



LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 43 December 1991

Christmas is but a few days away now, telling us that the years are rolling past more quickly than many of us would wish. Season's Greetings to all of you from the Committee and the very best wishes to everyone for a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Often we add the wish that it may be better than last year - this Christmas it is a particularly appropriate thought as so much seems to have been achieved toward World peace and the freedom of many people.

Something always turns-up: in the last Newsletter the editor solicited contributions and said that we were running-low on easily publishable material.

Within days of writing those sentences, Diane Morgan, Meadowbank (formerly Greendown Farm) sent me copies of some deeds which related to our previous article on Cae Talbot or Talbot's Land. The deeds came from the Talbot of Hensol Collection in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth and, at the same time Diane obtained copies of the 1840 Tithe Apportionment Map and Schedules for Llanarfarn Parish. The Talbot deeds are reproduced in this Newsletter: the Tithe material will require a little longer as it comprises more than 50 sheets of schedules together with the map which shows every field and sub-plot existing in 1840.

Peta Lougher, Little Pen-onn, sent some more information on the Brittany Connection article - this was very welcome and it appears in this Newsletter.

The fruits of any other member's researches into families, land and property in the parish will be gladly received.

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FUTURE EVENTS

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held in the Llanarfarn Community Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, January 24th 1992. Nominations for the officers of the Society should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Barbara Milhuisen (address below), or a Committee member. Nominees must have expressed willingness to stand and a seconder is needed. Our Chairman, Derek Higgs wishes to retire and so we shall definitely need a nomination for a new Chairman. All other officers have expressed willingness to serve during 1992. Following the formal A.G.M., there will be a CHEESE AND WINE PARTY and a SLIDE-SHOW, as last year.

DATES FOR THE DIARY: We shall be repeating the always-popular MAY DAY WALK, this year, with emphasis on the Deer Park at Llantrithyd. This is for the benefit of those who missed the visit to the Deer Park this year. There will be a BARBECUE at Abernant on Friday, June 12th and the ANNUAL DINNER will be on September 25th, also a Friday.

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ADDRESSES: Contributions for the Newsletter (which will be very welcome) should be sent to the Editor, John Etherington, Parc-y-Bont - New Buildings, Llanhowell, Solva, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Dyfed, SA62 6XX. Subscriptions and problems with mailing: to the Membership Secretary, Phil

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Watts, Abernant Bungalow. Llancarfan, Barry, South Glamorgan, CF6 9AD. Agenda items and correspondence for the Committee to Barbara Milhuisen, 73 Tynewydd Road, Barry, South Glamorgan.

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PHANTOM FUNERALS

In Newsletter 40, Katie Haber wrote of her grandmother's encounter with a funeral-procession in the lanes of Llancarfan:-

On one occasion my Gran had to go, at 12 midnight, to Caradoc Cottage because one of my Aunt's children was ill. She was walking along a narrow stretch of road when she heard horses and a carriage wheels. On looking back she saw a funeral approaching and she stepped to one side for it to pass. Of course, being Gran, she thought it was a phantom funeral. I have learned since, that it was the custom in some Churchyards to bury at night. I am told that they would travel from Penmark to Bonvilston.

Katie wrote a little more on this subject, for which there was not room when we printed her article:-

Talking on phantom funerals, I have read, since writing of my Grandmother's experience, of another occurrence which happened in a place called Roger's Lane in St Athan. It seems that a local farmer saw a phantom funeral. This made a profound impression on the villagers because they saw it in reality a few weeks later. Two funerals were passing each other, he said, one going to Bethesda 'r Fro and the other to St Athan Church. The two groups were singing different hymns, both in a mournful minor key. The lane was so narrow that they were unable to pass each other. They both stopped and one placed the coffin on the ground so that the other could go by. They then proceeded on to their respective burial places.

