his greatest impact in giving rise to a phrase that was long to be famous and indeed is still not forgotten.

Intended as an expression of censure, the phrase had its origin in this way. In 1886, Sir Charles Dilke, a distinguished politician who might have become prime minister, was involved in a divorce scandal and, later, large sections of public opinion were outraged by

22. Rupert G. Davies, *Methodism*, p.148.

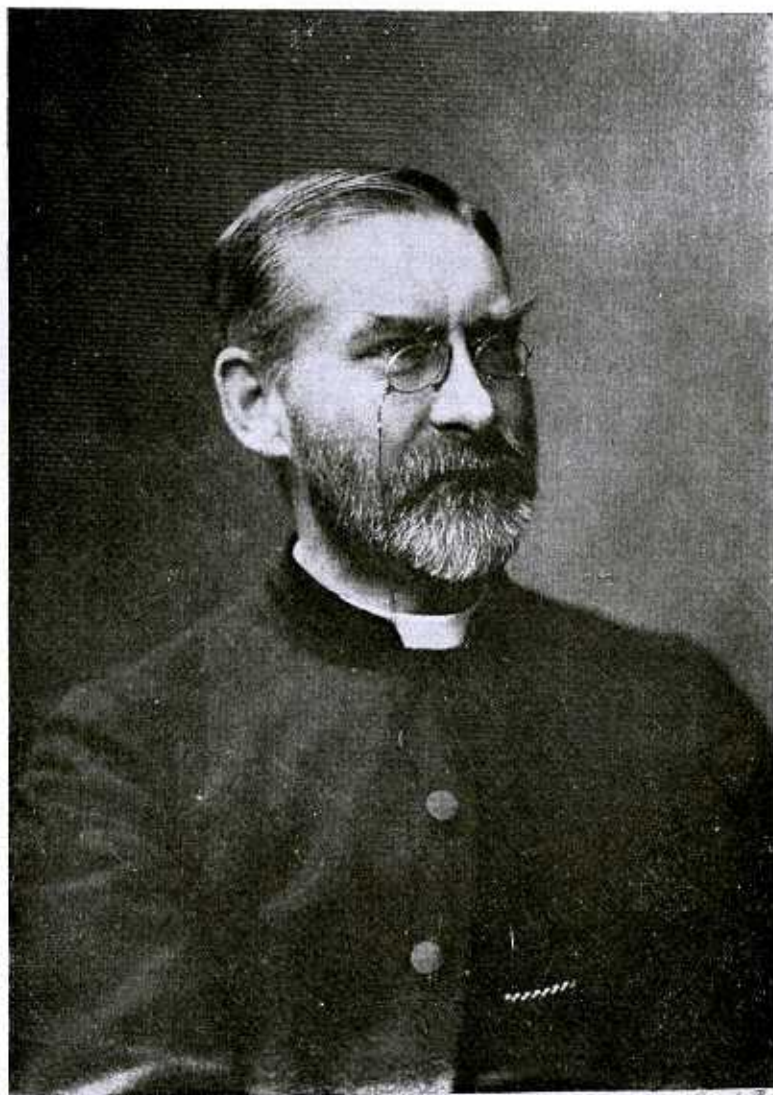
the even more sensational Parnell episode; in both cases, Hughes denounced what he believed to be a pollution of public life, with the result that his opponents referred to the tenderness of 'the Nonconformist conscience'. Undismayed, Hughes thanked them for the welcome slogan by rejoicing, 'Let us see that we are worthy of this title which has been bestowed upon us.' The power of this Nonconformist conscience "was shown in 1890 when Hugh Price Hughes effectively voiced the demand that Parnell must resign as a result of the O'Shea divorce action. Amid a seething audience in St. James's Hall, while a gang of converted toughs acted as 'chuckers out' to the very astonished Irish hecklers, Hughes made his devastating peroration, 'We stand immovably on this eternal rock: what is morally wrong cannot be politically right.'²³ In October 1896 the *Methodist Times* could reflect exultantly, 'Sir Charles Dilke defied the Nonconformist conscience and is a political outcast today. Parnell despised the Nonconformist conscience and he destroyed himself and his party. Lord Roseberry ignored the Nonconformist conscience for a race-horse, and the world sees the result.' The same conscience was 'pricked into a new awareness of the evils to be found in great cities . . . These and a hundred other crusades burned in the heart of Hugh Price Hughes with an intense and devouring flame, and led him to press for closer co-operation between the Free Churches and indeed with all the Churches.'²⁴ In 1885 a pamphlet called *The Bitter Outcry of Outcast London* recruited the support of this crusading zeal and a great meeting held at Exeter Hall was addressed by Hughes and chaired by Lord Shaftesbury.

The Warring Sects

His last years saw him very much engaged in the controversy concerning the reform of state schools and the provision of religious instruction in them. The warring sects as well as the secularists kept up a long and relentless debate in which Hughes, although he was represented in the Press and its cartoons as one of the champions of Nonconformity, was prepared to compromise with the Anglican and Roman Catholic interests rather than yield to secularist demands for schools free of religious instruction. On the other hand, he did not favour denominational schools, each giving instruction according to its own tenets, an arrangement which he thought would have led to an even greater separation of the denominations. For himself he would have been content with a universal system of Board Schools giving religious instruction of a restricted kind common to all sects. The debate culminated for the time being in the Education

23. Gordon Rupp, 'Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians—The Nonconformist Achievement', *The Listener*, 4th March 1948.

24. *Ibid.*



A. Price Hughes.

Act of 1902, but by the time it was passed his health was failing and his role in its consequences was destined to be cut short.

