



BRYCHEINIOG

VOLUME XXXVI

2004

Edited by
E. G. PARRY

Published by
THE BRECKNOCK SOCIETY
and
MUSEUM FRIENDS

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CONTENTS

Officers of the Society		2
Notes on Contributors		4
Editorial		5
Reports: Powys County Archives Office	Catherine Richards	7
The Royal Regiment of Wales		
Museum, Brecon	Alison Hembrow	11
Brecon Tower Research Project, Watergate, Brecon	Border Archaeology	15
After Mr Jones	Ruth Bidgood	51
The Landed Families of Breconshire	John Davies	69
Beating the Bounds: Perambulations of the Manors of Tretower and Crickhowell in 1863 and 1864	Pamela and Martin Redwood	83
Index		121

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Border Archaeology has, since its beginnings in 1998, grown to be the largest archaeological contracting organisation in Wales and the Marches; in recent years it has been involved in a number of major excavations in Hay-on-Wye and the surrounding area.

The poet Ruth Bidgood has left Abergwesyn but still lives in Breconshire at Beulah. Her enthusiasm for tracing the lives of the gentry and farmers of north Breconshire is as keen as ever. In 2000 she published *Parishes of the Buzzard*, a history of Abergwesyn.

John Davies's *Hanes Cymru A History of Wales* prompted academic praise and popular acclaim; since its publication he has become a well known figure on Welsh television. He has strong links with, and a great affection for, Breconshire which he explains in his article.

Pamela and Martin Redwood have made extensive use of the Badminton estate papers to investigate the history and topography of the area around Llangattock and their earlier discoveries are to be found in previous volumes of the journal.

EDITORIAL

The building of the new road at the bottom of Ship Street in Brecon prompted an archaeological excavation which aroused great interest in the town; the dig uncovered part of the medieval town wall and the base of a semi-circular tower. Brecon's defences have been the subject of a great deal of speculation – much of it printed in previous *Brycheiniogs* – but now the report of the excavation by the team from Border Archaeology adds significantly to our knowledge.

The Sir John Lloyd Memorial lecture in 2004 was – as we have come to expect – given by a leading Welsh historian; Professor John Davies's analysis of the great changes which affected landownership in the county during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is an important foundation on which local historians can build.

The other contributors to this volume are well known to readers of *Brycheiniog*. Pamela and Martin Redwood give us the latest of their reports on the topography of the Crickhowell area, based on the Badminton archives, while Ruth Bidgood concludes a sequence of articles about the minor gentry families of north Breconshire.

In 2004 David Moore the curator of the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery achieved distinction when he was nominated as Buyer for the Contemporary Arts Society of Wales by a panel of academics and fellow curators. The annual art auction at the museum realised £13,000 which will be used to further the aims of the museum and the Brecknock Society.

Next year sees two important anniversaries. Two hundred and fifty years ago the Brecknockshire Agricultural Society was established; this was the first organisation of its kind in Britain and Breconshire should be proud of the lead that a group of local landowners gave in the great changes which revolutionised agriculture in the eighteenth century. To mark the two-hundredth anniversary the Queen visited the Brecon Show in 1955 and in the same year the first volume of *Brycheiniog* was published.

As usual the Society is very grateful for the financial help it receives towards the publication of *Brycheiniog* from Brecon County Council and Brecon Town Council.

POWYS COUNTY ARCHIVES

This year has been a particularly busy and productive one for Powys Archives. January saw the launch of the *Friends of Powys Archives* and within a few months we had nearly 100 members, not only from within Powys, but across Britain and abroad. The group is intended to act as a forum for individuals and groups to expand their knowledge of the history of Powys particularly through its written records. It will aim to promote the preservation and use of historical records in Powys, and raise public awareness of their importance for research and education. The newsletter, *Almanac*, has been issued on a quarterly basis and this is circulated to all members of the group; County Councillors, Heads of History at all Powys Secondary Schools, and libraries across Powys. A programme of talks and workshops, held as far afield as Machynlleth and Ystradgynlais has been enjoyed by all those who have been able to attend. A number of Friends are working on indexing projects for Powys Archives, whilst another has undertaken to translate for us a series of World War One letters written in Welsh. We could not have wished for a better start to the Friends group. Membership details and forthcoming talks can be viewed on our Office website (<http://archives.powys.gov.uk>).

In December of last year a report on Powys Archives was presented to the Children, Families and Lifelong Learning Committee of Powys County Council. This report outlined the current situation at the Archives and concentrated on areas such as accommodation and storage, and access and users. The Committee heard that storage is now a fundamental and major problem, and has been heavily criticised by external inspection bodies both in terms of size and suitability for archival collections. The Committee also heard that since 1991 use of Powys Archives by members of the public has grown significantly, to the extent that demand now often outstrips the capacity of the very modest public search facilities available. On a more positive note the success of the digital projects was also reported. Over the past 12 months Powys Digital History Projects have received over 2 million hits, undoubtedly generating greater interest in and understanding of the work of Powys Archives.

CyMAL, the new strategic and advisory unit within the Welsh Assembly Government on museums, archives and libraries in Wales, came into action on 1 April 2004. For the first time archives have been placed on a level playing field with museums and libraries. One of the first achievements of CyMAL was the launch of the archives grant scheme in the autumn. The Assembly body awarded 32 grants worth a total of over £173,000 to the thirteen local authority archive services in Wales and the University of Wales Swansea Archives. Powys Archives made two successful grant applications to this scheme totalling just under £20,000. The first grant provided funding to help promote our open day, and has also helped finance other promotional activities, such as purchasing display

boards for travelling exhibitions and a display cabinet for the foyer in County Hall. The second grant allowed us to undertake a much needed conservation survey, and to purchase a large quantity of conservation material for our collections.

Powys Archives held a very successful open day on 25 September. Over 60 visitors were taken on a tour of the premises and enjoyed a selection of documents that were displayed from our strongrooms. Internet workshops for family history research were also run throughout the day. The day was enjoyed by all, and would not have been possible without the assistance of 10 volunteers, who provided invaluable help through the course of the day.

Again well over 1,200 visitors have come in person to Powys Archives to undertake research over the year. We have responded to around 300 postal enquiries and 900 emails. This year has seen a growth in the number of legal searches. In particular, changes to the compensation schemes for British coal miners has resulted in over 100 requests for information from post mortem reports held by Powys Archives.

Between 14 October and 21 November 2003 Powys Archives undertook a Visitor Survey which was based on guidelines of the Public Services Quality Group (PSQG) and their report *Standard for Access to Archives 2003*. Forty three forms were completed. Key results from this survey include the following: 33% of our visitors are new users and intend to return. In other words the growing interest in heritage and local history in general impacts on, and increases our visitors numbers year on year; 63% of our visitors are over 60 years of age, proving that archives are a key resource for lifelong learning. Younger people, 44 years and under, are seriously under-represented in the archive user population; Of those surveyed 58% have used our Office website and 42% our *Powys Digital History* pages. Comments on these were very positive. It is clear from this that we should continue to develop our strong web presence; it would appear that the County Archives staff offer an excellent level of service to the public and this is reflected in the percentages – 81% thought that staff were friendly, helpful, and 77%, knowledgeable. The overwhelming issue that emerged from the visitor survey was the lack of space in the searchroom. One visitor wrote “*The most overcrowded record office and searchroom that I have ever visited – and I have worked in many different record offices in Wales and England.*”

Powys Archives 2003-2004 Annual Report was published in April. This summarises the work undertaken by staff and a full list of accessions received. Details of accessions received during 2004 with particular reference to Breconshire are as follows:

PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL RECORDS

Tithe apportionment for Llanwrthwl, Breconshire 1847 [Acc 1505]

Llanfihangel Cwmdu National/C in W School: log books, 1872–1936 & 1961–1994, admissions register 1892–1940 [Acc 1481]

- Correspondence from the Charity Commission to Mary Herbert's Charity regarding site of new school at Llanbedr cum Patrishow 1865–1867 [Acc 1492]
 Rhayader Gwy byelaws, Radnorshire 1907 [Acc 1505]
 Minute books & indices of Brecknock Borough Council 1973–1996 [Acc 1509]
 Glyntawe Board School, Breconshire: log book 1899–1917 [Acc 1510]
 Tithe map and apportionment for Merthyr Cynog Parish 1840 [Acc 1518]
 Policeman's notebook: PC 28 Thomas Jarrett, Breconshire Constabulary, Gilwern 1900 [Acc 1519]
 Minute book for Treflys Parish Council, Breconshire 1894–1968. Minute book for Llanlleonfel Parish/Community Council, Breconshire 1895–1975 [Acc 1541]
 Tawe Uchaf Community Council, Breconshire: Planning applications 2001–2004; Correspondence 2001–2004 [Acc 1543]

NONOFFICIAL RECORDS

- Papers relating to Salem Congregational Chapel, Sennybridge 1950–1983; Programmes from Cymanfaoeth Canu 1961–1967; Papers relating to Sennybridge Esiteddfod 1966–1967 [Acc 1521]
 Deeds relating to Pen-gwrlodau and Ty-fry, Llanfihangel Cwmdu; principle parties: John Edwards & Thomas Watkins 1856–1878 [Acc 1492]
 Programme for Radnorshire County Show, horticultural section 19 Aug 1939 [Acc 1505]
 Map of electoral divisions; plans of proposed asylum at Talgarth; plan of Great Forest of Brecknock; ledger of Local Defence Volunteers (Aberyscir); sales particulars for Trecastle; copy will of D. W. Lloyd, Llandeilo'r Fan; sales particulars for Dyffryn Castle Estate; docs relating to Bryngwy, Rhayader; Red Cross forms; 1819–1960 [Acc 1473]
 Notebook/recipe book, inscribed 'Mrs D Parry, [Ff]yn[no]noer, [Mer]th[yr] [Cyn]nog, Brec[on]' [1909–1946] [Acc 1474]
 Goods invoices from Midland, Cambrian, Neath & Brecon, London & North, Great Western and Brecon & Merthyr Railways 1894 [Acc 1475]
 Ledger of personal expenditure of Mary G de Winton, Priory Hill House, Brecon & ledger of household expenditure for the Misses de Winton 1933–1944 [Acc 1476]
 Correspondence to & from Traffic Manager, Neath & Brecon Railway + 2 'giants of Steam' posters 1895–1947 [Acc 1477]
 Ledger recording salmon & trout caught on the river Usk at Buckland. Includes the stretch of river, weight of fish, method of catching and names of fishermen 1933–1941 [Acc 1478]
 Contributions register 1901–1929, and envelope of correspondence, for Sion Baptist Church, Sennybridge 1914–1959 [Acc 1480]
 Registers and ledgers from Salem Congregational Chapel, Sennybridge; Brief history of the chapel 1935–[1981] [Acc 1488]

- Sales particulars for Castell Madoc, Lower Chapel, Breconshire 2004, and Trefecca Fawr, Talgarth, Breconshire 2004 [Acc 1507]
- Records from Kensington Baptist Church, Brecon 1876–1995 [Acc 1508]
- Depositions, bills, inquisitions and extract of title of mills in the Lordship of Brecon 1637–1722 [Acc 1513]
- Records from Salem Congregational Chapel, Sennybridge 1938–1951. Records from Sennybridge and District Singing Festival 1933–1975. Records and photographs relating to Sennybridge, Defynnog, Ystradgynlais, Pentrefelin and Brecon 1879–1958 [Acc 1517]
- Records from Sardis Baptist Church, Llangynidr; 1957–1961 (additional deposit) [Acc 1523]
- Ledgers and notebooks written in Welsh, of the Sir Harri ab Gwilym Friendly Society, Lamb Hotel, Penderyn, Breconshire 1839–1962 [Acc 1524]
- Title deeds relating to Breconshire 1616–1815. Copy of the Bercon Journal and Town & County Newspaper for 6 Sept 1856 [Acc 1532]
- Papers & plans from Harry Morgan, Ystradgynlais, Breconshire 1938–1992. Includes: Ystradgynlais RDC; Brecknock Scouts; Gough Constitutional Working Mens' Club; British Legion; copies of The Breconshire Naturalist; plans of sewerage in Ystradgynlais [Acc 1535]
- Memoir of David Davies of Pencrug, Llanafanfawr, Breconshire 2004. Directors reports and correspondence from the Central Wales Extension Railway, Llandrindod and Llandovery section 1860–1869 [Acc 1537]
- Brecon & Radnor Branch of the National Farmers Union: Minutes of executive & various other committees 1909–1989; Copies of 'The Brecon & Radnor Farmer' and 'The Powys Farmer' 1969–1990; Commoners' committees attendance books 1956–1979 [Acc 1544]
- Mounted photographs and programme of Builth Wells and District Community Play 2002 [Acc 1547]
- Records relating to Sennybridge and district, Breconshire: Midland Railway consignment notes 1881; miscellaneous papers 1897–1979; photographs c1907–1950; minutes of Maescar branch of Breconshire Women's Conservative Association 1924–1945 [Acc 1552]
- Deeds relating to Tyr-y-Felin, Tuy-yn-y-Cwm & Tyr-y-Gorse, Llanfihangel Nant Bran, Breconshire 1860–1957 [Acc 1555]
- CD-Rom of images of collection of estate maps of Lord Camden's Brecknock holdings C18th, (originals held in the Centre for Kentish Studies) [Acc 1559]

CATHERINE RICHARDS
Archives Manager

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF WALES MUSEUM, BRECON (The South Wales Borderers Museum Trust)

Numerous television programmes, books and films on historical themes confirm the fascination of the past for many people. This often grows from an interest in family history or from a significant anniversary. In Wales these factors combined in 2004: the 125th anniversaries of the battle of Isandhlwana and the Defence of Rorke's Drift, plus the 60th anniversary of D-Day, highlighted not only local links with these events but also the vital rôle of The Royal Regiment of Wales Museum in preserving the artefacts and archives connected with the people who participated in them.

The Regimental Museum continues to assist many researchers, including Brecon families enquiring about ancestors who served in the regiment, plus authors and broadcasters. Dr Saul David used the archives when researching his acclaimed recent publication *Zulu: The Heroism and Tragedy of the Zulu War* and the associated BBC *Timewatch* programme. Falklands veteran Simon Weston visited to gain information for a BBC Wales television programme *The Forgotten War – Burma 1944–45* (to be broadcast in July 2005), and assistance has also been given to a joint British/Australian production on Welsh soldiers at Gallipoli.

