



LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 55 May-June 1993

Apologies for the extreme lateness of this Newsletter - shortage of material started the rot and then, after weeks of rain and gales, when the weather improved I'm afraid all of our delayed outside jobs took precedence over tapping a keyboard.

A CRY FOR HELP

Please, please, please may we have some more material for the Newsletter? Until now we have just about held our own and survived because "something always turns up". Well, this time it hasn't and Newsletter 55 clears the bottom of the barrel. Except for routine things, there is nothing in the pipeline for our next number. Out there, I know, are various part-completed items: several people have told me that they are writing or have copies of interesting publications. Please may we have them?

Just as functions like the dinners, barbecue and walks are important in keeping the Society together, so is the circulation of the Newsletter which not only brings news and history but also serves to advertise our various activities. It will be a pity if we have to reduce it to a couple of pages of "What's on" and reports of successful events. Please help if you can: we shall be only too pleased to diversify the sort of thing that we publish. The only rule is that the article or the author must have some connection with the Llanccarfann Community, however tenuous (some of our writers have not lived in the village for 50 years!). John Etherington's editorial address is in the section below.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

ANNUAL DINNER: The dinner on Friday, 24 September is almost booked-up so we shall certainly be holding a second dinner on Saturday, November 6. We shall be welcoming our President, Professor Sir Keith Thomas to the second dinner. A returnable slip was enclosed with Newsletter 51 and confirmation of booking will be needed before August 31, 1993 (a request for confirmation of your booking will appear in the Newsletter before the dinners). Cost will be £10 for a similar roast meal to the one we had last year. Bookings to Phil Watts at Abernant.

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. We will also be pleased to print short announcements of village functions but they must be sent in writing, at least 6-8 weeks in advance. Subscriptions and problems with mailing: to the Membership Secretary, Phil

Watts, Abernant Bungalow, Llancarfan, Barry, South Glamorgan, CF62 3AD. Agenda items and correspondence for the Committee to the Secretary, Sheila Mace, Pel y Dryn, Llanbethery, Barry, South Glamorgan. Arrangements for visits to sick members:

Len Fairfax, Summit View,
Aberthin, Cowbridge, S.
Glam. (Cowbridge 772654).

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BRITTANY AND ST CADOC - AGAIN

Previous articles have described the close links between the Vale of Glamorgan, Llancarfan and Brittany, related to early trade routes and the travels of the "Saints" of the Celtic Church (Newsletters 14, 42 & 43).

Basil Cottle's Names (1983, Thames & Hudson) contains the following information concerning Breton place names:- The two prefixes, Lan- (a sacred enclosure) and Plou-/Pleu-/Ple- (a parish) are common. Pleu- is combined with the saint's name in Pleucadeuc - the parish of St Cadoc. "Now some of these (saints' names) have no particular fame beyond Brittany, but St Cadoc, called in an antique inscription on the chapel wall of St-Cado (near Belz) "Prince de Clamorgant" was indeed an important saint of south-east Wales, patron of various churches there variously called Cadoxton and Llangattwg, titular above all of the important church of Caerleon with its memories of Arthur."

TUESDAY CLUB NEWS from Audrey Porter (Chairman)

The Llancarfan Ladies' Club is known as the Tuesday Club for obvious reasons (see below) and has gone from strength to strength during the past two decades. Audrey sends us news of some recent and future activities:-

A very successful jumble sale was held at the Village Hall on Saturday, 17th April and raised a Grand Total of £378 which is to be shared out to our various chosen charities in 1993.

We hope people are aware that all of our fund-raising is for charity - we are a non-profit-making club. During 1992 we were able to give £750 to various charities including the Children's Kidney Unit, Margaret May Respite Home, Rhoose Lifeguards and the Multiple Sclerosis Holiday Fund.

Our forthcoming events include:- Egg decoration; make-up demonstrations and, in July, a conducted walk around Old Llantwit followed by a Pub-supper.

We would welcome new members and can offer them an enjoyable evening. We meet once a month on the third Tuesday in the Village Hall.

HEDGEROWS

In Newsletter 50 we talked about the damage to hedgebanks and roadsides which is being done by large agricultural machines, lorries and four-wheel-drive domestic vehicles. The editor noticed that an article in the January issue of the magazine, Country Quest, made the same point. The writer identified the start of the problem with the increasing size of farm machines:- "This was heartbreaking for the lengthman, and ruined his efforts at

tidyness." Incidentally, this January issue of Country Quest had a lovely photograph of Bonvilston church in the snow as its cover-picture.