Hughes was a conspicuous figure at the Reunion Conference at Grindelwald in 1892 and he suggested terms by which the separated churches might be reunited.²⁵ This conference was inaugurated by Dr Lunn and to it were invited the leaders of the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church and English Nonconformity. His leading part in this conference, which was followed by others, did not affect Hughes's desire to consolidate the influence of Nonconformity, however, and in the same year he was the chief promoter of the Free Church Congress. He also played a leading role in the establishment of the national council of the Evangelical Free Churches, being its first president in 1896. In 1898 he became the foremost representative of his denomination by being elected president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

Beside his travels in Europe, Hughes visited Egypt, Palestine and America and wrote about his experiences in those countries. In addition to his weekly journalism he wrote extensively. His chief publications were: *The Atheist Shoemaker*, 1889, *The Philanthropy of God*, 1890, *Social Christianity*, 1890, *Ethical Christianity*, 1891, *Essential Christianity*, 1894 and *The Morning Lands of History*, 1901, the latter being reflections on his travels in Greece, Egypt and Palestine. *The Atheist Shoemaker* professed to be the account of a Soho shoemaker who recanted his atheism in favour of the Christian faith shortly before death. The publication attracted the suspicion of leading Free-thinkers like Bradlaugh and Holyoake, but Hughes, not feeling at liberty to do so, refused to reveal the identity of the convert as they demanded. There followed frequent meetings between Hughes and Holyoake, from which there sprang a mutual respect, though their views were widely divergent.

Magnetic Power

Hughes was unquestionably one of the most distinctive figures in the religious life of Britain at a time when religion was still a powerful influence in society and most certainly his is a significant place in the history of Wesleyan Methodism. Although he was a fiery and passionate preacher, he was no mere revivalist, for 'he filled his sermons with theological content and he was as deeply devoted to the care of men's bodies as he was concerned of the need of their souls'.²⁶ Doubtless it was his reputation as a speaker of magnetic power that persuaded Lord Roseberry to go to St. James's

25. *Dictionary of National Biography.*

26. Rupert E. Davies, *op. cit.*

Hall one evening and hear him preach. Later Lord Roseberry sent him an appreciative note saying he had been much impressed, and subsequently the two men exchanged letters on the subject of Non-conformity.²⁷ In his chosen vocation he achieved the ultimate eminence—the chair of John Wesley. This was a predictable eventuality for all save his father, who reserved doubts until the end on account of his son's temperament and died without seeing him succeed. But his mother survived, though bed-ridden, to witness the crowning glory of the great and good work which long, long before she had so earnestly prayed he would be called upon to do.

Hugh Price Hughes possessed all the qualities necessary to take him to the forefront in almost any field he might have chosen for his life's work. One eminent observer thought he would have made a fine general. There were others who thought his proper place should have been Parliament, where his gifts would likely have taken him to high office. Had he been a lawyer, too, he might even have become the Lord Chancellor that Dr John Hughes denied himself the pleasure of anticipating when young Hugh decided he would be a preacher. And had he been an Anglican, like his friend Tom Brigstocke, it is interesting to speculate on what episcopal throne one feels confident he would have filled.

But despite all his gifts, there was one that Hugh Price Hughes lacked. Although he survived his seventh year in defiance of his doctor's prediction, he was without the physical stamina that could have taken him into old age like his parents. Many labours discharged in a white-heat of intellectual energy took heavy toll by the time he had reached his fifty-sixth year and he died of apoplexy in London on the 17th November 1902, surviving his father by less than five years and his mother by less than three. He left a widow, two sons and two daughters.

Hugh Price Hughes was one of five children who lived beyond infancy. Beside his younger brother Arthur, he had three sisters, the eldest of whom, despite an unpropitious childhood, was to make a mark in the field of women's education in the pioneering days of the nineteenth century. Like Hugh, Elizabeth Phillips Hughes was born in King Street, Carmarthen, but four years later—on the 12th July 1851.

'Poor Bessie'

In her early years Elizabeth showed none of the intellectual promise of her brother; on the contrary, she was distinguished for

27. Dorothea Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-2.

her backwardness and it is recorded that at the age of ten she could scarcely read.²⁸ In such an unenviable position she was fortunate, however, that Hugh's guidance was available to her, though she must have resented his patent superiority, which he never tried to conceal. 'Poor Bessie,' he declared, 'understood nothing, positively nothing, but I toiled and perspired and made it all clear to her. I should have been a coach. I have a great faculty for making people see things.' Helped out of her early deficiency by her able though conceited brother, the adolescent girl was attracted by academic pursuits, and a growing awareness of her own ability to teach pointed the way she would take. But her path was not made easy. Though her mother had great ambitions for Hugh's future, she had little sympathy for her daughter's intellectual aspirations, believing that while suitable instruction at a school for the 'daughters of gentlemen' was permissible, indeed desirable if a proper match were to be assured, a woman's place was in the home bringing up a family.

Such a conventional prospect held no appeal for Elizabeth, who determined upon a career and in furtherance of it she could count herself fortunate in attending school at Hope House, Taunton, though later she came to realise the inadequacy of her schooling there. She continued her education more satisfactorily at Cheltenham Ladies' College and after teaching there for four years she was admitted to Newnham College, Cambridge in 1881.²⁹ She was now thirty years of age and for the first time she experienced the joy of learning at a place where it was regarded as a desirable exercise to be encouraged. She studied the moral sciences and now she received instruction that satisfied her intellectual appetite. In 1884 she was placed in class one of the Moral Sciences Tripos and in the following year she was awarded second class in the Historical Tripos. She later proceeded to M.A.