The phantom funeral seems to be a particularly Welsh experience. Another account of several such visions at Porthcawl appears in Alan Wooding's book on legends of the Vale coast and even more local to our part of the Vale are two stories of Cowbridge and of Gileston recounted in Roderick's *The Folklore of Glamorgan*. The Cowbridge tale concerns a farmer who witnessed his own funeral whilst a farmer's daughter from Gileston saw a coffin being carried by water near the Leys. There came to pass a very high tide which flooded the land between Aberthaw and the Leys so that a coffin from a house on the Leys had to be carried part-way to Gileston Church by water just as the girl had described after her evening walk.

The stories recur again and again and most have in common some specific event or observation which identifies the phantom from the inevitable real funeral: stopping to

pass in a narrow part of the road; recognition of the bearers or the mourners; an unusual event, for example the cortege leaving the road because it was blocked by a snowdrift; sometimes the phantommourners have reputedly jostled and bumped the unwary passer-by so that he or she was left black and blue.

J. A. Brooks, in *Ghosts and Legends of Wales*, wrote:- "The Welsh have ---innumerable superstitions, in the country, that concern portents of death.

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There are few parishes in Wales that are without tales of Phantom Funerals, Corpse Candles, or, most dreaded of all, visitations from Gwrach-y-rhibin (the Welsh banshee, even more fearsome than the Irish variety) or the Deryn Corph (Corpse Bird) which beats its leathery wings against windows, a harbinger of death."

There are also Arawn's hounds of the Otherworld, the Cwn Annwn, sometimes described as black with fiery eyes, sometimes white with red ears! Their terrible howl foretells the death of the hearer. Some say that the black dog of Cwmcidy, Barry (Cwm Ci Du) was one such.

Kate Harber gives a rational explanation of the night-time funeral procession which her grandmother saw and the editor has to search sceptically for a more general explanation. Many of the phantom funeral experiences have the aura of *deja vu*, something many of us have experienced, and which is often explained by the idiosyncratic working of the brain in which a current experience is instantly set aside and already seems to be in the past - such a happening, when recounted, would soon grow in the telling and might quickly become accepted as a "true" story.

It was often said that phantom funerals were only seen by those with "second sight" and it seems very likely that particularly sensitive, imaginative individuals would be most prone to such experiences. Anyone who has hallucinated as a result of illness will know how easily an imaginary experience can become reality, as does the consequence of a vivid dream, which waking does not immediately dispel.

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FEAR by John Etherington

It was one of those clear nights with a full moon which come before Christmas, bringing the first really hard frosts. Sheena and I had been to an evening "do" in the Church Hall - I think we had helped to tidy-up because there was no one else around when we left.

We walked home in the silent stillness of the moonlight and, having turned the corner past the War Memorial, our shadows angled across the road in front of us as we went along toward Chapel House.

The churchyard wall there is too high for anyone of normal height to see over, but it gets lower under the overhanging yew tree which seemed to cast a black, pit-like darkness ahead of us as we walked beside the wall.

Coming back into the open, for a moment there was a glimpse of the graveyard, tombstones leaning above their own long shadows, the village houses asleep in the

background and a few wisps of cirrus cloud hazing the eastern sky.

Then, without the slightest warning and barely a rustle, across the road swept the shadow of a huge head with up-curving horns. I jumped almost out of my skin and Sheena screamed before we realised that the "thing" was towering over us, head and horns looking down from the churchyard wall. To my dying day I shall never forget looking up at the frosty sky with the great moon half hidden behind the creature's head - all the primeval fears of the night displacing the common sense which says that such things just do not happen.

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Strangers to the village might well have fled back to their car, outside the Fox, and a modern devil-story would have been created, to be recounted again and again as first-hand evidence for the supernatural - "John and his wife actually saw a devil in the churchyard!"

I can't leave it like that though, for like Kate Harber's story of her grandmother's phantom hearse, there is an explanation.