Each year seems to see new sorts of disaster and not just confined to the muddy winter months. During the recent grass harvest, almost a mile of our lane here was "desertified" by a leak of silage-treatment fluid. The plastic pipe linking the drums of fluid to the harvester was accidentally broken and many pounds worth of fluid sprayed onto the road and verge. The fumes have done enormous damage to the flowers and ferns, destroyed the feeding ground

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of a rich butterfly and moth population and harmed garden plants of at least one property. If this was a chemical spillage into a river, the contractor would automatically face a hefty fine but, as our laws stand, little can be done. In the Vale of Glamorgan and here in Pembrokeshire we are lucky to have substantial areas which are not intensively farmed: other parts of Britain are not so fortunate and hedgerows are often the only remaining habitats of rare and declining species. They are as deserving of proper protection as watercourses.

I noticed, on returning to Llancarfan for the barbecue, that there has not yet been any early grasscutting along the lanes - neither has there in this part of Pembrokeshire. I imagine the reason is financial: the lengthman was replaced by the Council machine and now by the contractor's flail mower. It all costs money and there is not too much of that about. At least it has allowed the spring flowers to finish blossoming, but if cutting is neglected for too many months in the summer the taller grasses, herbs and ultimately brambles and young shrubs will shade out some smaller plants which are often the attractive ones which give early colour and diversity to these verges. There is no satisfying all of us!

GARNLLWYD WALKS: After postponement because of bad weather, the walk was held to everyone's enjoyment, guided by Mrs Joan Raum and waymarked by warden, Mr Frank Jameson, followed by a tour of Garnllwyd House by Sue Evans. Many thanks to all involved - we hope to give a more detailed account later.

BARBECUE: Many thanks to Phil and Ruth Watts for allowing us the use of the lovely garden at Abernant. It is a superb venue and makes it almost certain that the barbecue will be a success, even when the weather is wet, as it was three years ago. This year we were amazingly lucky - the dreadful weather of the previous week improved on the very morning of the barbecue. It allowed us a dry, warm and slightly overcast day and then, as the editor drove back to Pembrokeshire in the evening the next lot of rain arrived from the Atlantic. Typing this on the Monday morning it was still raining!

Ever since the first barbecue in the tennis-court field, Gwynne Liscombe has served as our

chef with impressive efficiency and care. This year he was assisted by Russel Watts and Mrs Fairfax. Meals were cooked for more than 70 people. Our thanks to Gwynne and Co. - it is a hot and sticky job on a humid day when you are hemmed-in by three red-hot charcoal grills.

The lucky ticket draw was won by Jeff Burrows and the raffle prizes by Mary Lougher, Val Watts, Audrey Williams and Val Watts granddaughter.

Remember that the Society owns a portable barbecue which is available for hire from Phil Watts.

RAILWAY HUTS - THE 1891 CENSUS

A copy of the 1891 census came into my hands via Phil Watts during the recent barbecue. This was sent to Phil by Geof Lee, Barry (formerly Old Parsonage). Because of the 100-year rule this has only recently been opened to the public. Many things remain the same as in the 1881 census but one notable

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difference is that there are three quite large blocks of entries relating to "Huts" at Lambethery (sic), Treguff and Kemslawn (this name has cropped-up before - I now think it is Kingsland, near the former St Mary Church station).

These huts were occupied by railway labourers, platelayers and their families, bringing another diversity of origins into the parish: Monmouth, Devon, Warwickshire, Northampton, Gloucester, Middlesex, Somerset and Wiltshire at Kemslawn alone! The foreman of the railway labourers was resident at Kemslawn house and several platelayers lodged with the family.

The other huts added Derbyshire, Dorset, Hereford, Surrey, Yorkshire, Hampshire and Sussex. However, most of the families had several children and in many cases each child had been born in a different county! - a nineteenth century version of our Norman's "on your bike", and an interesting bit of social history documenting the spread of the railways.

The Cowbridge to Aberthaw line was completed a year after the census was taken; did any of these itinerant workers stay in the Vale? Did any leave known descendents? This makes for complicated family history.

WELSH PLACE NAMES - a note from Robert Lougher, Llanishen

In an earlier Newsletter (32, 1990), the very sensible suggestion is made that place-names on road signs should appear in their original Welsh form only, rather than the Welsh name with its anglicised rendering.

Bonvilston is mentioned in this matter because it appears on the road signs as Bonvilston and Tresimwn.