Now fully equipped with the best academic training available to her in those Victorian days, she was quickly blessed with the opportunity to exercise her teaching abilities. After coming down from Newnham in 1885 she was appointed principal of the Cambridge Training College for Women Teachers. The college, designed for training Girton and Newnham graduates as secondary school teachers, was established through the efforts of Frances Mary Buss, a contemporary of Emily Davies, the champion of women's rights in the field of education. Emily Davies and others like her had overcome prejudice against academic enlightenment for women and in 1885

28. L. Twiston Davies and Averyl Edwards, *Women of Wales* (Eric Partridge Ltd., London, 1935).

29. *DWB*.

Miss Buss could write that 'Cambridge is willing and a suitable lady is ready'.

One of the 'Mad People'

Elizabeth Hughes was certainly suitable and equally ready to accept the challenge of organising the new college. Undaunted by lack of money, which enforced painful economy, she tackled her new responsibility single-handed. At the outset the college was nothing more than a few cottages near Newnham, and Elizabeth Hughes constituted the entire academic staff. But her outstanding ability and powerful personality ensured success in the face of difficulty and the derision of those who dismissed the pioneering principal and her students as 'those mad people at Cambridge'. In 1887 the college moved to more suitable premises, but another eight years were to pass before it could boast a worthy home.

These early years in the history of the college were a challenge to her undoubted administrative ability, but always she emerged the mistress of circumstance, and on the academic side she distinguished herself no less, for in her ideas and methods she was much in advance of her time. She drove herself hard and she expected the same of her staff; it was said that three or four years were sufficient to wear out her subordinates. Always there was a sense of urgency; indeed, impatience was one of her shortcomings, for she could never be content to wait for slow results any more than she could countenance second best when there was perfection to achieve in the interests of education and, more particularly, of teacher training. This latter was of great concern to her, for she felt, to use her own words, 'that the quickest, most effective way of improving education was to induce teachers to be trained, and to try and improve training'. This urge was not confined to the students in her care; for her, education was everyone's birthright and, characteristically, she persuaded her college council to make the lecture room available on Sunday evenings to working men and women. At these gatherings Cambridge lecturers and other scholars gave talks, which were followed by discussion, and these were occasions of great delight to her. But for all her self-reliance, she nevertheless enjoyed the encouragement not only of Miss Buss but of Miss Anne Clough, first principal of Newnham and sister of Arthur Hugh Clough, the poet. These two were contrasting supports to whom she could always turn for help; Miss Buss shared Elizabeth Hughes's administrative flair and energy, whereas Miss Clough was a poor organiser, but possessed sympathetic qualities beside intellectual ability.

Return to Wales

Because she made exacting demands upon herself as well as others, she felt that by the time she was forty-eight years of age she could no longer summon to her requirements the unlimited energy she had hitherto poured into her task, and in 1899, her health already impaired, she resigned her professional appointment. In her retirement she went to live with her brother Arthur at Penrheol, Barry, where her parents had joined him earlier. But she continued to be busily engaged in voluntary capacities, particularly in the field of education, her abiding interest; later she devoted her attention to other social activities, especially in connection with housing and public health. Her public life during this period included membership of Glamorgan County Council and its education committee, and of the governing bodies of the University of Wales and the University College at Cardiff. She attracted to herself many people who shared her interests and her home at Barry was a wellspring that afforded intellectual refreshment.³⁰

Elizabeth Hughes organised the first Red Cross Women's Camp and during the First World War she was commandant of a V.A.D. hospital. For this work she received the M.B.E., being one of the first two women from Wales to be admitted a member of the newly created order. The University of Wales—she had been the only woman on the committee that drafted the University's original charter—recognised her services to education and social progress by conferring the honorary degree of LL.D. upon her in 1920. She retained her interest in Welsh literature and the bardic name she assumed—Merch Myrddin—was a remainder of the town of her birth. At Barry she founded the Twentieth Century Club, a women's society for study and discussion.³¹

In contrast to her brother, she broke away from the influence of her early upbringing to become a member of the Anglican church, but one need not impute the transferred allegiance to a reaction against Hugh's boyhood threats to put his head in the fire whenever she had shown an unwillingness to attend his prayer meetings. In their political views, brother and sister exchanged attitudes, for whereas Hugh had started as a Tory admirer of Disraeli and deserted to Liberal influence, Elizabeth though a Liberal for most of her life

30. A reference to Miss E. P. Hughes in 'Wales and the World', *Western Mail* 20th September 1971 recalls that Prince Kropotkin was a visitor to her home in Barry some years before 1918.

31. *Who's Who In Wales*.

—as late as 1921 she was described as Radical and Democratic³²—became a Unionist during her last years.

She travelled widely, made a tour round the world, undertook lecture tours in Europe and America, which she visited twice, and for six months she held the chair of English at Tokyo. Among many articles and pamphlets she wrote were : 'A National Education and its Application to Wales', 'The Education of the Majority' and 'The Training of Teachers'. Her recreations included mountaineering and in her Alpine climbing she ascended the Matterhorn when she was forty-eight years of age. Such athletic activity and the energy she devoted to everything she undertook suggest a tall and lean person like her father, but she inherited neither his stature nor her mother's good looks, for she was rather short, rotund and plain. Her last years were marred by failing sight, but a partially successful operation saved her from blindness. She died at Barry on the 19th December 1925, physically broken though her mind was barely impaired.

Her fame never matched her brother's, yet in one way her career excelled his. Richly endowed, he made a mark in a man's world where the rewards of success were still almost exclusively reserved for men ; she had been among pioneers in fields new to women who were breaking free from the confines of domesticity. He had fulfilled the great work his mother had prayed he would be called upon to perform ; she had overcome the inadequacies of her childhood, defied the social conventions of her time, even her mother's prejudice, and ventured where not very many women had gone before. She aspired against odds, yet conquered mountains.