With thousands of objects, documents and photographs in the museum and archive, collection management has to be good if these resources are to be of use to researchers. The computerised collections catalogue (MODES) is maintained and updated so items can be identified and located by various criteria such as description, donor, date, and people/places/events involved. Further photograph albums are being scanned (partly funded by a grant from CyMAL – Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales) so the images are more easily accessible. This year has seen Martin Everett (Curator) and Celia Green (Customer Services Manager) gaining further first-hand knowledge of the South Wales Borderers in World War One by touring French and Belgian battlefields to study the retreat from Mons, Le Cateau, and the Aisne. Facilities in the Readers' Room have been extended, providing increased desk-space and seating. Research puts large demands on staff and resources, so when visitors wish to look at items in the archives, they benefit from contacting the museum in advance of visiting to book a research appointment.

An important aspect of the museum's work is coordinating and cooperating with other organisations in the museum world and beyond. In 2004 this has included hosting the Wales region meeting of The Society of Archivists, contributing to the popular Zulu War weekend at Firepower (The Royal Artillery Museum, Woolwich), participating in the Brecon Festival of Learning for Adult Learners Week, and being part of Brecon's Georgian Festival. We were also pleased to welcome Len Pole of the Royal Albert Museum, Exeter, to conduct an

Ethnographic Survey sponsored by CyMAL to help create an overall record of collections in Wales. Planning ahead for 2005, the Curator is on the Advisory Committee for the Veterans United project in which an Imperial War Museum exhibition will tour Wales to coincide with the 60th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day.

It was almost 60 years after his death while serving with 3/MONS at Broekhuizen in November 1944 that CSM Evan Davies from Abersychan was re-interred on 9th June 2004, his remains having been discovered by a Dutch Army Recovery Team. He was buried with full military honours at Venray Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in the Netherlands. His family have subsequently visited the museum and kindly donated his medals and other artefacts.

We are always grateful for the generosity of comrades, families and friends in donating items to the museum. Among recent acquisitions are an album of photos of 1/SWB in Waziristan in 1937 from the late Major David Rhys MC; an account of the service of Brig DHS Somerville; a Gulf War 2003 medal (specimen from the Army Medal Office); the Union Colour of 10/SWB (returned from Ebbw Vale Parish Church); and medals belonging to CSM George Morris DCM (5/SWB WW1), Pte A Thomas (2/MONS WW1), Pte OH Davies (1/MONS WW1), and Pte ZD Thomas MM (5/SWB WW1). All such donations help illustrate the history of the regiment and preserve the memory of those who served in it.

The team of staff and volunteers remains busy providing a service to the public and running the museum on a businesslike basis. Jean Legg retired as museum assistant in 2004 but continues to do voluntary work in the museum's memorial garden. Sylvia Davies was welcomed as Jean's replacement. Sylvia and Lucy Jones have attended a security training day; Lucy and Celia Green have completed a First Aid course at Coleg Powys. Celia has also masterminded the transition to new accounting software as well as overseeing the expanding e-commerce operations. Education Advisor Alison Hembrow achieved Associateship of the Museums Association and was presented with this award at the MA Conference in Edinburgh. Martin Everett kept abreast of developments in regimental museums at the Army Museums Ogilby Trust (AMOT) Conference. Volunteers Fred Antell, Tom Phillips, Yvonne Callaghan and Alan Baynham Jones provide valuable support. A new colour leaflet has been successfully launched, and visitor numbers for the first six months of 2004 are up on 2003. Educational provision (including new options in the National Curriculum workshop *Finding Out About Life on the Home Front in World War Two*) continues to attract large numbers of young visitors from Breconshire and across south and mid-Wales.

Grants from Brecon Town Council, Powys County Council, AMOT and CyMAL plus the backing of the Regiment and the MOD are appreciated. The

Royal Regiment of Wales Museum in Brecon is a local museum of national and international importance. It works hard to generate operating income so it can serve the local community, but relies significantly on the support of that community for its continued existence.

The Royal Regiment of Wales Museum,
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ALISON HEMBROW

BRECON TOWER RESEARCH PROJECT, WATERGATE, BRECON

INTRODUCTION

Border Archaeology was appointed in 2003 by Powys County Council as archaeological consultants for the Brecon Inner Relief Road, the main elements of which being archaeological observation and standing building recording of all the groundworks.

Due to programming considerations, it was decided to evaluate a specific 80.0m x 5.0m area encompassing the former sites of No. 14 Market Street and Nos. 1 and 2 Watergate (Figure 1). The evaluation revealed substantial structural remains which both Border Archaeology and Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) considered would benefit from further more detailed investigation.

Powys County Council, after consultation with Border Archaeology, subsequently approved full excavation of an area bounded by Ship Street, the Watergate, the

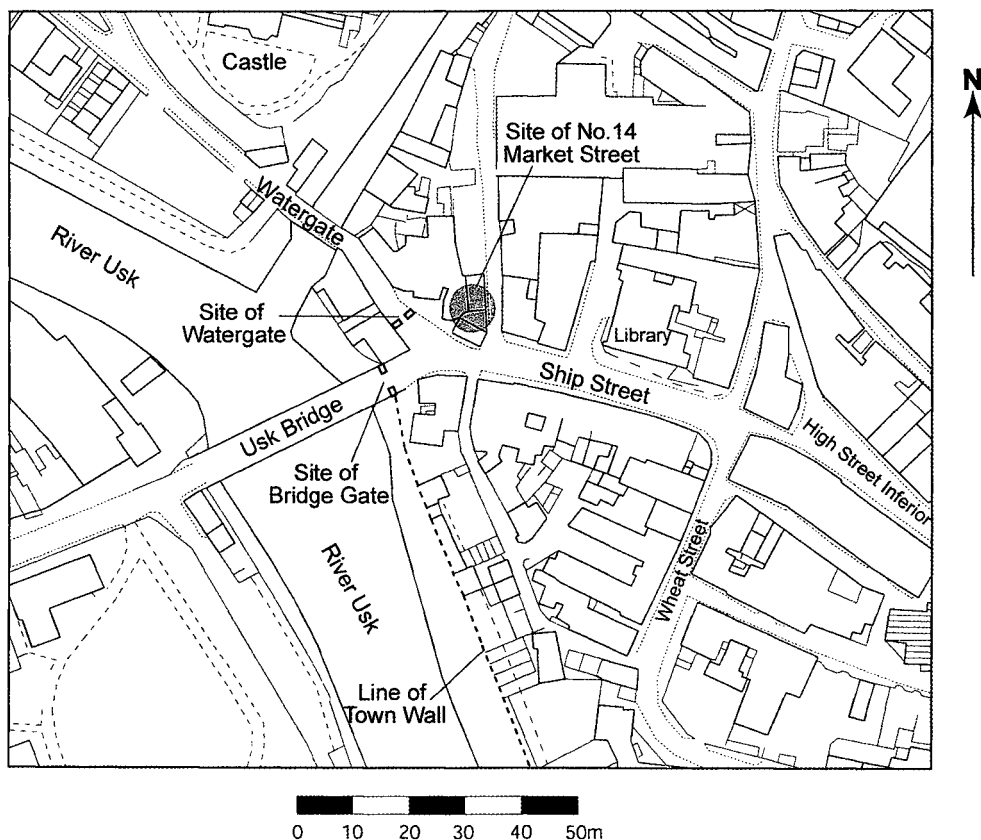


Figure 1 Site location plan.

Brecon Workmen's Social Club and sewerage pipe construction relating to the relief road.

Revealed was a semicircular structure (501) interpreted as the lower level of a mural tower relating to the medieval town defences and incorporating what appeared to be an arrow slit on the northwest side (Figure 2 and Plate 1).

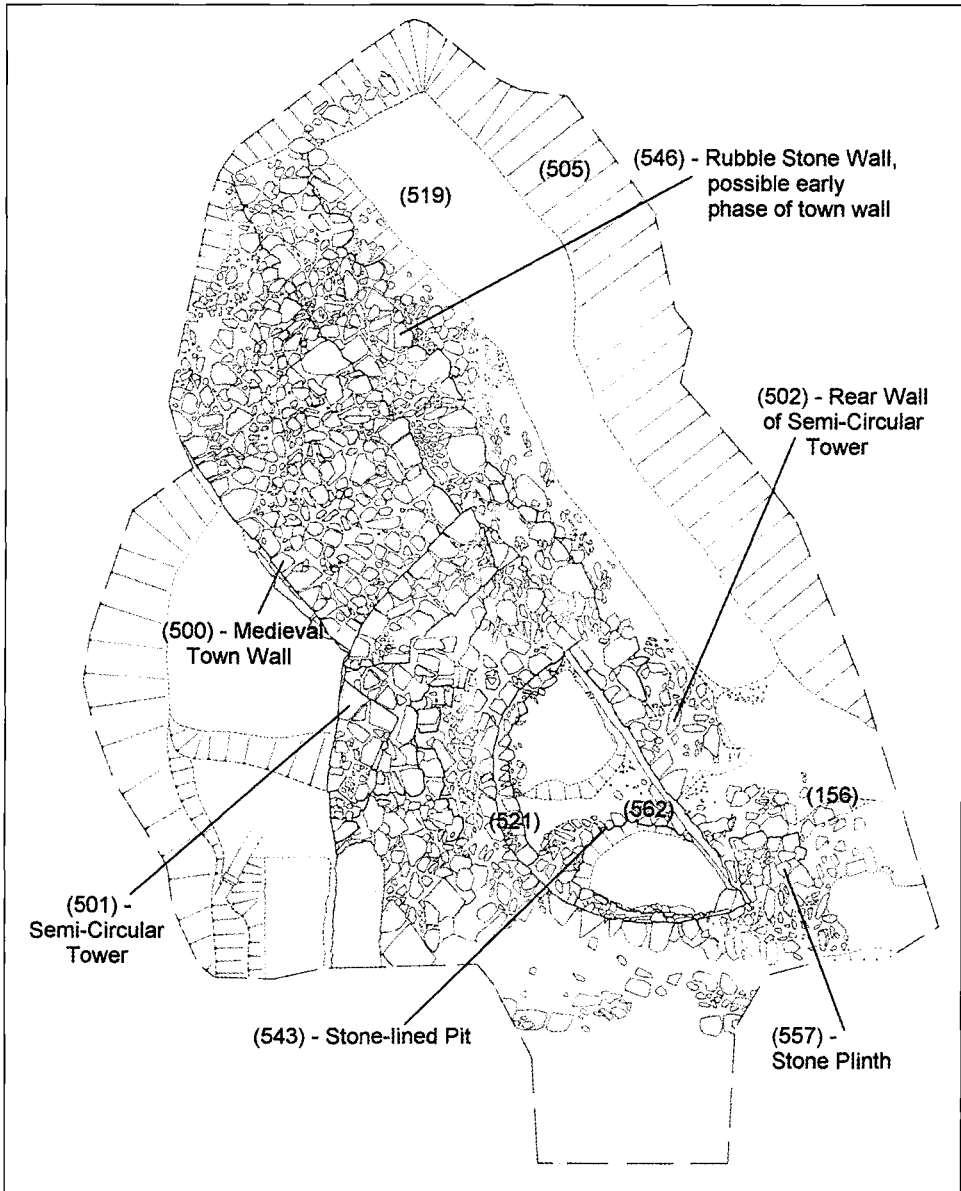


Figure 2 Plan of remains of tower.



Plate 1 View of lower stages of possible arrow slit, looking east.

The structure had an internal radius of roughly 1.9m and survived to an internal height of 1.35m. The external radius was about 4.0m and the walls averaged 2.0m in thickness. It is possible that the structure relates to one of two town gates that once stood in this location: the Bridge Gate (or Usk Gate) and the Water Gate.

A total of 66 contexts were recorded during the excavation and 12 others were carried over from the Market Street evaluation, those of particular importance being walls (156) and (158).

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The origins of urban settlement at Brecon have given rise to a considerable amount of scholarly debate. The name Brecon is generally assumed to have been derived from a semi-legendary Welsh leader named Brychan, who is reputed to have resided there at some point during the 6th–7th centuries AD.¹ However, there is no firm evidence of a pre-Conquest settlement in the vicinity of Brecon.

The earliest documented urban settlement in the locality dates from the late 11th/early 12th century, and appears to have been established immediately to the

north of the castle, situated on the west bank of the River Honddu. The castle was built in about 1093 by the Norman lord Bernard de Neufmarché, after his defeat of the local Welsh leader Bleddyn ap Maenarch, and was originally a motte and bailey structure, which was subsequently rebuilt in stone and considerably enlarged during the 12th and 13th centuries.

It is unclear precisely when the main urban settlement on the east bank of the Honddu was founded. It has been argued by D. Walker that the town was established within 20 years of the construction of the castle, based on the evidence suggesting that St Mary's Church was established as a chapel of ease to serve an expanding urban settlement on the east bank of the Honddu in the mid-12th century, that the borough already had a well defined civic organization by about 1200 and that, prior to 1188, the suburb of Llanfaes had developed to the extent that it already had its own parish church.²

Presumably, the initial urban settlement on the east bank of the Honddu was provided with defences, which may have comprised an earthen rampart and ditch. However, it is unclear when the town of Brecon acquired a defensive circuit built in stone. The earliest documented reference to the town walls at Brecon occurs in a deed of 1314, providing a *terminus ante quem* for their construction.³ However it is likely that the stone defences were erected some time before the early 14th century.