The form Tresimwn however is not new. I recall the late Professor G. J. Williams saying that Bonvilston, at one time the home of Simon de Bonville, was then known to the Welsh as Tresimwn, after his Christian name, and to the English as Bonvilston, after his family name.

Tresimwn is the form given in *Rhestr o Enwau Lleodd*, University of Wales Press, 1958, a Gazetteer of Welsh Place Names.

So both Welsh and English names seem here to have existed since the same period, and the case for a bilingual sign is probably justified, as one can imagine the reaction if Tresimwn alone appeared.

W. J. TATEM, 1ST BARON GLANELY - THE VALE CONNECTION a note from John Williams

Introduction: in previous Newsletters we have written of Lord Glanely both in relation to the Glanely shipping line and Lord Glanely's philanthropy toward St Illtud's Church, Llantrithyd (Newsletter 34). In Newsletter 46 we quoted from *The Recollections of Charles Deere of Bonvilston*, who wrote that "Mr. Wm. Tatham (sic), who afterwards became Lord Glanely, ---- then lived in the village in Great House, opposite the church." in Bonvilston.

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John Williams, Old Orchard, Llancarfan, writes as follows:-
Some time ago in one of your Newsletters reference was made to one W. J. Tatem who you say resided at Great House, Bonvilston. When this was so I cannot say but I know that he was created 1st Baron Glanely of St Fagans in 1918 and at this time became resident in Newmarket.

The following is an extract from *Cardiff Shipowners* (1986, National Museum of Wales):-

"CLAYMORE SHIPPING CO. LTD. This company was established in 1919 by Charles Leigh Clay who was a resident of Chepstow. He was succeeded in the operation of the company by his son John Charles Clay of Great House in the Vale of Glamorgan Village

of Bonvilston. John Charles Clay had already established himself as an amateur in the world of cricket and was acknowledged as one of the finest off-spin bowlers that ever appeared for the Glamorgan County Cricket Club. This company persisted until 1963 and as a symbol of the importance of its most distinguished director, the funnels of its vessels in the 1950's were painted blue with two yellow stripes; the colours of Glamorgan County Cricket Club."

Whether the Clay family followed Tatem in the occupancy of Great House I very much doubt since Claymore S.S. Co was not established until 1919, and the family seat was at this time in Chepstow.

Anyway, the point of interest here, is that two shipping companies of note should have connections with the house.

Editor's note: rereading Charles Deere on the subject of William Tatem it is apparent that he is referring to a time just after 1900 when he was a very small boy: the details are derived from his mother's memories. This would explain the mis-spelling of the name. He also names another resident of Great House who played cricket for Bonvilston: William Cope, later Lord Cope. This was probably just after 1902, well before John Charles Clay arrived there. Charles Deere says that Tatem "lived in" Great House - might this be as a tenant rather than owner? Do any of our readers have anything to add?

MORE MEMORIES OF LLANCARFAN by Jeff Thomas, Masterton New Zealand

I was delighted by the response to my last article and the conjecture that followed it and feel encouraged to write again.

Thank you to David Evans for memories of birdnesting - his complimentary recollections of my exploits here have obviously been exaggerated by the passing years. Also to Ann Radcliffe for putting me right on the schoolteacher names - how on earth could I get that wrong? Barbara Milhuisen says she remembers me well but she has the drop on me there for, apart from the references to Ty Uchaf and her innocent face, I have no clues. Barbara, how about coming out from behind that cloak of Milhuisen and revealing all?

Gowlog, I was told by my mother was originally Gold Oak but I do not recall any outstanding specimens of these trees and assume that they were of much earlier times. My father farmed about 100 acres and stocked it with cows, sheep, pigs, horses, geese, chickens, turkeys, gallineys (spelling?) etc. He did some cropping, mainly for feed for the stock; wheat, oats, swedes, mangels and kale being the most popular. The cows were mostly Friesians but

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there were some Gurnseys and Ayrshires. I remember helping to take young stock to Llanbethery Moor where they spent the summer months. The horses ranged from small

ponies to heavy carthorses which shared the farmwork with a Fordson tractor.

At busy times father would employ casual workers and I remember Tom Shanks staying with us for a few weeks at a time to do odd jobs such as manurespreading, picking stones, cutting thistles, etc. Tom had a keen sense of smell - you could smell him for miles! He would rarely come into the house and preferred to sleep on the hay in the barn. While with us Mum would persuade him to have his annual bath and also trimmed his beard and moustach. A particular favourite of mine was Bob Griffiths who would help out at harvest and other times when extra manpower was needed. He was a first class shot and no rabbit, pheasant or partridge was safe when he was out on the prowl with his shotgun. Unfortunately Bob, who had joined the Army, was killed in an accident at the end of the war. Another regular called at harvesting time was Dilwyn Price who, with his huge threshing machine did the rounds of the Vale farms.