On the Farm a Century Ago

by GWILYM EVANS, O.B.E., M.Sc.

HEOLDDU farm lies at the side of the road leading from Porthyrhyd to Cefneithin, and near the hamlet of Foelgastell. A well born family, Lloyd lived here in the eighteenth century, and probably earlier. Two brothers of this Lloyd family lived here at the same time, hence the two separate dwelling houses. For many generations, however, only one family has occupied Heolddu. On the outside of the house lived in at present occurs the record P.L.1743 ; on the stable P.L.1758, on the barn 1766 and P.L. 1774 on the second house. The P.L. probably refers to Philip Lloyd. One Philip Lloyd of Heolddu donated land to build Capel Seion (1712) in Llanddarog parish for the Congregationalists, as Charles Lloyd of Maesilwch, Radnorshire, had done for building Maesyronnen (1696 c.) "the first chapel built by the Congregationalists in Wales". Philip Lloyd, "gentleman of Heolddu, Llanarthney" repaired the old chapel of ease (Llanlluan) nearby to accommodate one of the circulating schools of Griffith Jones (1736), and in 1745, at the request of Howel Harris, he made this chapel suitable for Daniel Rowland to hold regular communion services. Both William Williams and Peter Williams also conducted services there frequently. Peter Williams married (1748) Mary Jenkins, the daughter of John Jenkins of Gors near Llanlluan.

Towards the middle of the last century six children were brought up at Pantybedw, Llangunnor, and were known on the hearth as Pegi, Sian, Beto, Dafydd, Jaci and Twmi. Dafydd Davies came to farm Heolddu, together with Garnlwyd, having married Margaret, the daughter of John Stephens, Nantygleisiaid, a farmer and cabinet maker. She was the granddaughter of George and Frances Grier, both of Scottish descent, and associated with Middleton Hall.

At that time the countryside was largely self-supporting. Necessities from the shop were relatively few, and hardware was purchased for its enduring value, as well as for its fitness for purpose. Ample supplies of bread, meat, eggs, vegetables, fruit and wool for home-spun clothes were produced on the farm. Frugality governed the enjoyment of luxury ; tea was locked in a substantial caddy.

Carmarthenshire climate favours grass production more than cereals, especially wheat, and during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, more wheat, barley and oats were grown than ever

since. That was the time before the large increases in importations of cheap cereals from abroad had begun, with unhappy results for many farmers. Among the varieties were *Hen Gymro* and *Red Lammas* wheats, *Ceirch-du-bach* and *Ceirch-gwyn-naill-ochr* oats, and probably *Hen Gymro* barley. Even though these were the most reliable croppers, their straws were weak and likely to lodge during wet summers. *Berwick* wheat was also currently grown in Wales.

The wheat crop was expected to cover the rent, and the rates were met by the sales of geese. Wet summers could, however, be catastrophic, and even the straw might be lost so that the thatch had to be taken from the roofs of the outbuildings to maintain the farm stock over the winter. They threshed the corn with flails in the barn during rough weather, and winnowed the *cyfagon** from the grain.

Goadng the Oxen

As there was considerable arable acreage at the two farms, Heolddu and Garnlwyd, three pairs of three year old oxen drew the harrows to cover the seed corn, while the horses drew the ploughs. The custom continued for the goad driving the oxen to sing home-spun verses. Here is an example from Heolddu in the form of question and answer :

Whit a Miri o ble doisti ?
O'r waun lās tu draw i Dywi.
Beth sydd yno'n well nac yma ?
Porfa frās yn eisiau'i fwyta.

About this time the late Robert Thomas of Doghill Farm, St. Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan when acting as goad for three pairs of oxen hitched to a plough would, at twelve years of age, sing *tribannau* such as the following :

Tri pheth sydd dda gan grotyn
Yw gwraig y ty yn chwerrthin
A'r crochan bach yn berwi'n frwd
A llond y cwd o bwddin.

Fe ges fy ngwadd i gino
A'r pinclots wedi stiwo
A bara haidd fel rhisgyl côd
Ni ches eriod fath groeso.

*Tailing and weed seed.

The oxen in Glamorgan had only one daily stint with the plough, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thus also for horses on distant fields, but near the homestead there were two stints for horses, with a mid-day break. After the harrowing was completed, the three year old oxen at Heolddu were sold at the Llanddarog May fair, as other pairs were being reared to replace them. The custom of sowing a field to French gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) for animal fodder had persisted. Crops of two years' growth were cut and chaffed as finely as possible to provide green fodder for cattle and horses over the winter in addition to hay, straw and corn. Where no chaff-cutting machine was available, the gorse was bruised with a special type of edged iron mallet, hence the term *eithin prono* in Pembrokeshire, but *eithin malu* in Carmarthenshire.



Heol Ddu, showing the two dwellings

The second dwelling house had been adapted for farm use, including a granary to store home-grown corn, and a kiln to dry the grain. Its large kitchen accommodated three fires, the large fire, the fire for the large cauldron (*pair*) for animal food, and the kiln fire. The kiln on the floor above was fitted with perforated tiles to allow the warm air to pass through the grain, which had to be turned regularly. Dried grain milled better, and the resulting flour retained its sweet condition longer. Bread from undried local grain is apt to develop a strong taste (*hwno*). No bread has as good a flavour as that from flour newly produced from a country mill. Ideally, bread should be made from stone-ground flour, and baked within the hour. Barley and oats locally milled a hundred years ago were required for making barley bread, oatmeal cakes, porridge and gruel.