Although the lack of concrete evidence, in the form of a murage grant, prevents the giving of a precise date for the building of the town walls and gates at Brecon, a review of the evidence and comparisons with other neighbouring Marcher towns suggests that they were probably built at some point between c. 1235 and c.1300. It seems unlikely that the new urban settlement on the east bank was defended with stone walls before the 1230s. The town of Brecon is recorded as having been captured and burnt by the Welsh in 1231 and 1233, although they failed to take the strongly defended castle.⁴

Brecon was of vital strategic importance in the conflict between Prince Llywellyn ap Gruffydd, the de Bohun lords of Brecon and King Edward I during the 1270s-80s. Consequently, a town of Brecon's critical importance would naturally have needed the protection of stone walls. Town walls were built at Hay on Wye in 1232, Abergavenny in 1241, Chepstow in about 1270 and Crickhowell in 1281, so it would have been very surprising if town walls were not being built at Brecon during the same period. The construction of the town walls at Brecon may have coincided with the extensive building work carried out at Brecon castle in the mid to late 13th century.⁵

Substantial sums of money were spent on the repair of the town walls of Brecon in 1404, to repair damage caused during the Glyndwr rebellion. The walls were again repaired at royal expense in 1483 and again in the early 16th century, following damage caused during an attack on the town by Yorkist rebels opposed to the rule of King Henry VII.^{6,7}

The earliest description of the town walls and gates appears in the Itinerary of John Leland, written c.1536–39.⁸ The Tudor antiquarian described the town of Brecon as ‘well waulled’ with four gates, Old Port Superior (Porthbont), the West Gate (Portissa), East Gate (Portdoure) and Water Gate (Portwiske or Portusk) and 10 mural towers, some square and some semi-circular. The walls were described by John Speed in 1610 as being ‘still strong and of good repair’⁹ and were still largely intact in the mid-18th century, as shown on Meredith Jones’s map of Brecon of 1744. However the walls were gradually robbed for building materials during the late 18th/early 19th century and by the mid-19th century large sections had been demolished.^{10,11}

It is possible to plot the course of the town defences, based on the evidence of John Speed’s map of 1610 and Meredith Jones’s map of 1744 and the existing structural remains, which have been incorporated into boundary walls (for instance, along Captain’s Walk). From the Honddu bridge which led from the castle, the walls ran down the east side of Castle Street to the Struet Gate (described by Leland as ‘Old Port Superior’) which stood at the junction with the High Street. From there, the walls ran roughly southeast across the garden boundaries of Lion Street and across a field called Clawdd y Gaer, then turning sharply southwest and extending down to the East Gate near the Shire Hall. From the East Gate, the walls followed the course of Captain’s Walk down to the Usk and then turned northwest, running roughly parallel with the Usk up to the Bridge Gate, commanding the bridge over the River Usk towards Llanfaes. The exact course of the wall from the Bridge Gate up to the bridge across the Honddu is unclear; Speed’s map of 1610 shows the wall continuing in a northwest direction up to the Water Gate and from there, back up to the castle bridge over the Honddu; however, this section of the wall is not shown on Jones’s map of 1744; possibly it had been pulled down by that date.

The excavation area, comprising the site of No.14 Market Street, was located at the junction of Market Street (formerly called Horn Lane), Ship Street and Watergate, in close proximity to both the Bridge or West Gate, commanding the bridge across the River Usk towards Llanfaes and the Watergate or Usk Gate, leading northwest towards the bridge over the Honddu, the north bank of which was guarded by Brecon castle. According to Hugh Thomas’s description of the town, written in 1698, the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate (described as the least of the town gates) were separated by just one building.¹² The pictorial evidence of Speed’s map of 1610 and Jones’s map of 1744 seem to confirm that the Bridge Gate and Water Gate were in very close proximity to each other. Significantly, the 1610 map shows what appears to be a semicircular tower located approximately between the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate; it is possible that this may be identifiable with the structure discovered on the site of No.14 Market Street.

This semicircular structure appears to have been demolished in 1776 as a

result of the widening of Ship Street carried out in accordance with the Brecon Improvement Act, and may possibly be identified with the 'old Building, called Porthbach, and Gateway adjoining' which is listed in the Act as among the buildings to be taken down. This building is reputed to have served as a place of imprisonment for local miscreants during the 16th century.

However, the Camden estate map of 1780 shows the outline of a semicircular structure at the junction of Ship Street and Market Street (then called Horn Lane) which suggests that the structure which took the place of the tower demolished in 1776 observed the footprint of the earlier building and may well have incorporated parts of the original structure. This likelihood is strengthened by an early photographic view taken in the mid-1840s, looking up Ship Street from the end of Usk Bridge, which shows a small, two-storey building with a curved, jettied street frontage at the junction of Ship Street and Market Street.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

During the evaluation of Market Street, a substantial curved stone wall was discovered, the scale of which was deemed sufficient to warrant full excavation.

The layers surrounding the structure were reduced methodically and revealed a semicircular structure with a 2.10m thick wall on the curve and a 1m thick wall on the straight edge. The straight edge ran north-south and formed the eastern edge of the structure. At the highest surviving point of the structure was a triangular gap, standing 0.5m high, with a terminal aperture about 0.1m wide and an internal aperture of 0.6m wide. The nature of this aperture, together with the substantial nature of the structure, suggested a defensive function, probably a wall or gate tower, with the aperture possibly forming part of an arrow slit.

The tower survived to an internal height of 0.75-1.5m and an exterior height of 2m. No means of access to the chamber enclosed within the tower was found and it is likely that this room was accessed via a staircase or ladder from a chamber above. As the arrow slit would therefore be underground it is assumed that the ground level west of the tower has been raised considerably since the construction of the tower, thus implying that the course of either the Usk or the Honddu, or both, may also have altered significantly.

In the southern part of the tower interior a stone-lined pit was discovered, sunk to a depth of 1m below the tower floor. This pit was curiously constructed, having an ovoid shape in plan, with the northern curve being well made and the southern being considerably less so. At the eastern edge the stones of the pit seem to be recessed slightly under the lowest course of the tower wall, where, as at the western side, they appeared to abut the rough stones beneath the tower.

It is thus probable that the pit predated the tower, although the finds within the backfill suggest that the pit was still open and in use until the 14th century.

The pit contained a greenish organic fill that produced a number of wooden planks and some medieval pottery, as well as a curious “D” shaped piece of metal and a wide array of animal bones. The layer above this had been rich in iron slag, including some large (0.3m diameter) lumps. It is unlikely that this pit was for domestic or human waste, as it was located within the tower and it would have been easier and healthier to discard such waste over the walls into the river. Another possibility is that it served an industrial function, for example lime-burning or iron working, hence the greenish hue or slag, respectively, but the lack of burning on any of the facing stones seems to belie either possibility. It is possible that the pit was originally intended to be a simple storage pit, either for weapons or food. The pit was then reused as a waste pit and possibly also as a containment cell for local miscreants.

On the northern side of the tower a large, wide wall extended northwards. This wall survived over 3m wide at its widest, with the eastern extent heavily truncated by the construction of No.14 Market Street. The western side was well faced and abutted the wall of the tower. The eastern side appeared to key in with the construction of the tower, so there seemed to be two phases of construction.

Such a substantial wall could only have served a defensive purpose and thus it is likely that this was the old town wall, the location matching the course of the town wall as shown on Speed’s 1610 map but contradicting the “site of Town Wall” as marked on the 1903 revised OS map. The semicircular structure would therefore most likely be a wall tower or gate tower. The town wall appears to have been substantially strengthened, being widened by over 2m. This can be seen by the fact that the curve of the tower was faced even within the bulk of the town wall, suggesting that it was originally exposed to view.

On the eastern edge of the semicircular structure, a spur wall was discovered that ran roughly east-west. This wall abutted the rear of the tower and appeared to be a later addition. Along the southern face of the wall was a pair of rectangular indentations, forming vertical slots. Though archaeological evidence was scarce, it was presumed these represented sockets for scaffold or timber beams. The wall continued beyond the boundary of the site to the east. It may be that this wall represents a structure from the old medieval street front of Shepe Street.

At the junction of the town wall and the tower a later wall had been built up against the edge of the town wall, running WNW-ESE. This wall was 0.7m wide and survived to about 0.5m in height. It was truncated by later activity at the western extent of the site but it appears that the wall continued on to the WNW. The nature of this wall could not be ascertained from the little that survived within the excavation area but it is possible that it is similar to the spur wall located during the watching brief phase and that this wall represents the course of medieval Watergate Street.

A trench was excavated down to the natural geology to the east of the tower

and town wall in order to assess the full dimensions of both. At no point on the eastern edge of either the tower or wall does a faced stone remain and it can thus be presumed that either the entire eastern edge was truncated or that it originally had an earthen rampart against that side.

A small patch of cobbling survived to the west of the tower, although it was disturbed by the later cut for a sewage pipe. These cobbles appeared from the associated finds assemblage to date from the 19th century. The stones of both the tower and town wall above the level of the cobbles bore traces of rendering, suggesting that both of these structures stood to some degree at this time.

At the bottom of the tower wall a small 'skirt' extended roughly 0.1m from the town wall. This was initially assumed to be the foundation course of the tower, although below this was found further stonework, sloping eastwards beneath the tower. This either represents foundation backfill within a slope-sided foundation cut that was dug and backfilled before the construction of the tower – an unusual construction technique – or an earlier stone feature over which the tower was constructed. There was no evidence of undisturbed natural at this level and excavation only ceased here due to health and safety concerns.

THE EXCAVATION (Figure 2)

Wall (158), located at the southern extent of the Market Street site, ran northeast-southwest and measured 0.64m northwest-southeast x 0.94m northeast-southwest. The wall was faced on the southeast side and survived to a height of two courses (0.20m). The structure was perpendicular with Phase 3 wall (156) and askew in relation to tower wall (501), suggesting that (158) related to the former rather than the latter, although (501) was obviously still standing, at least in part, when (158) was constructed. It is possible that (158) was built in order to buttress (156) or that it represents a re-alignment of the rear wall of tower (501), possibly in order to accommodate the construction of (156), a northwest-southeast wall projecting from the rear of the tower. Wall (156) ran 5.9m southeast, continuing beyond the edge of site. It was faced on the southwest side but the northeast side was heavily truncated by the installation of modern concrete footings, standing seven courses high (0.90m) at its highest. Wall (156) was probably not contemporary with the tower's construction, as its orientation was slightly skewed, but it was certainly built while the tower was still in use. Slots in the southwest face may represent sockets for scaffolding or a jetty bracket for a second storey. The orientation of the wall suggests it may represent the line of medieval Shepe Street. Speed's map of 1610 shows a crenellated rectangular structure where Horn Lane (Market Street) meets Ship Street and wall (156) may be the remains of this structure. It is felt, however, that Speed's depiction represents either Water Gate or Bridge (Usk) Gate and the location of this wall

behind and post-dating a probable mural tower (501) suggests it is unlikely to be part of one of the town gates. It has been suggested that (156) might represent the existence of a more substantial gateway and that these indentations supported a portcullis or similar arrangement but this is felt to be unlikely.

Walls (158) and (156) probably relate to a structure or structures built to the east of the original tower (501). There is an historical reference to a strengthening of the town defences in 1404 and it is possible that (158) relates to an attempt either to reinforce the rear wall of the tower or, more likely, to key wall (156) into the rear of the tower. Due to the substantial nature of (156), and the connection with the tower, it seems plausible that it represents part of the town defences. If the structure represented by (156) was domestic in nature, then (156) represents a very solidly constructed building: the wall was at least 1.2m wide.

It therefore seems most likely that (158) and (156) were broadly contemporary and represent the scaffolded construction of a substantial structure within the town walls, the function of which remains uncertain, although it is likely to be related to the medieval defences.

Another possible clue to the nature of this building is suggested by a drawing dated c.1840, which shows a jettied structure fronting Watergate, roughly on the site of No.1 Watergate. The structure appears to comprise a timber-framed street frontage and a stone portion to the north, bearing two chimneys. An early photograph (mid 1840s) by the pioneer photographer Calvert Richard Jones seems to show the same building, which would appear to be a two-storey structure with dormer window, although no building seems to occupy this location on Wood's 1834 map or the 1832 OS map (Plate 2). The 1780 Camden estate map¹³ seems to show a semicircular building that may relate to tower (501) but there is no indication of a structure protruding from the rear of it.

It may be that a timber-framed building was attached to the south wall of an earlier medieval structure, possibly by means of the slotted indents, or it may be that the wall



Plate 2 Photographic view of c.1845 by Calvert Richard Jones looking N.E. up Ship Street from the end of Usk bridge.

Reproduced from *Brecon in Old Photographs*, David Moore, Allen Sutton & Brecknock Museum, 1993.

was constructed at the same time as the rest of the building. The drawing is difficult to interpret in this respect but it may be that the rear (northern) element of the structure extends further up Market Street than this illustration allows us to see.

The results of the excavation can, somewhat simplistically, be assigned to nine phases.

6.1 *Phase 1*

Naturally formed deposits accumulating through geological processes such as flooding are represented by contexts (534), (541), (551), (552) and (565), while deposits (519) and (520) appeared to be medieval flood deposits or, more likely, deliberate dumps as both contained fragments of 13th century pottery.

6.2 *Phase 2*

Extremely compacted sandy clays with frequent gravel inclusions (517) and (518) probably formed a continuous surface but this could not be ascertained as Phase 3 wall (502) divided them and was not removed during the course of the excavation. Layer (518) contained two sherds of 13th century pottery. These layers may have been rammed foundations associated with Phase 3 wall (502)=(546) but such foundations were uncommon beyond the 10th century and were usually unsuccessful.

A sandy accumulation (540) over (541) was stained by charcoal and may represent a dump of material relating to occupation of the site. A silty layer (550) that had accumulated over (517) appeared to be confined to the course of Phase 3 wall (546) and seemed to relate to the construction of this wall.

The northern and southern arcs of an ovoid pit [543] cut into (520) and measuring 2.4m northwest-southeast x 1.4m northeast-southwest x 0.88m were stone lined (544) (Plate 3). On the north side the stones were laid to courses and frequently squared, the lining being fair-faced and bonded with pinkish clay. On the southern arc, however, the stones were rough and randomly coursed and sloped in more markedly. At the west end, the northern arc seemed to abut the rough stones of the southern arc and at the east end a number of larger, flatter stones formed a squared-off end. The base of the pit was unlined and revealed what appeared to be a natural deposit (565). Several fragments of wood deemed suitable for dendrochronological analysis were recovered from a cess deposit within the pit (539). These were identified as oak boards. Two samples were taken from these fragments and were dated respectively to AD900–AD1180 and AD1116–AD1221 (see Appendix). The original purpose of this pit is uncertain; an industrial function is possible, although the fair-faced stones showed no sign of burning or other indication of industrial processing. Another possibility is that the lining was intended to offer some protection to material stored within the pit.