At that time, Peter and Joan Badcock, Great House, were looking after the churchyard - cutting the grass and so on. For a while they kept a goat which was tethered to an iron stake and grazed a ten-yard circle. It soon became an object of affection for passers-by and customers in the garden of the Fox. On that particular night Pete must have moved the goat's stake too close to the wall and he was able to climb up, front hooves on the wall coping and head over, to satisfy his curiosity about these late-night humans. It was easy for the goat as, along most of that part of the churchyard wall, the ground inside the churchyard is much higher than the road - maybe the road eroded away before it was surfaced, or the tumbled ruins of the Tithe Barn raise the level of the churchyard. Once the adrenaline settled, we said our usual "hello" to the goat who then jumped down with a familiar click of hooves and resumed his nibbling, unaware that a new Llancarfan folk tale had just escaped the making.

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THE BRADLEY FAMILY

In the last Newsletter we published an appeal from Frederic Bradley of Maidstone, Kent, who is searching for possible links with Christopher and Edward Bradley who lived at Treguff Place and David and Martha Bradley of Llancarfan, in the early 1840's. His letter must have touched a chord as Mavis Coles wrote to him with some suggestions for further searching and Diane Morgan managed to trace the Llancarfan family to Jones' Court, Womanby Street, Cardiff after they left the village (between 1841 and 1843). The editor also wrote a long letter with as much information as could be gleaned from our files. Shortly after this, Mr Bradley wrote, acknowledging our help and also added the information that one of his ancestors, a John Bradley, kept the Angel Hotel in Cardiff. This is literally within a stone's-throw of Jones' Court suggesting that this may be the missing link. We will let you know in due course if anything else is found.

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CAE TALBOT archive research by Diane Morgan and historical notes by
John Etherington

In Newsletter 41 the editor asked if anyone could throw light on the fieldname Cae Talbot or Talbot's Land. This was the field in which Talbots (now name-swapped with Middlehill) was built. The name appeared as Talbot's Land in a deed of 1814, pertaining to lands originally held by Robert Jones IV of Fonmon and subsequently bought by Evan Griffiths, Llancarfan Blacksmith in 1828.

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The following abstracts of deeds are in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth archive where they are held in the Talbot of Hensol Collection:-

1640 June 16. Henry Slade of Orchard in the parish of St Athan, Mortgage of £100 of the messuage and lands in Moulton and the parish of Llancarfan.

1653 May 27. 1/ Thomas Andrew of GREENDOWNE in the parish of Llancarfan and Bonvilston and Christian his wife. (D.M. Taken-down because of the reference to my house)

1660 November 1. Between 1/ David Jenkins of Greys Inn, Co. Middlesex esq. 2/ George Nicholas of Llancarfan, yeoman, and Jane his wife and Rees Nicholas his elder brother.

Lease for three lives of the tenement called THE MILL and the BROADHAYES and a parcel of land lying within the land of Sir Thomas Lewis in the parish of Llancarfan. Rent £4.00, one dozen chickens and one day's work in the course of harvest annually. Heriot of £2.00.

1660 February 18. 1/ David Jenkins of Greys Inn, Co. Middlesex esq. 2/ William Richard gent. Llancarfan. Lease of three lives of a messuage of land called Wordwalls Hill and a croft in the parish of Llancarfan (D.M. - surely this is Redwalls?). Rent 4s., a pair of pullets and one day's work in the harvest or 6d. in lieu thereof annually.

1675 Nov 22. 1/ Cecil Mathews of Castell-y-Mynach widow. 2/ Edward Grant of Llancarfan - Cordwainer. Lease of three lives of a house lately built called Y ty Wath-y-Bont Llancarfan - rent 2s., a couple of hens and one day's work in the harvest or 6d. in lieu thereof annually.

1702 August 13. 1/ Richard Jenkins of Hensol esq. 2/ Christopher Howell of the parish of Wenvoe yeoman.

Lease for three lives in consideration of £18.00 of the Tiled House in the parish of Llancarfan with land. Rent 10s., a couple of pullets and a day's work in the harvest or 6d. annually. Heriot 15s.