The large kitchen had two ovens, the one heated by burning logs inside (*ffwrn goed*), and the other—a small one—with the fire outside it. Three loaves of barley bread were baked daily; this was the main bread, but a slice of wheat bread was given to finish a meal, and of course, a wheaten loaf appeared on the table on Sundays. On some farms barley bread was kept until it was "as hard as nails" lest the servants should eat it excessively. Quality bread came from the large oven heated with logs; the crust had a biscuit texture. After clearing the hot ashes out, fifteen loaves were put in together, to make one baking.

Corn harvests were busy times for the women; the kitchen was in full use with large scale cooking. They took hot dinners to the harvest fields; besides *cawl*, meat and vegetables, everyone was eager for the *whipod*, the harvest pudding. This was made in a large pan of thick brass—an heirloom for many generations. Rice, currants, milk, and a few basinfuls of white flour went into the pan to boil on the large kitchen fire. For the field they doled the pudding into creaming pans, sufficient for four in each pan so that everyone had his fill. Tasty meals in ample quantities were important, seeing that wages were low. Harvesters received two shillings per day and their food, half a crown for hay mowing; ninepence for women haymaking, and sixpence for hoeing swedes.

Gleaning had survived; a needy widow would gather wheat ears, thresh them with a flail, carry the bag of grain on her head to the mill, and return with flour for her children's bread.

Towards autumn came the kill, and the preservation of the annual supply of meat for the family, including the *'tylwyth'*, as the servants were collectively called at Heolddu. A fat beast, two sows, and a pig were salted. Lamb and chicken were also available for the table.

Custom of Sharing

Although a women's branch of the True Iforites Society flourished in the district, a little charity was acceptable to the poor of the parish. Come festive days, the mistress of Heolddu would observe the custom of sharing, mindful of the psalmist, according to the version of William Morgan, "Rhannodd (a) rhoddodd i'r tlodion", and of early free verse, "Rhaid ytt rannu ar dy tylawd, yr yd, y blawd a'r dillad". Margaret Davies would bake buns to fill a large butter marketing basket. Each suppliant would hold her apron to receive a bun for each member of her family. This alms-giving was known as *rhanna*. At another time, each housewife would receive wheat, barley and oat flours, a basinful of each. The recipient

would give a curtsey (*cwrtshu*) for each basinful. These flours were kept conveniently in circular containers made of straw ropes which were bound together with green thongs peeled from bramble stems, to make appropriate vessels, similar to bee hives, but taller.

The garden stood for the countryman's "chemist shop" in those days. A high wall surrounded the garden at Heolddu, and a variety of vegetables, greens and fruit were grown to keep the family healthy, as well as alive. Ample quantities of leeks, parsley, cabbage, swedes, carrots, parsnips, potatoes and nuts lasted over the winter. Supplies of different varieties of apples were as important as vegetables and bush fruit. David Davies himself stored the apples on the shelves of the apple house, and kept the door locked. Chief among the apples was Morgan Nicholas; its fruit kept well until May when the gooseberry crop came for making pies. This tree, with its erect branches, grew strongly in the shelter of the stable. A Morgan Nicholas was seen growing at the same spot in 1947. "No," said the occupier of Heolddu, "that was not the tree of the Davieses, but a branch from the old tree was planted to grow on its own roots." Although an apple tree growing on its own roots may not come into flower for twelve years, its longevity is proverbial. Here is an example of two ages of Morgan Nicholas extending well over a 100 years. The apple varieties Jac Gruffydd, Twm-y-Crydd (two early apples), Coch-bach, Marigold and Leathercots (Russet) were also grown. Within the garden wall grew a row of walnut trees (*cnau Ffrenigig*), but their life came to an end some time after 1871, and there was no re-planting.

An occasional black lamb would appear among the flock of sheep. Just as a black breed of cattle throws a fortuitous red calf, so a black lamb (recessive character) may be born to white sheep. Black wool was welcomed to make homespun suits in natural colour. This would not be a deep black, for grey fibres would be interspersed throughout. Homespun, however, did not completely satisfy a thriving farmer; special occasions such as a wedding demanded a morning suit of fine cloth. Heolddu employed a needlewoman for several months of the year to make clothes and other articles for the household.

Prayers after Breakfast

The influence of the Methodist Revival had continued in the district so that home life at Heolddu showed a puritan and Calvinistic pattern. No one could avoid attending the services regularly at Llanlluan—the new chapel built in 1830. Reading and prayer followed breakfast, although no doubt they would avoid Psalm 119 at sowing and harvest time. In some homes meal times were

regarded as sacraments : conversation was proscribed at the table, but the Davieses did not carry their piety to this extreme.

The small parlour was reserved for the master and mistress, the children and servants being given the freedom of the kitchen at evening. This family was notable for its hospitality ; ministers of the gospel being particularly favoured. William Prytherch made this home his centre whilst he attended to preaching engagements in all directions on his pony.

Let us not forget other aspects of rural life at this period of time. Beer, home-brewed in a cottage, would help to supply the wherewithal for many a needy widow. During the *Curw-bach* in the cottage, ballads would be sung, and no doubt some of the satire would distress the faithful. Expressions such as these would be heard : "Os ces fy achub cyn fy ngeni, wedi fy achub wedi meddwi", and "Virgin Mary Mother of God please give me husband—Tommy Dodd". A poor woman keeping bees would make mead (*medd*) instead of beer for her patrons, and provide opportunity for many a *cy-fedd-ach* (carousal) to the sorrow of the devout. Few farmers continued the custom of brewing their own beer for celebrating occasions such as weddings.

The Davies children were fortunate in having a National School within reach at Llanddarog, although they were subjected there to the indignity of carrying the "Welsh Not". Welsh prevailed on the hearth, and later on the hearths of each of the children. Having passed through Llanddarog school, the boys and girls of Heolddu would benefit from periods of tuition at private schools in Carmarthen and Swansea. Those privileged to be at Alwyn Evans's school enjoyed benefits beyond learning to acquire copperplate handwriting.* One of the daughters had schooling at Kidwelly and as far as Northampton.