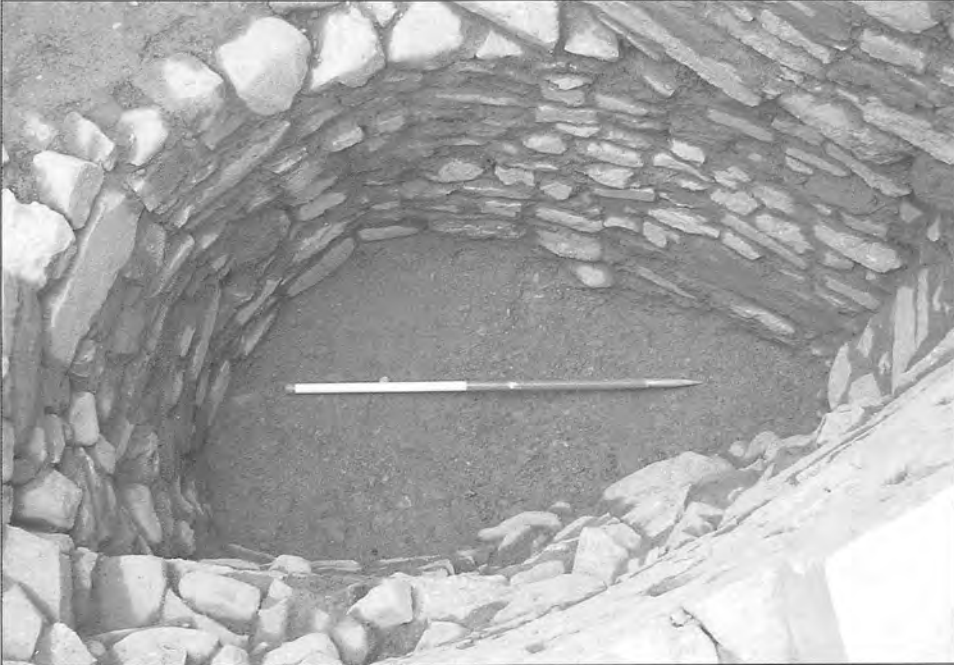


Plate 3 Stone-lined pit [543]. View looking north.



Plate 4 View looking S.E. showing foundations of semicircular tower (501).

If this is the case then why not line the floor as well? Was this meant to assist drainage? Did the pit originally have a wooden floor? No fixings for such a floor were noted and no cavities existed into which such a floor could have been slotted. If a floor existed it would have to have been added after the stone lining.

An inclined stone construction (566) of similar style to the south side of [543], although laid to courses and including occasionally faced stones, underlay the outer wall of Phase 3 tower (501) and may relate to the foundations of that structure. If so, these were of a curious construction, the stonework sloping inwards beneath the tower rather than outwards as one would expect. The material around these stones appeared to be gradually accumulated sands and clays rather than dumps of material, suggesting the existence of a structure predating the tower, possibly incorporating pit [543]. The footings of this structure may then have been utilised as the foundation for tower (501) (Plate 4).

6.3 *Phase 3*

This phase saw a period of massive construction. Deposits (547), (548) and (549) were laid down over silty layer (550) and appear to have built up a solid base upon which a large, rough wall (546) was constructed, which may represent an early phase of the town wall, before (500) was constructed to strengthen the defences. The rough nature of the wall suggests that the original facing stones have been truncated or were reused in the extension. It is possible that (546) was never faced and simply represented a bank of stony material utilised as a defensive barrier. The alignment, construction, orientation and apparent dimensions suggest it is similar to – and probably a continuation of – the rear wall (502) of tower (501). It is assumed to have followed the course of (502) and the two are presumed to be parts of the same construction. However, (502) was differentiated as it was well constructed, with squared, faced stones laid to courses on the west side.

Below (502), on the lip of Phase 2 pit [543], were two large flat stones (562) projecting from under (502). These may have originally formed a more continuous line, possibly constituting a floor surface. A similar line of projecting stones (521) followed the curve of (501) to the west and these were bonded to further flat stones by pinkish clay. This also seemed to form the basis of a floor surface but there was a height difference of 0.2m between (562) and (521). Stones (521) seemed to incorporate a possible step at the southernmost extent, where the feature touched the lip of pit [543], which may relate to a stairwell or similar access way.

The rear wall of the tower (502) stood to a height of 1.35m and, while the stones of the tower (501) seemed to overlie it, it is more likely that the two were keyed together in a single phase of construction. The tower (501) was a massive construction of squared, faced stones laid to courses, with an internal radius of

roughly 1.9m and an external radius of about 4m. The wall survived to an internal height of 1.35m and an external height of 1.67m to what appeared to be a projecting foundation course or ground table, although the stonework continued for at least another 0.7m, sloping inwards beneath the tower (Phase 2 stonework (566)). The upper courses of stonework on (501) bore traces of a lime mortar, this being confined to stones that would have been visible above the level of Phase 7 cobbled surface (512).

At the highest surviving point of (501) was an aperture in the external face of the wall measuring 0.1m across and widening to 0.6m at the rear edge. The slit survived to a height of 0.45m. This edge was faced but did not extend fully to the interior of the tower. It is presumed that a recess existed within the wall, as the aperture is interpreted as an arrow slit and the field of view, which includes the base of wall (546) and later wall (500), would be considerably reduced in the absence of such a recess. It is presumed that at least one other arrow slit would have existed on the southwest curve of the tower, giving a more complete field of view. Traces of a lime mortar were visible on some of the stones protruding above the level of Phase 7 cobbles (512).

The internal area formed by (501) and (502) overlay Phase 2 pit [543], which occupied the southern part of the interior. This internal area was small, measuring a maximum of 3.7m NW-SE x 1.9 SW-NE, the pit occupying nearly half of this area. Presuming a second aperture did exist on the southwest curve of the tower, [543] would have had to be covered to allow access to it. No access to the interior was found suggesting that access must have been from above, either by ladder or stairs. The possible step identified at the south end of (521) may indicate the presence of a curved staircase located along the south edge of (501).

A thin silt layer (545) formed within [543], suggesting that the pit was exposed for some time and not regularly maintained. Its original function may have ceased or it may not have required regular maintenance; no artefactual evidence survived within [543] to indicate the nature of any activity associated with the pit at that time.

6.4 *Phase 4*

This phase saw the strengthening of wall (546), interpreted as an early phase of the town wall. Wall (500) was added to the west, extending the overall width to 3.28m (Plate 5). The wall survived to a height of 1.57m and abutted Phase 3 curved wall (501) at its southern extent. The uppermost surviving stones of (500) bore traces of a lime mortar at a height comparable to those visible on (501). Embedded in the west face of wall (500) was an iron stud with what appeared to be traces of encrusted lime mortar (Plate 6). A rough course of footing stones protruded from the base of the wall and these were covered by probable



Plate 5 View looking S.E. showing semicircular tower (501) and continuation of town wall to the west (500). Ovoid pit (543) is visible to the right of the picture within D-shaped tower.



Plate 6 View showing iron stud with lime encrusted mortar embedded in west face of wall (500).

foundation materials (523), (537), (536) and (535), the latter being an organic deposit immediately overlying the foundations of (500) and interpreted as an occupation layer dating from the construction of the wall.

A deep sandy gravel deposit (505)=(157) developed east of wall (546). Measuring 0.5m in thickness against the rear of (546) and (502), this deposit became more than 1.5m thick to the east and is presumed to be a natural dump of material, but it may well have been a deliberate levelling layer.

An accumulation of river-borne materials (526) over layer (535) probably relates to a flooding episode.

Within the interior of the tower, meanwhile, two sandy deposits accumulated, which are interpreted as early depositions within the structure, possibly relating to construction of a new floor surface or to a lack of maintenance of the original surface. At the same time, pit [543] seemed to undergo a change of function, with a slump of clay (542) appearing at the east end and a thick deposit of organic material accumulating within the feature. This suggests a period of heavy usage and low maintenance, such as might be expected if the feature were being used as a waste pit.

6.5 *Phase 5*

This phase saw the construction of a number of walls that were ancillary to the main walls. Walls (158) and (156) were built to the east of the tower. These walls are described above in detail but seem to form a sturdy structure, possibly with defensive origins.

Wall (524) was built within construction cut [563] to the west of the tower, projecting at an angle from the junction of (500) and (501), and clayey material (525) was dumped around the lower stones as foundation backfill. This wall seems to follow the course of a building illustrated on the 1780 Camden Estate Map as projecting from the west side of a semicircular structure in this location. The wall is interpreted as one of the structures comprising the later medieval street front of Watergate.

At the uppermost surviving point of (502), near its southern extent, a stone plinth (557) was constructed comprising several stones laid in courses, its orientation mirroring that of (158) rather than (502). It is possible that this represents further attempts to key wall (156) to (502) but if so then (502) must have been in a fairly ruinous state when (156) was built. It is perhaps more likely that (557) represents a structural element within the tower formed by (501) and (502). This may have been an upper step relating to a stairwell descending to Phase 3 surface (521) or it may represent an inserted doorway relating to the structure formed by (156).

6.6 *Phase 6*

This phase represents the initial disuse of the structural features. A loose dark reddish-brown silt and clay deposit containing much gravel and large angular sandstone fragments, together with occasional 19th century debris (155) is interpreted as material from the demolition of wall (156). A firm light pinkish-brown clayey silt containing frequent small to medium stones with occasional charcoal flecks and moderate sandstone rubble (504) filled the lower portion of the aperture, or arrow slit, in tower wall (501) (Plate 1). Finds included animal bone and a post-medieval cup or tyg handle. Successive accumulations of material west of the tower and town wall, (506), (507)=(516), (509), (510) and (511), appear to have been a sequence of deliberate dumping, presumably indicating that the need for defensive walls was waning and possibly suggesting a greater concern with flood defence. These deposits also covered the demolished remains of wall (524), which was built out from town wall (500) after the partial burying of that wall and probably represents the front wall of a property on Watergate. Debris rich in iron slag (513) was dumped into the base of Phase 3 tower (501) and filled the upper levels of Phase 2 pit [543].

6.7 *Phase 7*

This phase saw the final demolition and disuse of the structures, with a levelling layer of clay and stone (152) being laid over the demolition debris (155) of wall (156). A firm mid pinkish-red silty clay (152) was probably laid to take cobbled surface (151), which was similar in composition to cobbled layer (512), lying west of the tower, and was presumably laid at the same time. A deposit of tumbled stone, clay and charcoal (503) accumulated on top of (504), the primary build up of debris within the aperture or arrow slit in (501). A loose mid greyish-brown silty clay containing frequent sandstone and siltstone fragments (508) comprised a dump of post-medieval debris, presumably intended to level the ground. A dump of stones and silt (538) was deposited in the southeast corner of tower (501), predominantly covering the east end of pit [543]. This deposit had frequent voids among the stones and was interpreted as representing the demolition of tower (501) and possibly the collapse of a cobbled floor above it. A deposit of charcoal and coal waste mixed with grey silt (522)=(556) covered the exposed stonework of (501) and (502) following demolition. A large accumulation of apparently tumbled stone (530) deposited at the northern end of the excavated area is interpreted as a portion of material relating to the demolition of wall (500) but, equally, may have been a dump of stone during the active life of wall (500) possibly for buttressing or representing the rough infill of an access ramp to the rear of the wall or similar.

6.8 *Phase 8*

An area of rough stone rubble containing a number of faced stones (153) is interpreted as the upcast of architectural stone robbed from wall (156) after the insertion of foundations for No.1 Watergate. Also revealed was a hard-packed clay surface (154), probably a compacted floor or foundation layer relating to the construction of No. 1 Watergate. A levelling layer of clay (026) covered the exposed surface of post-destruction wall (500) and continued south around the outside of tower (501) and east to the western wall of No. 14 Market Street. The corner of a roughly made stone wall, probably a foundation course relating to a structure between No. 2 Watergate and No.14 Market Street (027), was built over (026) at the north end of wall (500).

A linear cut [564] truncating the eastern edge of wall (500) measured 0.9m E-W x 4.1m N-S x 0.37m and contained stony tumble (532), which probably relates to a slump of material from (529), a debris layer, possibly relating to the demolition of a structure in the vicinity, possibly wall (500) itself. On top of (532) was dumped (531), a very stone rich clay deposit, probably intended to aid drainage and possibly associated with the construction of No. 14 Market Street. A dump of clay and stones (528) over (529) and (531) probably formed part of the construction process of No.14 Market Street.

Dumps of sandy material, (554) and (555), on the south side of tower (501) were located under the pavement on the north side of the Ship Street/Market Street junction and are interpreted as material associated with the construction of new road surfaces following demolition of (501).

6.9 *Phase 9*

Brick demolition rubble (553) below the concrete sub-base (559) and tarmac (558) may relate to the destruction of a property on the site of No.1 Watergate or possibly imported rubble used as hardcore prior to the laying of the tarmac. A small patch of blackened concrete (561) set into the surface of (554) appeared to be related to the construction of No.1 Watergate.

CONCLUSIONS

7.1 *Pre-Norman*

Archaeological evidence for pre-Norman occupation of the site is limited. A series of deposits beneath the earliest levels evidencing human activity were interpreted as flooding deposits, possibly suggesting a shift in the course of the Usk or Honddu or both. At the front of the tower (501) an exploratory trial hole was excavated to locate the tower foundations and revealed stonework (566) and a series of deposits showing traces of occupation, such as charcoal stains. The excavation ceased at this point due to health and safety concerns yet the base of the trial hole had still not revealed any sterile deposits.

A single rim sherd from a coarse fabric cooking pot of probable Iron Age date was found within one of the upper deposits of this trial hole, the deposit itself being one of a series of dumps apparently intended to level the ground prior to construction of a 17th century cobbled surface (524), and if this is the case the material has presumably come from somewhere reasonably local.

7.2 *Early Medieval*

The earliest deposits showing signs of human occupation were layers (519) and (520). These contained pottery sherds dating from the 13th century, although (519) contained a sherd that may have been 13th/14th century. These layers seemed to form a footing for heavily compacted layers (517) and (518). (518) contained two sherds of early-mid 13th century pottery. These layers were made up of clays and gravels and these appeared to have been deliberately compressed. This could possibly have been related to the construction of the tower, or earlier defences on the same site, as rammed foundations are known from the 10th century but it is more likely that they represent a compacted occupation surface. Rammed foundations were notoriously unstable and it is unlikely that the tower or wall were based on such material, although earthen defences may have been constructed on compacted earth.

A series of sandy layers (547), (548), (549) and (550) were deposited over (517). These may have related to the construction of wall (546), although what purpose they would have served in such a construction is uncertain. Another, more likely, possibility is that they represent part of an earthen bank, part of an earlier defensive line, over which wall (546) was built to strengthen the boundary.