1730 November 2. 1/ Charles Richard Talbot of Hensol esq. 2/ Thomas Claxton of the parish of Llancarfan yeoman. Lease of 21 years of lands called Millands and Broadhayes in

Llancarfan. Rent £6-10s.

1735 April 7. 1/ Talbot of Hensol. 2/ Thomas Rees of Llancarfan yeoman. Land called Wool Mashill. 6s. rent (three lives).

1757 June 24. 1/ William, Lord Talbot. 2/ Henry Williams of the parish of Llancarfan, clockmaker.

Lease of 21 years of a messuage of lands called Broadhayes and Millands in the said parish of Llancarfan. Rent £19.00 annually.

Notes

The David Jenkins of the third deed was Judge David Jenkins of Hensol (1582-1663). The Talbot family acquired Hensol by the marriage of Cecil Mathew, Judge Jenkins' granddaughter, to Charles Richard Talbot in 1708. Charles was Lord Chancellor of England in 1733-37 and created Lord Talbot of Hensol in 1733. His son, The Hon. William Talbot (1710-82) was M.P. for Cardiff between

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1734-7 and then succeeded to the peerage on his father's death (sources: The Border Vale of Glamorgan (1976) by D. J. Francis and The Parliamentary History of Glamorgan (1978) by R. Grant).

The Tiled House - was this the original Ty To Maen? The name means "the house with the stone roof" and at this time the majority of houses in the village would have been thatched - stone slabs, fired clay or slate would have been uncommon in the area. The present Ty To Maen dates from the mid- to late 1800's and replaced a pre-existing farm house which was to the east of the road.

These are the earliest mentions, so far, of Broadhayes, Millands and Redwalls (if the last is synonymous with Wordwalls). Millands occurs in later Griffith's family deeds but where is it - anyone know? - the editor had presumed it to be the lands of New Mill but I think this deed pre-dates it.

Y Ty Wath y Bont - is this Bridge House? - now Bridge Cottage - the only likely Pont is the one adjacent to the Churchyard. Wath is possibly derived from Gwadd which can mean either guest or mole - take your pick! "Lately built" would fit the age of the original cottage which was extended in the mid-1970's. Less likely, it could be the Church House which stood on the site of the Village Hall - church houses were used as inns in the Middle Ages but as the house was Tudor, "lately built" does not fit.

Wool Mashill - is this the Woollen Mill? - fulling might be "mashing".

Hens or pullets seem to have been, relatively speaking, very valuable in the 17th and 18th centuries. They were ranked with annual rents which, today, would be several thousand pounds a year.

Well, that seems to explain the origins of Cae Talbot but, suprisingly, none of these deeds refer specifically to the parcel of land on the road to Walterston which is occupied by the house, which was formerly The Talbots, built by Arthur Collins.

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RAGWELLS

Whilst searching The Border Vale of Glamorgan (ref. above) for historical information, the editor came across the following reference to ragwells which is of interest following the article in Newsletter 41:-

"Closely associated with the activity of the Celtic saints are the holy wells. One of these is

Ffynnon Cattwg (St Cadoc's well near Pendoylan Church), another is Ffynnon Ceri in Llanilid. Throughout the Middle Ages, wells figured prominently in folk customs and medicinal practices. Llanilid is one of the few rag wells in Glamorgan. The old custom was to leave a garment of a deceased person in the well, so that the disease which afflicted him would be carried away in the discarded clothes."

This is a slightly different story from the one surrounding our Ffynnon y Fflamwyddan which appeared in Newsletter 41.

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An apology: writing of Ty To Maen in the article on Talbots reminds the editor that he had his knuckles rapped for illiteracy in Newsletter 42 where he allowed Ty-to-Maen to appear. The name means "House (with) roof (of) stone" and consequently all three words should appear with equal weight and unhyphenated, thus Ty To Maen or Ty to maen.