This was a period when the Tonic Solfa of John Curwen, the Independent minister, became popularised in the district ; the Heolddu children received private tuition in this method of reading music. They, in due course, brought certificates home to prove their proficiency. The voice of the youngest daughter could fill a chapel. She could be relied on to pitch the right note to begin a hymn tune, and when the family moved to live at Plas Mawr, Llanedi, she had the opportunity to sing solo parts in choral singing.

(This article is based on information gleaned from the author's mother Margaret Evans (née Davies) (1856-1945), born at Heolddu).

* For an article on Alwyn Evans see *The Carmarthenshire Historian* Vol. VI, pp. 37 ff.—Ed.

A Nash House Vanishes

Early in August of this year Llysnewydd, the most imposing survival of John Nash's work in the county, disappeared with explosive suddenness and is now no more than a picture in the record books and in the memory of those who knew it.

The house, which was built to the design of Nash towards the end of the eighteenth century, stood on the west side of the road between the village of Drefach and Henllan bridge over the river Teifi. An earlier house, of which nothing is known, probably stood on the same site and was purchased early in the seventeenth century by John Lewes, a strong supporter of the Royalist cause during the Civil War and ancestor of Mr. J. P. Ponsonby Lewes of Llanayron in Cardiganshire, the last owner. Llysnewydd had thus been associated with the Lewes family for over three hundred and fifty years.

The Nash house, of conventional square plan, originally had unusual elevations. The entrance or south front, though simple, was well spaced. Latterly there were panelled double doors with sidelights and an arched fanlight within a stone portico possessing two pairs of Ionic columns. The opposite elevation had five windows on each of the two floors. The west front had three windows on each floor, there being a pediment in the centre of the upper floor beneath which, on the ground floor, was once a high window. This window was 'an ingenious deceit to achieve symmetry, the semi-circular head and half the lower part being sham'. The east side was obliterated by nineteenth century additions. On the south and north sides, the servants' dormitory under the hipped roof had dormers, the original oval lights of which were replaced by rectilinear windows. The caves cornice was dentilled and the whole building was cement rendered.

Nash's elevations were much altered towards the end of the nineteenth century, when an ornamental cast-iron balcony and colonnade was added along the south and west sides on the ground floor, where some of the fenestration was turned into french windows. Other modifications had a more drastic result in the interior, which was 'ferociously altered', according to Sir John Summerson (*John Nash*, Allen and Unwin, 1935). In consequence the curved staircase with S-balusters disappeared, though the fluted drum and circular windows of the top-light remained, but these were damaged during the last years, when the house had been abandoned, and rainwater caused the staircase to collapse. The columns in the hall and parlour, with Corinthian and Ionic capitals, were also removed during last century's alterations. But the library, with fine built-in bookcases, survived intact.

Information about the Lewes family and a description of the interior of the house, together with an inventory of its contents in 1828 will be found in an article by F. Breudeth in *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, Vol. IV, p. 74.

A drawing by Mrs. E. M. Lodwick showing Llysnewydd as it was at the time of demolition appears on the cover of the present volume.

MORE ABOUT MOTS

Readers who were intrigued by his reference at page 13 to a fancy 'Mot' in William Davies's Crimea letters published in Vol. VI of *The Carmarthenshire Historian* may be interested in the following observation by T. H. Parry-Williams in his article on 'English-Welsh Loan-words' which is included in *Angles and Britons* (University of Wales Press, 1963), pp. 47-48 :

There is a very local dialect or patois impregnated with a peculiar argot or slang prevalent in the town of Caernarvon and, to some extent, in the surrounding districts. At any rate, it seems to have been confined at one time to the lower level of society in that town, centred around the quayside and such places. Today, it has become something of an oddity or linguistic curio and the use of it something of a joke. It has a peculiar adenoidal intonation associated with it, as well as a loose kind of enunciation, so that it has developed into a special lingo. The exact provenance of this strange element in its vocabulary is unknown; but it may have drawn upon the jargon, cant or slang of gipsies, thieves, and tinkers Some of the words of this argot are certainly English in origin, or at any rate they are found in English also. The two best-known words of the 'local dialect' are *mòd* or *modan* (*bòd* or *bodan*) for a girl or a woman, *Cof* or *cofi* for a man. Curiously enough, in the volume entitled *Comic and Curious Verse* (in the series 'The Penguin Poets'), selected by J. M. Cohen, first published in 1952, there occurs a ballad called 'A Leary Mot' (—A knowing or fly wench), by an anonymous author, c. 1811. The first line contains the word *mot*, another form of *mort* 'wench' :

Rum old Mog was a leary flash mot, and she was round and fat.

In the second and third verses we have the word *cove* and *covey* :
For he [that is Mog's 'flash companion'] valued neither cove nor
swell . . .

and

Her covey was an am'rous blade . . .

John Jones 1772-1837



John Jones

Little is known of the early life of John Jones, barrister, translator and historian beyond the solitary fact that he was born on the 17th August, 1772 at Derwydd in the parish of Llandybie.

He seems to have had small formal education and although largely self-taught he acquired a good grounding in the classics, which was sufficient to enable him to become at a very early age an under-master at a superior school at Wimbledon, where (Sir) Robert Peel was one of his pupils. Later he went to Germany where he distinguished himself in his studies

and received the degree of LL.D. from the university of Jena. He was acknowledged to be a good Greek scholar.