Two elements of stonework that appear to predate the tower and wall were also identified. These were pit [543] and sloping stone face (566). The pit was ovoid and confined within the circuit of tower (501). The stones lining the feature underlay the wall stones of (501) indicating that the pit was dug and lined prior to construction of the tower. No solid base survived within the pit, suggesting that it was either intentionally open-bottomed or that it originally had a wooden or similar degradable floor material. The northern arc of the pit was lined with fair-faced stones laid to courses and was very steep sided. The eastern end – the wider end of the ovoid – was similar in construction. The southern arc was very different, consisting of rough-faced stones, randomly coursed. The slope here was also much more pronounced, particularly towards the west end. At the western point the fair-faced northern arc seemed to abut the rough stones of the southern arc. This variation in the form of the lining suggests that the southern arc was extant prior to the digging of the pit and lining of the northern arc and eastern end. A curious area of stonework (566) was located below what is presumed to be the ground table of (501). Within the exploratory trial hole excavated around the front of (501) this stonework continued downwards beneath

(501) for 0.7m. The stones were a mixture of faced and rough stones, laid to courses. The inclination of the stones mirrored that of the southern arc of [543].

It is plausible that (566) and the southern arc of [543] are part of the same construction, although this would suggest a straightening of the line of [543] and a sharp bend at the junction with (566) unless both were as wide as the wall of (501). This may have been foundation material for tower (501) but if so it is of a curious type, sloping inwards under the tower wall. Foundation stones would be expected to flare outwards from the base of the tower rather than undercutting it, which would seem to reduce stability. Another possibility is that they relate to an earlier construction on the same site, although if this were the case the consistency of the western arc of (501) is maintained from the earlier structure and it is uncertain what form of structure would require rough stones sloping inwards as these do. Neither of these elements could be properly assessed as health and safety concerns precluded undermining the tower wall further and the tower itself could not be removed to elucidate their function.

7.3 Medieval

The pottery recovered from the site appeared to date the majority of activity between the late 13th century and the 14th century. The most notable of this activity is the construction of the tower (501) and wall (502) (Figure 2). The dimensions of (546), a probable early phase of the town wall, are hard to estimate due to truncation by [564] to the east and extension by (500) to the west. Where (546) formed the back wall of (501) it was recorded as (502) because it is uncertain whether (502) and (546) are the same and that (501) and (502) were later additions to the line of (546). Both (502) and (546) may have been heavily truncated along the rear or they may not have had a rear face but instead had an earth rampart built against their east side. This method of construction has been suggested by studies of elements of the town defences along Captain's Walk.

Wall (502) survived to a width of 1.1m, while the wall of (501) was considerably wider, at about 2m around its arc. This wall contained what appeared to be an arrow slit on the northwest curve with a traditional wedge shape, 0.8m thick. As this did not continue through the full thickness of the wall it is presumed that a recess existed in the wall giving access and allowing a greater field of view. It seems plausible that at least one other arrow slit existed, probably on the heavily disturbed southwest curve.

There is no point of access or egress into the interior of the tower and it is suggested that access must have been via a stairway or ladder from above. This suggests the tower was originally only accessible from a wallwalk or perhaps more likely, that the surviving element of the tower was below street level, perhaps fronting onto the old course of either the Usk or Honddu. Such a placement

would reduce the effectiveness of the arrow slit, although it may have been intended to cover a crossing such as a ford.

The stones of both (501) and (502) rested on small flat stones around the interior of the tower, (521) and (562) respectively. These stone courses might represent the footings of a floor but a height difference of 0.2m between the two would necessitate a step; however, as the interior of the tower was so restricted, the existence of such a step seems unlikely, unless (521) itself was the step allowing access to the archer's recess in (501). This would, however, still leave a 0.7m climb into the recess.

Wall (502)/(546) is presumed to be the town wall, which would follow the course suggested by Speed's map of 1610. Wall (501) probably represents the lower chamber of a semicircular tower attached to the town wall; Leland makes reference to 10 mural towers along the circuit of the wall, some square and some semicircular. Another possibility is suggested by the fact that the tower lies on the rough location of two of the old town gates: the Bridge Gate, or West Gate, which sat at the east end of the bridge from Llanfaes, and the Water Gate or Usk Gate, which was divided from the Bridge Gate by just one building.

The exact location of the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate are open to dispute but they are generally believed to have stood at the eastern end of the Usk Bridge and somewhere between Nos.4 & 10 Watergate, respectively. The location of the Bridge Gate might be in doubt as, if the confluence of the Usk and Honddu was, as the archaeology suggests, further east, the original Usk Bridge would also have had to reach farther east, suggesting that a gate at the end of it would have been in the vicinity of the excavation area at the junction of Market Street, Ship Street and Watergate. A pen and ink drawing of the Usk Bridge in 1793 shows what appears to be a ruined gateway at the end of the bridge, suggesting that the eastern terminus of the bridge remained more or less in its present location (Plate 7). The cartographic evidence suggests that Bridge Gate sat roughly outside No.13 Watergate. The 1780 estate map of Lord Camden suggests that the gateway was a sizeable structure, off alignment from both the bridge itself and Ship Street. The structure would appear to lie below Nos. 12-14 Watergate and partially under No. 11 Watergate to the north.

The Water Gate is described by Hugh Thomas in 1698 as the smallest of the town gates, opening directly to the back of the Usk, from where a road led 'winding full west' to the crossing of the Honddu.¹³ As Leland suggests the Water Gate may also be called the Usk Gate and that, despite being on the water's edge, the gate is some distance from the Honddu bridge, it is likely that the course of the Usk has altered considerably since the 17th century and that Water Gate originally sat on the banks of the Usk. If this was the case, and Bridge Gate sat at the end of the Elizabethan bridge, then the single building between the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate must have been of a substantial size.



Plate 7 Pen and ink view by Sir Richard Colt-Hoare looking N.W. across the Usk bridge and showing the remains of the medieval bridge gate (1793).

It is presumed on most cartographic and historic records that St Michael Street roughly follows the course of the town wall to the south and Speed indicates that Horn Lane (Market Street) continues that course to the north. If this is so, and one would expect the gates to be in the wall, rather than projecting from them, the Bridge Gate would most likely be sited in the vicinity of the front bar of the Boar's Head Inn, while the Water Gate would be roughly where (501) was located. If the curved structures on the Camden map are taken to be the surviving elements of the Bridge Gate and Water Gate, then the two are considerably less than a building apart and assuming the map is broadly to scale there is only about 2 feet between them.

The 1776 Improvement Act, broadly contemporary with the Camden estate map of 1780, lists five properties in the location that are scheduled for demolition: "*To make the Street or Passage leading from Ship Street to Usk Bridge Thirty Feet wide – Three Houses, situate on the North Side of the said Street or Passage, now or late in the occupation of Andrew Morgan, Skinner, John Rees, and David Walter, Shoemakers; the old Building, called Porthbach, and Gateway adjoining*". The Porthbach, or little gate, is mentioned as being used as a prison in the 16th century. The

Water Gate is referred to by Hugh Thomas in 1698 as being the least of the gates, and in 1744 Meredith Jones records the Water Gate and not the Porthbach; the two may be the same, but there is no direct correlation made by contemporary writers.

Speed's map of Brecon (1610) depicts a mural tower situated between the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate. As the physical description of the mural towers being semicircular matches that of the excavated structure, together with a lack of solid evidence for the location of the gates, it is best to assume that (501) represents a mural tower along the course of the town wall. The function of the tower was presumably to provide protection for the two gates, both of which appear to have been simple arched openings with no added defence in the form of flanking towers or barbicans.

At a later point (the pottery analysis points toward the early 14th century) the town wall (546) was widened to 3.28m. Historical evidence records substantial repairs and strengthening of the town wall in the early 15th century, following a major assault by Owain Glyndwr's forces in 1404. The wall covers much of the north face of tower (501) and severely limits the field of view of the arrow slit, perhaps suggesting that its usage was now limited, although it was not blocked completely, perhaps indicating that the tower chamber was still in use.

Over time, a series of layers accumulated west of (500) and (501), probably reflecting differing levels of usage of the area or possibly reclamation of the land from the Usk floodplain for the expanding town. These deposits contained pottery dating from the 13th to the 14th century.

Within the tower, pit [543] appears to undergo a change in use, with a thick cess deposit accumulating within it. Amongst this was a quantity of wood planking that suggests a late 12th/early 13th century date. At the north end of the interior two dumps of material were laid, apparently in an attempt to level the interior or possibly to provide footings for a floor. This dumped material contained four sherds of pottery of probable 13th century date but possibly as early as the 12th century or as late as 14th.

To the east of the tower, a dump of material was deposited against the rear of (502) and northwards along (546). This contained three sherds of late 13th-14th century pottery. Subsequently, this and a large area of land to the east was covered by a thick dump of sandy gravels, varying between 0.5m and 1.5m thick, from which three sherds of 13th-14th century pottery was recovered.

7.4 Late and Post-Medieval

At the junction of (500) and (501), abutting (500) and running WSW, a construction cut [563] was excavated for wall (524). This cut was backfilled with material containing 15 sherds of 14th century pottery. No other features or deposits could be directly associated with this wall and the majority of it is

presumed to lie beyond the boundary of the excavation area. On the 1780 Camden estate map a semicircular structure is shown on the site of tower (501) and projecting westward from this is another structure. This might be the structure represented by wall (524), although an unusual notch in the southwest wall of this structure is mirrored in the surviving footprint of the Working Men's Club (No. 3 Watergate). An alternative explanation is that this wall represents a late medieval structure built on newly reclaimed ground west of the walls and lining the north side of the road to the Honddu bridge.

At the southeast side of the semicircular tower, on the east side of (502), was a small fragment of an apparently substantial faced wall (158). This wall abutted the rough stone rear of (502) but followed a slightly different alignment, angling somewhat to the northeast-southwest. The nature of this wall is uncertain; it was faced on the east side at a considerable depth when no other elements of any of the structures were faced on the east side at all. It is interpreted as an attempt to key in wall (156), which overlay the stonework of (158), with the tower structure, although this does not explain why the stonework should be faced at such a depth. It may be that the ground level east of the tower was not so different from the west of the tower, as the difference in height between (524) and (158) was only 0.1m.

This dip to the east of the tower might be suggested also by stony material (530) which lay to the east of (546) at the northern end of site. This material had frequent large stones in it and appeared to be either demolition material from a wall – presumably (546) or (500) – or a dump of material intended to buttress the rear of the wall, although if this was the case then it is questionable why it only appeared at the very north of the excavation area. It might be that the structure delineated by (156) had truncated the material up to this point or it might be that (530) represented a localised dump relating possibly to an access from ground level to the wallwalk around the town wall. The material produced no datable evidence.

Wall (156) protruded east-west from the rear of tower wall (502), following the course of the modern pavement of Ship Street/Watergate. It extended beyond the scope of the excavation to the east into the modern course of Market Street but service trenches excavated on the east side of Market Street revealed no continuation of the wall at that point, suggesting that the wall turned or terminated before this point. The wall was faced on its southern side but roughly truncated on the north by the later construction from a property on the site of No.1 Watergate. On the southern side were two small square indents presumed to relate to scaffolding for a timber-framed addition or braces for a jettied upper storey. No datable evidence was recovered from around (156) or (158).

Constructed either over the dismantled remains of, or more likely inserted into, (502) was a plinth (557) constructed of faced stone laid to rough courses. This plinth was 0.3m proud of (502) and angled on the same orientation as (158).

It probably represents an inserted doorway or stairway, perhaps linked to the possible step at the southernmost extent of (521). It is possible that this plinth was contemporary with the remainder of the tower but this is considered unlikely.

At some point a large clayey dump (513) was deposited in the tower, filling the remainder of [543] and covering the base of the tower to a depth of 0.4m. This deposit contained six sherds of 13th–14th century pottery, a large quantity of iron slag, some fragments of mortar or plaster and animal bones. It appeared to represent a deliberate dump of material into the tower interior, presumably indicating that the tower had served its purpose and had fallen into disuse. A quantity of clayey silt and sandstone rubble also built up in the arrow slit at this point and this contained a fragment of a post-medieval tyg handle.

The structure incorporating wall (524) was obviously demolished and sandy clay deposit (507) dumped over it. This dump included three sherds of latemedieval/ early post-medieval pottery, iron slag, a fragment of stone roof tile, a number of small metal objects and a large quantity of animal bones. The purpose of the dump is uncertain but it was most likely intended to bury the remainder of (524) prior to construction of further buildings or surfaces.

Wall (156) was demolished and the stonework from it used to build up the ground surface to the south (155). This material produced no datable evidence to suggest when this occurred.

Cut [564] truncated the east side of (500) or (546) to provide space for drainage material relating to the construction of properties on the location of No.14 Market Street. The base of this cut was filled by a slump of material (532) that appeared to be the same deposit as (529) which was a stony clay layer dumped over (530) and (505). Neither of these deposits contained any datable evidence nor did (531) which was, apparently, the deliberate backfill of [564]. The nature of (531) is uncertain, as it banked up out of cut [564], suggesting that either the cut was truncated or that it was not cut to intentionally contain (531). It may be that [564] represents a construction cut for a structure built before No.14 Market Street and that deposit (529) was a levelling layer relating to the floor of that structure. When it was demolished, (531) was deposited into the robbed out wall slot in order to assist with drainage of the new property, whose floor surface was established over new dump (528).

This cut presumably marked the end of the town wall in this area and the cartographic evidence suggests this occurred sometime between 1610 and 1744. When the town wall was demolished the remaining stones were covered in a layer of pinkish clay (523). This deposit did not contain any datable material.

A series of deposits west of the tower and town wall seemed to confirm that both went out of use and that their remains were buried. Contexts (506), (510), (511) and (516) were deposited over (507). These included 18th century material and a single sherd of 13th century pottery.

The tower underwent a period of demolition, with (538) accumulating within the southern side of the interior. This was a stony deposit containing a single fragment of 18th/19th century pottery. The deposit is interpreted as a collapse of stone material – possibly relating to the potential stairwell or south wall. Over this was a thin charcoal and coal waste rich deposit (522)=(556) which covered much of the exposed internal stonework after demolition.

Over deposit (510) was dumped sandy layer (509) which contained 10 sherds of pottery dating from the 16th-18th centuries. This layer is interpreted as being a levelling layer prior to the laying of cobbled surface (512), amongst the stones of which were recovered four sherds of 17th and 18th century pottery.

Over the demolition debris related to wall (156) was dumped a layer of pinkish clay (152), which was similar in nature to (026), deposited at roughly the same time, and covered the northern side of the tower and town wall. Layer (152) also covered plinth (557) and elements of (502), suggesting that wall (156) and (557) may have gone out of use simultaneously. Neither (152) nor (026) contained any datable artefacts.