Jobs that I was given at harvest time included stooking the wheat, backbreaking work!, tedding and raking the hay (horse-drawn machines of course) and leading the mare backwards and forwards to operate the hoist used for lifting the hay from the waggon to the mow.

We employed an Italian P.O.W. who was a "trusty" and was dropped off at the farm gate daily and returned to the camp at Llantrithyd Park each evening. We named him Benghazi after the place of his capture in North Africa. Landgirls also worked at Gowlog but I was too young to fully appreciate their talents.

December was always one of the busiest months for, as well as the usual preparations for Christmas, we had the orders to fill for poultry and pork. My job was in the feathering department and what an awful chore it was! Feathers and down flying in all directions and pressure went on to meet the promised delivery dates and the panic when inevitably an order was overlooked.

We owned various cars but the one that made a lasting impression on me was a sporty little Sunbeam Talbot which Mum used to whizz about in on her shopping trips to Cowbridge or Cardiff. Starting cars and tractors was often a problem in those days and swinging on a starting handle was one of the tasks to be avoided if possible. Frozen radiators and waterpipes in the winter months were other hazards which we had to face. I recall a particularly severe winter, probably in 1945, when we were about to leave Gowlog and father had already moved to Llwyncrwn. We were snowed-in for some considerable time and with provisions running low, Vern and I helped Mum dig through snowdrifts across the fields to Llanveithin where the Madocks family were able to help us through the crisis.

By the way, do you accept that spelling or should it be Llanvithyn Llanvythin, or Llanveithen - alternatives I have seen in recent Newsletters.

I have not touched on entertainments in those pre-TV years or the effect that the war had on our lives at that time so will devote articles to those topics later.

Finally a confession. I have a copy of Annals of South Glamorgan, borrowed from the Llancarfan Lending Library in July 1914. I do hope the fines are now statute-barred!

Editors note: spellings of Llanvithyn are legion - the O. S. and the present owners use this form but the Newsletter accepts usages from different times and places (as well as editors idiosyncratic brain or typing!). Other items arising from this fascinating piece which will appear in the next Newsletter.

NEWS OF MEMBERS FRIENDS AND PLACES

Barry and District News (May 13) reported that M.P. Walter Sweeny has given his support to the idea of a "Green Belt" to protect the Vale from erosion by expansion of Cardiff. The borough council is the first in Wales to ask for such an idea in its Local Plan. Some of you will remember that this idea was originally mooted during the public meeting to discuss the now abandoned plan for Parc Dyffryn new village.

Church bells. Phil Watts tells us that the bells are no longer safe to be rung until major repairs are carried out. A detailed report will be given in a future Newsletter.

Phil Watts also tells us that membership renewals have now reached 161, so numbers remain undiminished - a success story indeed.

Against the advice of officers, the Vale borough council's Planning Committee has recommended approval for a hospice for terminally ill children --- in open countryside near Llancarfan (Barry and District News May 27). This is adjacent to the existing development of Whitton Rosser Farm, off Five-Mile Lane - does anyone know what is going on here?

Congratulations to 14 year old Kate Newton, Old Mill, Llancarfan who took part in the international pentathlon contest in Barcelona in late May. Kate was the only Welsh member of two British teams and finished a creditable 9th out of 20. Thanks to Audrey Porter for sending us the press cutting from the South Wales Echo.

Andrew Vicari, who lived at the Wesleyan Chapel (Whitechapel) in the late 1960s was featured in the Western Mail of 9 July. Now living near Monaco, he has completed a series of 235 giant paintings which chronicle the Gulf War. The largest canvas is 20 x 34 feet and all depict his experiences on the spot, an opportunity given by his connections with the Saudi royal family to which he is court painter.

ST CADOG'S BELL

St Cadog's bell said to have been made by Gildas, was preserved at Llancarfan, as was another, also reputed to be Gildas's handiwork, at Llanilltud Fawr; both had supernatural

powers attributed to them.

(Glanmor Williams, *The Welsh and their Religion*, University of Wales Press, 1991)

Editors note: Gildas: Early sixth century monk and Latin author, educated at Illtud's monastic school.