When he returned to England he applied himself to the study of the law and was called to the Bar, following which he joined the Oxford and South Wales circuits. He made a very successful start as a lawyer, but fell foul of the profession when, in defending a poor client, he made forthright reflections on those who administered the law. This caused great offence to the legal profession and as a result no further briefs came his way. He ended his days in poor circumstances and died at St. James's Street, Islington on the 28th September, 1837.

Jones was well read in the manuscript records of Britain and other countries, but it is said that his strong prejudices affected his judgements as an historian. His chief historical work was a *History of Wales*, which was published in London in 1824. The work showed much learning, but he has been charged with a failure to understand the religious revival in Wales in the eighteenth century, a shortcoming said to have been influenced by German rationalism. After his death a revised copy of the work was found among his papers. In a footnote at page 323 of the published version he says that he 'was born at Derwydd and hence is a natal Druid', a reference to the fact that the place-name is Welsh for Druid.

Another historical work, left in manuscript at the time of his death, was entitled 'The Worthies of Wales, or Memories of Eminent Ancient Britons and Welshmen, from Cassivelaunus to the present time.' In compiling it, Jones stated that he had, 'from juvenile days, collected notes respecting his country and the great men it has produced It is presumed the work will form three vols. 8vo., making 1200 pages, and contain from 50 to 100 lives.' In addition to the *History of Wales*, his published works were: *Translation from the Danish of Dr. Bugge's Travels in the French Republic*, 1801; *De Libellis Famosis*, 1812, a useful work on the law of libel; *Y Cyfammod Newydd*, a translation of the gospels which has been dismissed as almost worthless because of the author's evident unfamiliarity with some of the simplest rules of Welsh construction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The illustration by Mrs. E. M. Lodwick of the militiaman on page 22 is based on a painting by H. Oakes Jones included in *Records of the 1st Somerset Militia*, by W. J. W. Kerr, published by Gale and Polden Ltd., Aldershot. We are grateful to Messers Gale and Polden for permission to reproduce this picture, and to the Librarian, Ministry of Defence Library (Military) for making the book available.

Thanks are also due to Mr. V. G. Lodwick for providing the picture of Ebenezer Chapel reproduced on page 57 and to Cardiff City Library for making available the picture of John Jones used on page 77.

An Eighteenth Century Master of Words

John Walters, the compiler of an early Welsh dictionary, was a native of Carmarthenshire who was born two hundred and fifty years ago in the parish of Llanedi.

The son of John Walters, he was born near the Fforest on the 22nd August, 1721. His parents having died when he was young, Walters moved to Bassaleg in Monmouthshire, where he became a schoolmaster. Later he was a pupil at Cowbridge Grammar School and then went to keep a school at Margam. He was ordained in 1750 and became curate at Margam. Afterwards he was given the perpetual curacy of Llanfihangel Ynys Afan, where he remained until 1759, when he was instituted rector of Llandough and vicar of St. Hilary in the Vale of Glamorgan. Sometime domestic chaplain to the Mansel family at Margam, he became prebendary of Llandaff Cathedral in 1795. Walters died on 1st June, 1797 and was buried at Llandough.

In 1771 Walters published *A Dissertation on the Welsh Language, pointing out its antiquity, copiousness, grammatical perfection, with remarks on its Poetry, and other articles not foreign to the subject*. But his chief work was the large English-Welsh dictionary, printed in eighteen parts between 1770 and 1794. The first three parts were printed at Llandoverry by Rhys Thomas, who was probably persuaded by Walters to move to Cowbridge so that they could be more conveniently in touch. Thomas's printing press at Cowbridge was the first to be set up in Glamorgan and printed parts four to twelve of the dictionary between 1772 and 1780. The remaining six parts were published in London between 1782 and 1794.

An unpublished dictionary compiled by William Gambold (1672-1728) was used by Walters for his own work. But Walters was himself painstaking in collecting material and his finished work has been described as "unrivalled for its excellence in the idiomatic renderings of sentences and shows the compiler to have been a master of the idiom and phraseology of the Welsh language". The author coined many Welsh words which became established in the language and sought to show how to translate English idioms into Welsh.

Although it was a praiseworthy work, it proved a great financial loss to Walters, the dictionary being coldly received, partly perhaps because the many parts were so long in appearing. But it had a lasting value, as evidenced by the two editions which were published

in the following century. The third edition was edited by the compiler's granddaughter, Hannah Walters. Her father, John, was one of five sons; he and his brother Daniel distinguished themselves as poets and scholars. Another brother, Henry, became a printer at Cowbridge.

REPRIEVE FOR GEORGIAN HOUSE

Furnace House in St. Peter's Street, Carmarthen, the threatened demolition of which was reported in Vol. VI of *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, pp. 72-73, will not wholly disappear after all.

Following a Public Inquiry on the 10th March 1970, the Secretary of State for Wales announced in January 1971 his decision to allow demolition of the building, subject to the preservation of its facade, forecourt and railings.

In announcing his decision, the Secretary of State noted that the building was in poor structural condition and accepted that because of formidable structural problems complete restoration would not be practicable.

Mr. A. L. MacIver, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., A.M.T.P.I., the Inspector who held the Inquiry, considered Furnace House, despite its dilapidated state and poor structural condition, to be a very fine example of an 18th century town house which depended mainly on its elegantly proportioned facade and railed forecourt for its principal effect. Apart from its intrinsic architectural merit, he also noted that the building occupied a strategic position in relation to the street scene and to St. Peter's Church as well as forming a fitting continuation of King Street into the 'Square' around the Church.