Over (152) was laid a heavily compacted clay and mortar surface (154). This contained no artefacts but it is interpreted as forming a floor surface, or similar occupation layer, relating to a property that stood on the location of No.1 Watergate. To the north of (154) was a patch of apparently architectural stone dumped in a pile (153). The nature of this is uncertain but it may be upcast from intrusive works into the north face of wall (156). At the northwest edge of (152) was a very small patch of blackened cobbles (151). These were laid in a similar manner to the cobbles of (512) and it may be that they formed a continuous surface. If so they would most likely have had to circumnavigate tower (501), as traces of mortar extant on the west facing walls of (501) and (500) above the level of the cobbles suggests that both of these structures either stood to some extent after the laying of the cobbles or parts of them were incorporated into structures that were built over them. The two cobbled patches (512) and (151) differed in height by a maximum of 0.03m

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the former sites of No. 14 Market Street and Nos. 1 and 2 Watergate at Brecon revealed significant structural remains, including the foundations of a substantial semicircular building, incorporating an ovoid, stone-lined pit at its base. Also found were the remains of a 1m thick stone wall running immediately to the north of the semicircular structure.

Based on a detailed assessment of the archaeological and documentary evidence, it is likely that the semicircular structure represents the remains of a mural tower along the course of the medieval town wall of Brecon, situated in a narrow plot of ground between the Bridge Gate and the Water Gate. It was probably built in

the late 13th–early 14th century and appears to have overlain an earlier occupation site, attested by the ovoid, stone-lined pit found at the base of the structure, in which several fragments of wood were found which have been dated to 900–1180 and 1116–1221 respectively. The tower may have served as a prison the the 16th century and was probably demolished in 1776 when Ship Street was widened in accordance with the Brecon Improvement Act.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GRAHAM CRUSE
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CARTOGRAPHY

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- 1963 Revision Ordnance Survey map of Brecon
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APPENDIX

Dendrochronological Spot Date Report

Site Name/Code: Market Street, Brecon

Report Date: 13 October, 2004

Compiled by: Nigel Nayling, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Wales Lampeter

Table of Samples

Sample code	Conversion	Dimensions	Species	Ring count	Sap wood	Average Ring Width (mm)	Date	Felling range
Sample 1	Radial	170 x 15	Oak	106	-	1.47	AD 1116-AD 1221	after AD 1231
Sample 2	Radial	230 x 18	Oak	281	-	0.80	AD 900-AD 1180	after AD 1190

Notes

The two samples have dated, with a combined tree ring sequence dating from AD 900–AD 1221. As no sapwood survived, the end dates can only provide a *terminus post quem* for the felling of the parent trees, and subsequent use and desposition of the timber. Significant computer correlations and visual matches were identified between the combined tree-ring sequence and dated tree-ring curves from a wide range of previously dated British sequences.

THE POTTERY

Summary

Twenty-three pottery assemblages from Border Archaeology's excavations at Market Street, Brecon, were examined for this report. The study follows one of 35 assemblages from the company's excavations at Heol-y-Dwr, Hay-on-Wye, and a similar but slightly revised system and coding has been used in this report. The pottery covers a wide date range—probably from the 13th century to post-medieval times—although the majority of the medieval material is centred on the 13th and early 14th centuries. Although it appears unlikely, there is little reason why some of the cooking pot fabrics could not be of 12th century date.

There is a single rim sherd in Context 506 (17th century) which appears to be prehistoric, probably Iron Age. This is an important discovery, especially as the author could not easily find a reference to any Iron Age pottery from the county.

The four cooking pot rims from (519) and (520) are, on stylistic grounds, fairly definitely of late 13th century date. This may be important for the dating of the structural remains beneath which they were found and the date may fit with some of the murage grants for stone defences along the border.

The study supports the evidence obtained from the recent excavations at Heol-y-Dwr, Hay-on-Wye that there was no local pottery industry in Breconshire until at least the middle of the 13th century. All the earlier pottery was imported from outside the area and this is especially evident with the cooking pottery, which is further support for a later 13th or even early 14th century appearance of a local ceramic industry.

At Hay-on-Wye, the 13th century pottery was dominated by that from Malvern and Worcester, with rarer pots from Hereford and northern Gwent. Although this was a small assemblage and the one from Brecon smaller still (238 sherds to 87), there are definite indications of a change in the sources of supply. At Brecon there are still ample Malvernian cooking pots but now North Gwent wares are clearly on the scene. The Hereford and Worcester wares are much rarer, so it appears that the long distance overland traders from the east were challenged at Brecon from the south – by traders from Monmouth and Abergavenny, travelling along the future A40 or up the River Usk. This was the picture until a local pottery was set up to exploit the growing market sometime in the later 13th or even the early 14th century. This potter could have come from northern Gwent where small-scale production centres were well established by this time.

The long distance origins of late 11th and early 12th century pottery is a feature of the Norman towns of Monmouth and Abergavenny, where pottery such as the 12th century Malvernian (B2) tripod pitchers are also found (a sherd of this came from another part of the Heol-y-Dwr site).

Comparisons of the two assemblages, using the unchanged Hay codes:

Code	Production area	No. of sherds	
		Hay	Brecon
H1	Hay-on-Wye (13 th –14 th century)	131	67
A2	Hereford (11 th –12 th century)	6	–
A3	Hereford (13 th century)	4	–
B1	Malvernian cooking pots (12 th –15 th century)	41	5
B2	Malvernian tripod pitcher (12 th century)	0	–
C1	Worcester cooking pots (12 th –13 th century)	36	–
C2	Worcester jugs (13 th century)	8	1
G2	?Golden Valley (12 th –13 th century). Now A9.	8	–
G3	?	1	–
G4 etc.	North Gwent or southern Herefordshire (Mon A3)	1	8
	North Gwent or southern Herefordshire (Mon A5)	–	2
	North Gwent or southern Herefordshire (Mon A5b)	–	3
G5	?Shropshire ?Mid Wales	–	1

Method

All sherds were examined under a binocular microscope at x8 magnification in order to identify inclusions. Simple tests were used for calcareous inclusions, hardness, etc. and Munsell colour charts were used to describe the fabric colours.

It was easy to identify a lot of the fabrics without breaking the edge of the sherd in order to properly expose its inclusions. This was a constant problem with Malvern and Worcester wares, so a method of flaking off small parts of the sherd was used. A thick cloth was wrapped around the sherd before using a pair of pliers to snap off a thin edge-flake—without the cloth the pliers would often burr the break and obscure the temper or cause a large area of the sherd to break away.

Codes

As so much of the pottery used in medieval Hay-on-Wye came from or through Herefordshire it was decided to use the Hereford system for the Heol-y-Dwr assemblages. Despite the changed pattern of supply, it is convenient to carry this on into the Brecon groups and this has been done in this report. Using this system it also seems appropriate to prefix the code with a 'P' for Powys.

The Hereford pottery series was defined by Dr. Alan Vince (Vince A.G., 1983) using a system of lettered groups, which has since been adapted by the present recorder for the medieval pottery of Monmouth. In the case of Hay-on-Wye it seemed best to follow Vince's system and his lettering codes for the various sources as the groups are mostly the same as those found in Hereford. The exception will be the using of letter 'P' (Powys) for the one main fabric which was

probably produced in or close to Hay/Brecon area; this is the Hereford A7b fabric but there are subtle differences, especially in colour. The coding system allows for the easy insertion of new fabrics or others in the Hereford report not yet recognised at Hay-on-Wye or Brecon.

The Hereford series groups from Heol-y-Dwr and Market Street, Brecon are therefore:

Group A *Pottery found in Hay-on-Wye and Brecon that has been classified in Hereford and Gwent and which was made in the region of Devonian Old Red Sandstone Marl and its glacial till. Fabrics which are believed to be non-local and were not recorded by Vince in Hereford have been given the prefix 'G'.*

Powys Fabric

P1 This is the Hay-on-Wye fabric H1 and is similar to the Hereford Fabric A7b and the Monmouth Fabric A5 (Monnow Valley ware). This seems likely to be the first (and possibly the only) medieval pottery made in or close to the study area.

Group A

A2 Herefordshire cooking pots, tripod pitchers and jugs (Hay only).
 A3 Gwent/south Herefordshire cooking pots (G4 in the Hay report).
 A7b This is the Hay Fabric H1.
 A7d Later Herefordshire/Gwent wares.
 A8 Herefordshire/Gwent cooking pots.
 A9 Golden Valley cooking pots and ?tripod pitcher. This is Fabric G2 in the Hay-on-Wye report but has not yet been found in Brecon.

Group B

Pottery from the Malvern area.
 B1 Cooking pots.
 B2 Tripod pitchers (Hay only).
 B4 Later oxidised wares.

Group C

Pottery from the Worcester area.
 C1 Cooking pots.
 C2 Jugs.

Group E

Non-local wares.
 E4 North Devon gravel-tempered ware.
 E6 Staffordshire wares.

Group F	Foreign wares
F1	Saintonge ware
Group G	<i>Other regionally local pottery.</i>
G1	Jugs. Light firing, heavily tempered with fine quartz.
G3	?Jugs. Light firing.
G4	Cooking pots
G5	?Jugs

The Fabrics outside the Hereford/Gwent series:

Fabric P1 (Hay report H1. Hereford A7b / Monmouth A5)

During the 13th and 14th centuries, there were a number of kilns in Herefordshire and Gwent (and probably on the Powys borderland) producing pottery, especially jugs, with very few inclusions; consequently the products of the various kilns are almost indistinguishable one from another. There are however, subtle differences between the fabrics of some of these centres. The Hay-on-Wye ware (P1), for example, although superficially appearing to be the same as that of Gwent and regions of Herefordshire have distinct but subtle differences when subjected to close study. This is caused by slight differences in the fine inclusions in, or in the iron content, of the clay.

However, there is evidence that the similarities of style and decoration between the different centres of the region may not all be the result of accidentally analogous potting methods or the copying of a neighbour's work.

There are few inclusions—even less than in the finely tempered Monnow Valley Ware. There are rare angular quartz grains, mostly below 0.3mm, with very rare grains up to 1.5mm. The fabric is finely micaceous and a Munsell red (2.5YR 6/6) on oxidised unglazed surfaces. Most of the jugs are oxidised throughout but often have a darker core (2.5Y 5/1) and there are occasional reduced surfaces (Grey 2.5Y 5/1).

Forms:

Medieval: Jugs are Always wheel-thrown; they can be small or large and where discernable, bulbous; heavily or lightly thumbbed bases; there are no split rod handles like those found in the Monmouth area and which are always associated with applied clay decoration.

No cooking pots have been recognised in this fabric (or with added temper).
Ridge tiles. Only a few sherds of thin-walled ridge tile were found in Hay and no crests.

Late medieval or post-medieval: Skillet; Internally glazed bowls; Large ?pancheon; slipware.

Glaze:

The lead glazes vary in colour according to the oxidation/reduction of the fabric, this can be from a lustrous green to a fawn or green with dark copper speckles. The glazes covering the applied strips appear very dark over those enriched with iron hammer-scale and off-white or pink over iron low clay or its mixture with local clay.

Decoration:

Applied clay. Iron low clay (off-white, as compared with that used in some other areas, or the examples found may be an iron free/local clay mix). Local clay, iron-enriched with hammer scale. These clays in the assemblages from Heol-y-Dwr and Brecon were only applied in strips—there were no rosettes or spirals like those sometimes found in other areas.

Rouletting. A single sherd in P1/H1 fabric bearing complex rouletting was found in the Hay assemblage. This is a very important find, although the glazing has partly flaked off the sherd. The wheel used is very similar to, if not the same as one, used on a jug found in Monmouth. It is a running scroll ornament. There was also an example of simple herringbone rouletting.

Added copper. Copper was often added to the lead glaze of the Hay and the Brecon pottery to produce a distinctive speckled decoration. This technique is most common in early 14th century in Monmouth and continues to be a feature of local and Malvernian potteries into post-medieval times.

Frequency: It was considered that the best way of assessing the percentages of the various fabrics was by sherd count.

Dating. Complex rouletting like that on the single Heol-y-Dwr sherd mentioned above is dated in Monmouth (on coin evidence) to the middle of the 13th century. The applied clay (in Monmouth) decoration is dated to the very late 13th and early 14th centuries and is particularly associated with the great decline of the first half of the latter century. The absence of cooking pots in the Hay and Brecon collections also suggests a late date; in Monmouth the Drybridge kilns which were producing applied decoration in the late 13th-early 14th centuries were also still making some cooking pots.

Other Fabrics

Fabric A9 (G2 in the Hay report, not found in Brecon)

This fabric was first recognised in assemblages from Grosmont where it is found in cooking pots and occasionally in jugs (Monmouth fabric A6). The small group from Heol-y-Dwr is mostly cooking pottery but with a possible jug sherd and a definite tripod pitcher rim. The tempering is mostly of rounded limestone up to 3.00mm; occasional rounded siltstone to 2.0mm; rare micaceous sandstone to 1.0mm and rare fine grained sandstone to 2.0mm. There are also rare grains of sub-rounded quartz up to 1.0mm and occasional iron ore up to 2.0mm. Fine mica can be seen under a strong light with rare plates up to 0.4mm.

The Munsell colours are: Cooking pot surfaces are reddish brown from 5YR 5/4 to 4/3 with a dark grey core (5YR 4/1). The oxidised surfaces of the jugs are red 2.5YR 6/8 and reduced surfaces grey 5YR 5/1 with a darker core.

The tripod pitcher surfaces where the glaze has decayed is a weak red 2.5YR 5/4.

The inclusions in the Grosmont examples are usually leached away whereas the Hay ones have survived reasonably well, although the glaze on the tripod pitcher has decayed.

The Grosmont examples were assumed to have been made in the 13th century, especially as jugs were being produced, but the Hay tripod pitcher could take the industry back into the 12th century. It may be that this fabric has a longer life than the current discoveries suggest.

Fabric G3 (Hay only)

This fabric is represented by only two sherds. It is heavily tempered with fine angular quartz with dark, rounded sandstone to 2.0mm and other inclusions. There is a dusting of mica with some large golden flakes. The sherds have a pale green glaze while other surfaces are very dark with a black background.

Fabric G5 (Hay only)

This jug fabric is also represented by a single sherd. It contains rounded micaceous siltstones generally up to 1.5mm in size with occasional sub-angular quartz up to 1.0mm. There are occasional plates of golden mica up to 0.5mm. The sherd has a very pale green glaze and is a Munsell 7.5 6/1 colour throughout but with a very dark, almost black inner surface (?accretions).