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THE BRITTANY CONNECTION a note from Peta and David Lougher

In Newsletter 42 we talked about the shared church dedications in Brittany and South Wales and in particular our part of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Peta Lougher wrote as follows:-

We came across the small church of St Maclou in one of the small ancient streets of Rouen. Imagine our amazement when we saw the inscription - which was taken from the writings of a 19th century Curate of the parish referring to St Maclou and his birth in Britain and education by St Brendan (presumably of leather boat fame!) at the monastery of "Lant-Carvan" - which could only have been Llancarfan.

We took some pictures and I copied the inscription. I enclose the original French inscription - taken from a plaque on the wall - plus my own translation. Not perfect, as neither is my French! :-

St Maclou or St Malo was born in Great Britain around 487.

His education was entrusted to St Brendan, Abbot of the monastery of Llancarfan (sic), where he took religious orders and received the sacrament (Fr. sacerdoce) and a short time later was consecrated as a Bishop.

His liking for solitude made him decide to leave his native country and go into retreat on an off-shore island in Brittany, close to the town of ALETH. Near the place where he lived as a hermit, he experienced a vision which persuaded him to become an evangelist in the surrounding country. He successfully converted to the Christian faith, a large number of the population, who were still pagans. As he was a Bishop he established a bishopric at Aleth. Soon, however, during his mission, he met opposition from those who remained pagan and was forced to move away from the region of Aleth. He searched for peace in Saintonge but a deputation of Christians from Aleth, who remained faithful to him, came to beseech him to return to their midst. He felt convinced by them and returned to Aleth. The unexpected infirmities of old age made him elect a successor to the bishopric of Aleth and he returned to the solitude of Saintonge where he died in 565 at the age of 78.

Extract from the writings on

the Church of St
Maclou by the
Abbot, Julian
Loth (Curate of
this parish in
1885)

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Notes: this is almost faithful to Peta Lougher's translation as the editorial schoolboy French is almost certainly worse!

The story that the Irish St Brendan was for a time abbot of Llancarfan and teacher of St Maclou, is repeated in Tim Severin's book The Brendan Voyage.

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LLANCARFAN NOTES: when he addressed the Annual Dinner, our Chairman, Derek Higgs made the point that Llancarfan is a village in which a great deal goes on. Quietly, and without too much fuss, a whole host of organisations serve the needs of their members and often make substantial contributions to good works of one sort and another. Our Secretary, Barbara Milhuisen has sent a list of recent fund-raising events which make this same point very strongly:-

Children in Need - Charlotte Ashmore and Jacqui Pluck organised a sale of designer-

clothes - £500.

Youth Club (Federated to Llancarfan Community Association) - a "Murder" night raised in excess of £100.

Church Fair for Church funds - £1248.

Tuesday Club held a cheese and wine evening to raise funds for a "Talking Book".

A flourishing community-spirit don't you think?

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WAR MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS: HELP NEEDED

The following extracts, appeals for information, are taken from the Journal of the Glamorgan Family History Society, passed on by Mavis Coles:-

Memorials: Please continue to send "unknown" memorials to David Hughes. ---
It is the hidden ones in Church Halls, bus shelters, stations, village halls etc. and we and the Imperial War Museum are anxious to find and record.

Inscriptions: Work continues in all areas and over 100 churchyards have been recorded. We have not got a "team" in the Vale - small churches in lovely villages - so why not come and join us. Incidentally, some of the grounds may have been recorded by Women's Institute members'. If you know of any will you please let us know.

If any of you can help the addresses to which records should be sent are:-

Memorials - Inscriptions - Mr Noel Israel, 11 Pine Court, Talbot Green, Mid-Glamorgan, CF7 8LA

The Membership Secretary is Mrs Sue Mackey, 11 Cherrydown Close, Thornhill, Cardiff, CF4 9DD