Before It's Forgotten

He Saw Steele Resurrected



Dick Steele died in Carmarthen, the town of his Welsh wife's family, in 1729. I was eager to see the spot, in the foothills of Bryn Merthyn. To my surprise the approach put me at once in mind of old Toledo, in Spain; nearing Toledo, one crosses an ancient stone bridge and winds up a long, bleak hill to the Alcazar. So before Carmarthen the task was to get over the Towy, like Cromwell, then to toil up a serpentine road to Castle Green. I put up at the Ivy Bush Inn, off King Street, a street of dips and bends in one of whose houses Steele had died. Inquiring, as always, who the local antiquary might be, I was told to see Mr. Walter Spurrell.

Spurrell must have been nearly eighty,* a spare man, silver-haired, and with kindly blue eyes, very steady. He received me in a little front room of his house, and when he had heard me out, he quietly said, "I have seen Steele."

I am sure it diverted my host to see me overbalance and nearly fall off my chair.

"Yes," he continued. "It was in 1876. They were repairing the chancel of St. Peter's, where he is buried, and they had to lift his coffin out. I was there."

Unable to repress a juvenile though legitimate curiosity about this, I asked in what condition they had found the coffin.

"Rotten like a pear," said Spurrell, "and caved in."

"And Steele himself?"

*Walter Spurrell, born in 1858, died in 1934. The writer was wrong in saying that the Ivy Bush was off King Street; it was and is off Spilman street, of course.—Ed.

"He had a black wig on, with its 'pig-tail' tied by a silk ribbon, about an inch wide, and turned dark brown. He had only a half-dozen teeth left. A little of his own grey hair still showed on his temples. It was a very round skull."

"Then they reburied him in the same place?"

"Not straight away. The repairs went on for several days. I think the verger was afraid somebody might come prowling about for souvenirs, and he took Steele's skull, put it on a table in the sacristy, and covered it with a cloth. While the repairs were being completed, the whole town heard what had been uncovered. People came in to see. That verger had a sense of the dramatic. He admitted into the sacristy a few persons at a time. Then he lifted the cloth, like a magician, with the words, 'You are now going to see the G-r-e-a-t Sir Richard Steele!'"

WILLARD CONNELLY,
John o' London's Weekly.
2nd April, 1954.

Carmarthenshire's First Movie

The cinema began as a fairground entertainment staged by enterprising showmen. One of the earliest pioneers in Britain was William Haggar . . . who was inspired by stories of the American Bioscope. His first performance was almost a disaster; he bent so closely over the projector that his breath steamed the lenses up and nothing appeared on the screen . . .

Haggar . . . persevered . . . but enjoyed only modest success on tour around the Welsh border towns, and the situation was made worse by the Welsh coal strike, which robbed the fairgrounds of most of their customers. In desperation, Haggar took his show to Chepstow and Lydney, where business was so bad that he had to sell two caravans.

Then Haggar made his first film—a train arriving at Burry Port station. Encouraged by its success, the family acted out plays for Haggar to film. Then he persuaded his son Will, who had his own company at Maesteg, to act out the local love story *The Maid of Cefn Ydfa* for him to film . . . It made his fortune and remained a box

office hit for many years. The family made some 600 films between 1901 and 1908.*

CAROLINE RICHARDS,
The Sunday Times Magazine.
20th September, 1970.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CASTLE HILL HOUSE

Sir,

In Vol. VII of *The Carmarthenshire Historian* there is an interesting short article about Castle Hill House, Carmarthen by Dr. C. F. Parry, but there are one or two slight amendments I would like to make.

The writer states that the first occupant was the Rev. David Archard Williams. Actually, at the time of the building of the house (1815) D. A. Williams was 19 and had not finished his education at the Carmarthen Licensed Free Grammar School. The Rev. D. Archard Williams became Headmaster of the Grammar School in 1824 and in his first advertisement in the *Carmarthen Journal*, 3rd December, 1824 his address was given as John Street. On 15th April, 1825 his advertisement in the *Carmarthen Journal* read thus: 'Rev. D. Archard Williams having removed to a larger house (lately occupied by Mr. Maddocks) is enabled to announce a few vacancies for boarders' and the address was Castle Hill.

Thus for a period Castle Hill House was the home of the Headmaster of the Grammar School and also used for boarders of that School when it was in Priory Street.

One other correction: the Rev. D. A. Williams was responsible for the building (not rebuilding) of Christ Church, which celebrated its centenary in 1969.

T. L. EVANS,
35, St. Non's Avenue,
Carmarthen.

*Older Carmarthen people will remember the films of local street scenes which were shown to amused patrons who recognised themselves or their acquaintances in the pictures.—Ed.

TRAGIC FIRE RECALLED

Sir,

I have read with interest Miss Eirwen Jones's account entitled "Town and Castle Go Gay" in *The Carmarthenshire Historian*, Vol. VII, giving details of the celebrations at Dynevor Castle at the time of the coming-of-age of the Hon. Walter F. Rice in 1894.

My parents lived at the White Hart, which is not far from Dynevor Castle, from 1904 to 1928, and as a small boy, I can remember hearing some of the older people who then lived in the neighbourhood talking about these celebrations and stating that, as the guests were leaving the Castle late at night, they could see the White Hart in flames.

The house was totally demolished by fire, and of the Edwards family who then lived there, John Edwards and four children perished; his wife and two other children being saved. The father and four children are buried at the Tabernacle, Ffairfach, and I remember it being said that their funeral was one of the largest ever seen in this locality, the procession extending from Ffairfach Square to well beyond the town bridge.

The headstone over their graves has the following inscription:

John Edwards	(37)	died 14th September, 1894.
William	(15)	
Rees	(9)	
Joseph	(7)	
Henry	(3)	

"Canys pan ddywedant tangnefedd a diogelwch, yna mae dinistryr disynwth yn dyfod".

D. J. HUGHES,
Irlwyn,
Alan Road,
Llandeilo.