THE POTTERY CATALOGUE

Market Street, Brecon

A total of 123 sherds were gathered from sealed contexts during the excavation.

<i>Ware/Form, etc.</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Sherds</i>
<u>Context 503</u>			
Hfds./Gwent PM	PA7d	16 th /17 th century	3
<u>Context 504</u>			
PM cup or tyg handle. Distinctive fabric with high percentage of fine quartz sand. Does not match Hfds. or Gwent wares	G	Post-medieval	1
<u>Context 505</u>			
Malvernian cooking pot rim	PB1	Prob. 13 th century	1
Local Jug	PH1	13 th /14 th century	1
This is the first local glazed ware in Monmouth (A5b) c1200-c1240	PMA5b	Early 13 th century	1
<u>Context 506</u>			
North Devon Gravel-tempered ware	PE4	Late 17 th century	1
Moulded slipware	PE6	18 th century	4
?Prehistoric ?cooking pot rim: Coarse fabric with large angular quartz and ?shale temper. Soapy feel, totally reduced Lump of burnt clay			1
<u>Context 507</u>			
Local (Rim and 2 sherds)	PH1	Late med./early PM	3
<u>Context 508</u>			
North Devon	PE4	Late 17 th century	2
?Staffs.	?PE6	18 th century	1
Hfds./Gwent PM	PA7d	17 th century	3
? Hfds./Gwent PM	?PA7d	17 th century	1
Porcelain (bowl?)	G	19 th century	1

Context 509

Moulded slipware plate	?PE6	Later 17 th century	3
Staffs. slipware	PE6	18 th century	2
'Blackware'	PG	18 th century	1
Hfds. type small bowl	PA7d	16 th /17 th century	1
Malvernian	PB4	Early post-med.	1
Local, internally glazed	PH1	Post-medieval	1
North Devon	PE4	Late 17 th century	1

Context 512

North Devon	PE4	Late 17 th century	1
?Midands	G	18 th century	2
Staffs.	PE6	18 th century	1
Local slipware	PH1	17 th /18 th century	1

Context 513

Jug (one handle)	PH1	13 th /14 th century	4
Cooking pot	PG4	13 th /14 th century	1
Saintonge ware jug	PF1	Late 13 th /14 th cent.	1

Context 515

Monmouth A3 cooking pottery	PA8	12 th /14 th century but 13 th cent. rim form	4
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Context 516

Like Monmouth A5b	PMA5b	Early 13 th century	1
Brick fragment	-	19 th /20 th century	1

Context 518

Monmouth early glazed ware	PMA5b	Early 13 th century	1
Worcester jug with rouletting		Most common in mid-13 th cent. but this sherd abraded	1

Context 519

Malvernian cooking pot	PB1	13 th /14 th century	1
Cooking pot rim from north Gwent or SW Herefordshire (G4 in Hay report)	PMA3	13 th century	1

Context 520

Two Malvernian cooking pot rims. The form is found in Hereford and Monmouth in late 13 th century contexts	PB1	Late 13 th cent. rim form	2
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Context 525

Local jugs, one with applied decoration/one handle	PH1	Probably early 14 th century	15
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Context 526

Local but a little coarse	PH1	13 th /14 th century	2
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Context 533

Local jugs	PH1	13 th /14 th century	3
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Context 535

Cooking pot rim	PG4	13 th /14 th century	1
Local jugs. Often copper speckled glaze, Lots of small sherds. 2 rims, 3 handles	PH1	Late 13 th /14 th cent.	25

Context 536

Local jug, one with iron-enriched decoration (2 bases)	8	Probably early 14 th century	8
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Context 537

Cooking pot	PG4	13 th /14 th century	1
Jug	PG1	13 th /14 th century	1
Cooking pot	PB1	13 th /14 th century	1
Jug (very like Monmouth A5)	PH1	13 th /14 th century	1

Context 538

?Staffs.	?E6	18 th /19 th century	1
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Context 539

Saintonge jug. This is the same vessel as that in Context 513 : Bag 4	PF1	Later 13 th /14 th cent.	1
Jugs	PH1	Late 13 th /14 th cent.	2
Hfds./Gwent ware (Monmouth A5)	PA7b	Late 13 th /14 th cent.	2
Hfd./Gwent cooking pot. Typical 13 th century rim	PA8	13 th century	1

STEPHEN CLARKE
Monmouth Archaeology

AFTER MR JONES¹

I. THE ROBERTS FAMILY OF LLWYNDERW, LLANDDEWI ABERGWESYN

In 1833 Llwynderw was sold to Captain Thomas Turner Roberts, a retired East India Company officer who came from a Worcestershire family of some distinction. The 'Turner' in his name originated in his mother's family; her brother Thomas Turner, J.P. founded the Caughley porcelain works. Thomas Turner Roberts's great-grandfather, Richard Roberts of Pershore and Breedon's Norton, was High Sheriff of Worcestershire in 1739. Richard married twice; Captain Roberts descended from his first wife, Elizabeth Hancock of Twining, Gloucestershire. By his second wife Catherine Pingry of Redmarley, Richard had a son, Richard and three daughters; memorials to this branch of the family are to be found in Pershore Abbey.²

A descendant, Miss M. E. Cameron, stated that the Roberts family originally came from Cornwall, settling in Worcestershire about 1600.³ For a century or so they were squires of Breedon's Norton. Richard left a reputation for extravagance. He was very musical, and spent a great deal on entertaining those of like taste. The family story is that at his death his lawyer brother-in-law gained possession of the encumbered estate.

The only child of Richard's first marriage, William, lived to extreme old age, a highly respected man of sober judgement, though on the evidence of ledgers he kept, not of a high standard of education. He lived in one of the two cottages the family owned in the village of Bushley. A keen and very orthodox churchman, William was parish clerk, and taught the village children in his brick-floored kitchen. The squire and the vicar paid for a large number of scholars. William could also turn his hand to tailoring. He played the fiddle in church services and on other occasions. His ledgers recorded all manner of local events, such as the great flood of 18 November 1770, when a coal-owner brought his barge up to unload coals nearly as far as the porch of Bushley church.

William married twice, all his children being by his first wife, Mary Mann (who died in 1750), daughter of a prosperous Bushley fisherman, William Mann. By his will of 1751 Mann left Bushley property to his grandchildren. William and Mary's three older children were daughters. William junior, the only son, baptised at Bushley in 1744, was given the second name Hancock after his paternal grandmother. His mother died when he was six. Miss Cameron told of his being apprenticed at 14 to a Tewkesbury draper, but sent home as being too bookish and dreamy for a commercial career. He was then admitted as a day-scholar to the private school kept in Cooken Street, Worcester by the amateur astronomer Dr Turner, and lodged with a friend of his father. His 'breakfast allowance' of 2½d covered bread, butter and milk, batch-cake and fat-cake.

William Hancock Roberts was a good scholar with a bent for mathematics. He gained entry to Magdalene Hall, Oxford (now Hertford College), which he attended when in funds – he worked his passage by teaching. He did not take his degree till 1787,⁴ having in the meantime been ordained. In 1775 he became headmaster of the Free Grammar School, Worcester, then vicar of St Clement's, rector of Broadwas, and a minor canon of Worcester Cathedral (Plate 1). He lived in Edward's Tower, the old monastery gateway. Later he became head of Loughborough House School, a large school in which Dr Roberts entered into partnership with his brother-in-law Dr Richard Turner.⁵

In 1772 William Roberts senior (then in his 67th year) married as his second wife his housekeeper Susannah Wood. At 83 this enterprising old man made the journey to London 'to see my son Dr Roberts' (as he entered in his ledger). He was in his 99th year when he died in 1804, and Dr William Hancock Roberts raised to him a 'handsome stone tomb' in Bushley church-yard.⁶ Dr Roberts himself died aged 70 in 1814, and his wife Sarah, who had died in 1811, is remembered with him on a marble tablet inside Broadwas church (Plate 2). She was the second daughter of the Rev. Richard Turner, LL.D. They had sons Thomas Turner and Richard, and daughters Sarah and Mary, the latter being by her marriage to the solicitor Archibald Cameron the mother of a doctor son and of the Mary Emily Cameron to whom we are indebted for much of the family story. Sarah married the Rev. William Edwards, who succeeded his father-in-law at Loughborough House School when the latter left in 1806 to settle in his parish of Broadwas.

Richard, the second son of William Hancock Roberts, was born in 1784. He took his M.A. degree at Oxford, from Merton College, and was ordained. He was a minor canon of Worcester Cathedral and vicar of Stewkley, Bucks.⁷ In 1809 he married at St George's, Hanover Square, Amelia Stephen Hunt of Union Hall, Rickmansworth, by whom he had three daughters and four sons. Richard died on November 1873 and was buried in Worcester.

Thomas Turner Roberts, the future owner of Llwynderw, was born on 10 April 1778. When he was 16 he matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, where he took his B.A. degree in 1798. He served as an E.I.C. officer in the Sixth Bombay Native Infantry, becoming a lieutenant on 28 December 1798, and captain on 4 February 1808. He retired on 10 November 1813.⁸

On 31 March 1819 Thomas Turner Roberts of Horsham, a hamlet in the parish of Martley, married Jane, younger daughter of Charles Cameron, M.D., of Worcester, and Anne, only daughter of Richard Ingram of White Ladies, Worcestershire and widow of Edward Chambers, surgeon. It was a double wedding; at the same service Archibald Cameron, a solicitor, married Thomas's younger sister, Mary. The service was conducted by the Rev. C. R. Cameron of Snedshill, Shropshire, at St Helen's church, Worcester. Thomas and Jane seem to



Plate 1 Broadwas church, Worcestershire.

(Photograph by A. G. Bidgood)

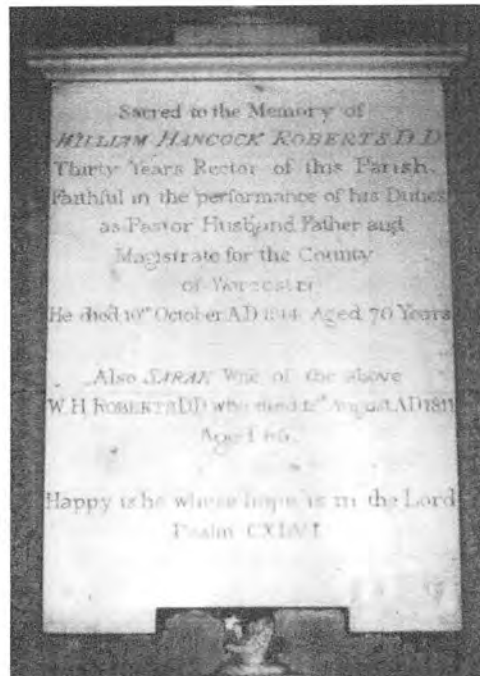


Plate 2 Memorial tablet to Dr W. H. Roberts and his wife Sarah in Broadwas church.

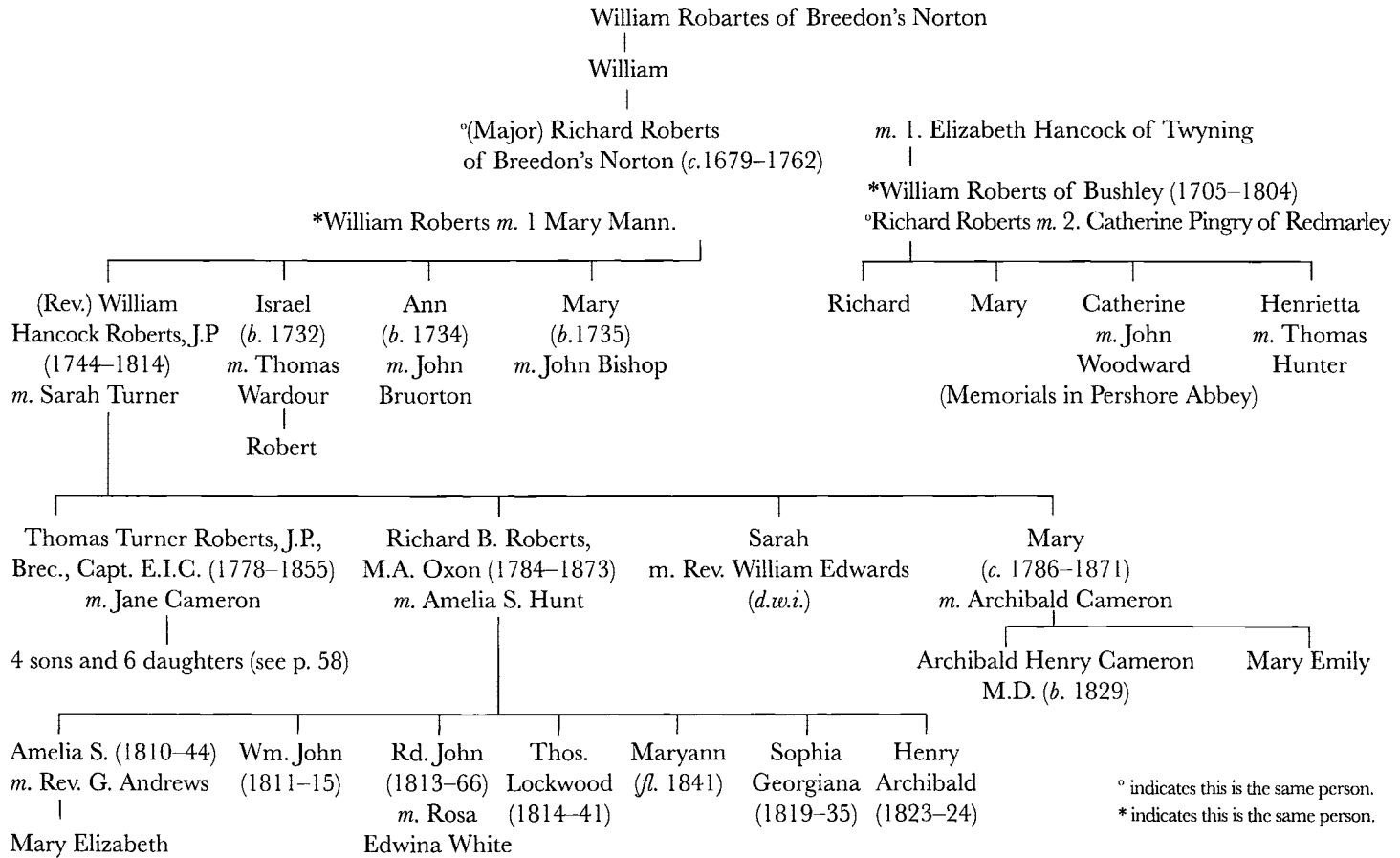
(Photograph by A. G. Bidgood)

have moved about between their marriage and finally settling at Llwynderw – children were born in Tenby, Bath, Shropshire, and one daughter in Llandoverly (not very far from Abergwesyn). It appears that the Roberts family lived for an appreciable time in Tenby, Pembrokeshire; the baptismal records of St Mary's church there confirm that several children were born during their stay. Thomas Archibald was baptised in 1824, Frances Elizabeth in 1828, Amelia Jemima in 1831, Charles Ingram in 1833, and William Henry Sherwood in 1834. (Another son born during the Tenby years, Richard Willett, was baptised in Bath). The parish registers of St Mary's describe Thomas Turner Roberts as 'Captain in the East India Company's Service', and give his address as 'Town', though without specifying where his house was. It does not seem to have been a summer residence, as three of the children were baptised in winter. Such Tenby records as directories make no mention of Captain Roberts; he has left no trace of involvement in the public life of the town. Whatever his Welsh contacts were, it seems likely that one of them was responsible for his hearing of Llwynderw's coming on the market, and at a reduced price of £5,500, for there had been an earlier sale that collapsed.

Captain Roberts kept, it seems, his Worcestershire roots; as we shall see, he was called in his will 'of Horsham Martley', though he died and was buried in Llanddewi Abergwesyn.⁹ For some years he had made Llwynderw his home, though we do not know precisely the year when he took up his abode there. The local historian David Lewis Wooding, who married the previous owner's daughter Marianne Jones, has a puzzling reference in his *Journal* to his father's purchase of a red cart at Llwynderw in 1841, at a sale of Captain Roberts's effects.¹⁰ Census returns for that year have no reference to 'Llwynderw Hall'; it does not figure till 1851, when Thomas Turner Roberts, 'Captain half pay E.I.Co.', was there, aged 72, with his 57-year-old wife and two unmarried daughters, Jane Sarah (aged 31, born in Madeley, Shropshire) and Sophia Anastasia (aged 18, the one born in Llandoverly). In 1841 and 1851 a Thomas Price was the farmer of Llwynderw, occupying with his family a house or part of a house called 'Llwynderw' in 1841 and 'Llwynderw Farm' in 1851. Captain Roberts was called 'magistrate' in the 1851 Census returns; in 1844 he had been a nominee for the Breconshire shrievalty, but was not pricked.

On 11 February 1855 Captain Roberts died at Llwynderw; he was buried in the churchyard of Llanddewi Abergwesyn, where his grave and that of his daughter Lucy's (both overgrown now, and with largely indecipherable lettering) lie within iron railings. His widow died at Bath in 1857. Captain Roberts had made his will on 8 January 1833 (the year when he bought Llwynderw), and republished it on 24 April 1834 and 14 May 1834. He left his wife his household goods and personal possessions, including his collections of fossils, shells and coins. His brother the Rev. Richard Roberts and brother-in-law the Rev. Charles

ROBERTS FAMILY TREE



After Mr Jones

Cameron were appointed trustees to manage his property for the benefit of his wife for life and the maintenance of their children, and after Jane's death for their children and heirs. Jane was sole executrix. As we have seen, Captain Roberts was called 'of Horsham Martley'.¹¹ Witnesses to the second republishing of the will include a Pembrokeshire name – James A. Garlick of Amroth Castle; perhaps a friend from the Tenby years. The will was proved in London on 4 August 1855.

Mr B. R. D. Clarke, a descendant of Thomas Turner Roberts's second son Richard Willett Roberts, stated that family tradition reports the Captain to have been a martinet, all too often harsh and disagreeable. Mr Clarke wrote that Captain Roberts devoted himself to scientific pursuits, and had a fine collection of British shells and insects.¹² He was an excellent oriental scholar, but so touchy and hasty-tempered that on one occasion, when it was suggested that he should put his linguistic talents to a practical use by giving lessons, he was so offended that he threw all his oriental books on the fire – an unlovable manifestation of snobbery, irascibility, and cavalier disregard for the fruits of his undoubted learning.

Captain Roberts seems to have made his home at Llwynderw at some point between 1841 and 1846, when his 23-year-old daughter Lucy Barbara was buried at Llanddewi Abergwesyn. In 1848 the Tithe Schedule named him an owner-occupier of Llwynderw and some nearby farms. The Roberts family were the main support of the flagging Abergwesyn churches at a time when most of the local inhabitants attended Moriah Congregational chapel. The Baptist minister Rhys Gwesyn Jones said that the Roberts family and their servants went to morning service at Llanddewi, took the clergyman to Llwynderw for the midday meal, then attended Llanfihangel, nearby, in the afternoon.¹³ This no doubt accounts for the fact that in 1851 services at Abergwesyn, a very Welsh-speaking area then, were partly in English.¹⁴

As we have seen, the farming enterprize at Llwynderw was kept separate from the life of the 'Hall', though just how the physical division was made is uncertain. The splitting of a single house into 'gentleman's' and 'farmer's' sections is not unknown in the area. It happened until comparatively recently at the important Abergwesyn farm of Glangwesyn (formerly Clun). There the division was of one end from the other. At Llwynderw, at some points in its history, the division was of front from back. Captain Roberts's grandson, Major Chester Roberts, wrote that 'there used not to be any communication from [the front of the first floor] and the [back] except by coming downstairs to the hall and going to another staircase which started behind the dining-room, at the back of which was the kitchen'.¹⁵ In Llwynderw's days as a hotel this 'kitchen' was the dining-room; from it a flying staircase mounted to the first and second floors, a connecting door having been made to the first floor landing (reached by the main staircase

from the hall). When the house was divided, it seems likely that the large farm kitchen served both parts. Whether Mrs Price cooked for the Roberts family, or one of their two 'female servants' did so in the farm kitchen, can only be guessed at.¹⁶ The Robertses do not seem to have kept a large establishment. After their day, later Census returns give once more a single 'Llwynderw'. It is hard to imagine why such an awkward split should be made in a small gentry-house without a good reason for it. That some occupiers did find it inconvenient is shown by the construction (date unknown) of oblique passages cutting through from front to back at first floor level, passages done away with by its remodelling in 1968-69 by the hotelier Mr J. M. L. Yates. During the lifetime of his hotel a second front-to-back wing (now demolished) was added to give more accommodation, balancing the short bar of the original L-shape.

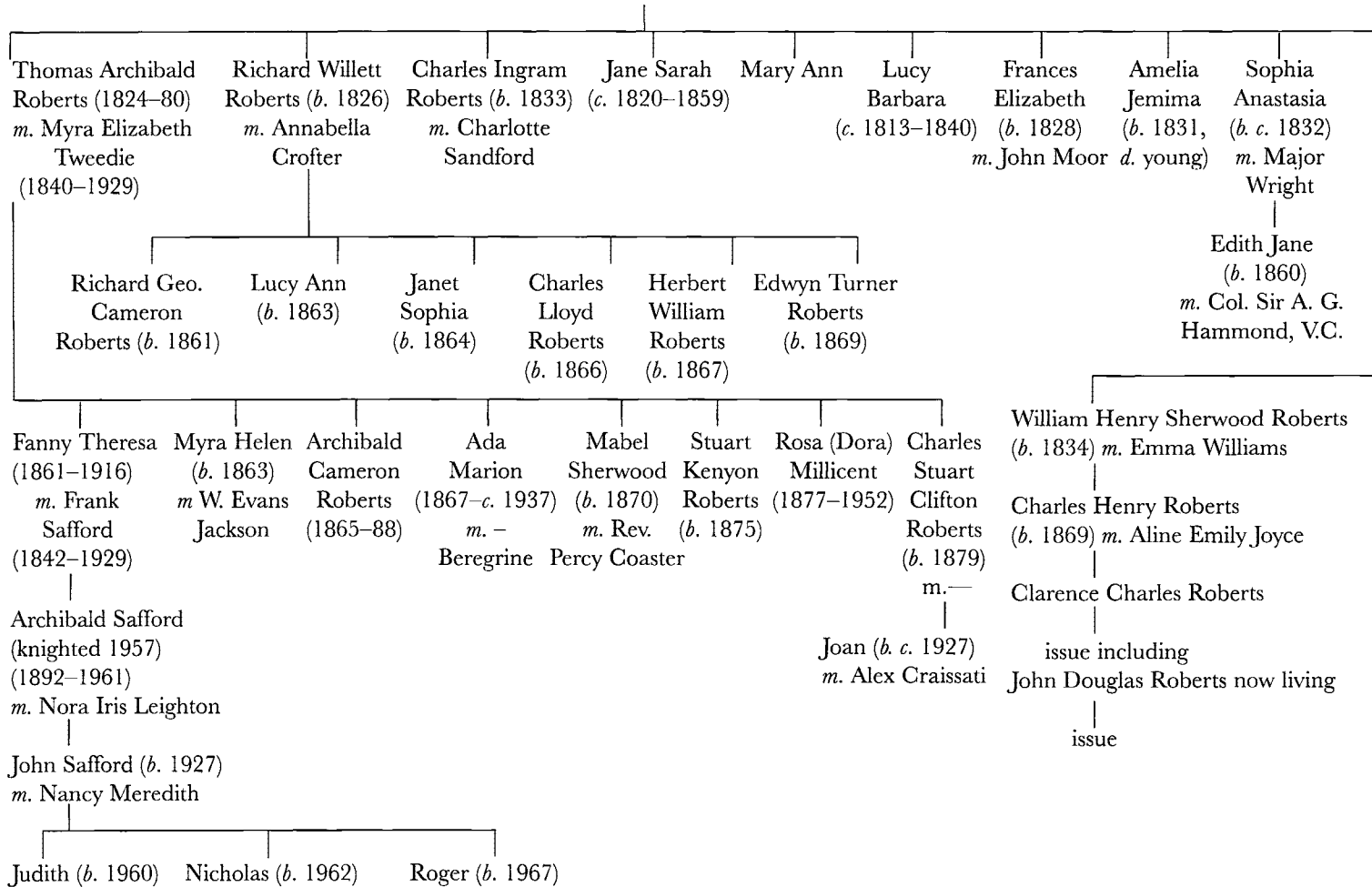
One strange thing Captain Roberts is said locally to have done is to remove from the house his predecessor Peter Jones's windows, which had beautiful heart-of-oak frames bearing the date 1812, and to replace them with inferior ones. The workmen were delighted with their unlooked-for acquisition of valuable timber.

Thomas Turner Roberts and his wife had four sons and six daughters. The youngest son, William Henry Sherwood Roberts, born in 1834 at Tenby, emigrated to New Zealand in 1855. He married Emma Williams, settled in Otago, and was the progenitor of a branch of the family which has representatives living today.¹⁷ William died at Oamaru in 1917. At least two of his descendants have visited Llwynderw – Mr John Douglas Roberts in 2003, and Ms Jillian Evers in 1986.

Charles Ingram Roberts (born in 1833 at Tenby) took Holy Orders and married a clergyman's daughter, Charlotte Sandford. His brother Richard Willett Roberts (born well before the Llwynderw days, in 1826 at Bath) became a solicitor of Grays Inn. He married Annabella Crofter, who bore him six children, all baptized at St Mark's church, Surbiton. His descendants include Mr B. D. Clarke, M.A., LL.B., a major source of this outline of his family's history.

Captain Roberts's eldest son, Thomas Archibald Roberts, born in 1824 at Tenby, was a successful Chancery barrister and the author of a book on Equity. He married in 1859 the beautiful Myra Elizabeth Tweedie, of a Scottish family, by whom he had three sons and five daughters. Some of their family too, made distinguished careers in the law. Mr John Safford, another main source of information about the Robertses, was the son of Sir Archibald Safford, Q.C., and grandson of another barrister, Frank Safford (Recorder of Canterbury), who married Thomas Archibald Roberts's eldest daughter Fanny Theresa. An odd postscript to the story of Thomas Archibald and the Roberts family's ownership of Llwynderw is found in the old farmhouse of Coedymynach near the Elan valley in Radnorshire – a house earlier occupied by Peter Jones of Llwynderw's father-in-law, John Lewis. On the inside of a cupboard door there was found a

(CHILDREN OF THOMAS TURNER ROBERTS AND JANE née CAMERON)



collection of signatures of visitors, friends or associates of Hubert Smith, a Bridgnorth solicitor who lived there for a time. Among these names was that of 'Thomas Archibald Roberts, Avocet, Llwynderw (sic), 1864, 29 August'.¹⁸ The date is interesting – the actual 'Hall' was in the nearest Census year, 1861, the home of the Williams family of tenants, and the farm occupied by a 44-year-old retired farmer and his family. In a register entry of 1863 they were said to be at 'Llwynderw Cottage', and the farmer had become a labourer. Evidently the Roberts family, after leaving Llwynderw, felt in a sense placed or defined by their continued ownership of it.

Of Captain Roberts's daughters, several died young. As well as Lucy, who lies in Llanddewi churchyard, a sister Amelia Jemima died at an early age. Jane Sarah died unmarried in 1859; of Mary Ann little is known, though the family have a photograph of her. Frances Elizabeth ('Fanny') married John, son of the Rev. James Moor of Clifton near Rugby. Anastasia Sophia married Major Wright, who died in India in 1863, when their daughter Edith Jane, born in Dorset, was three years old.

The Breconshire Electoral Roll of 1871 shows the 'freehold lands at Llwynderw' owned by David Pritchard of Glanyrafon, Richard Willett Roberts of Grays Inn, and the Rev. Charles Ingram Roberts of Sutton Coldfield. The house of Llwynderw was occupied by tenants.

Richard's son Major Chester Roberts wrote that on his father's death the Llwynderw part of his estate went to Chester's brother George, who hastened to sell it.¹⁹ (This sits oddly with Thomas Archibald's being of Llwynderw in 1864). About 1895 Mrs Myra Roberts, widow of Thomas Archibald, bought Llwynderw, with 2000 acres of land, from her sisters-in-law, who were said to be delighted to be rid of what they considered a white elephant.

Sir Archibald Safford, who as a boy of about ten used to spend his summer holidays at Llwynderw, remembered his grandmother Myra Roberts as tall and beautiful, with a splendid figure. (It was a handsome family – several of her children were outstandingly good-looking). Myra was charming and well-read, particularly in the novels of the day, and keenly interested in public affairs. She was the daughter of a Royal Artillery captain whose family made their fortune as E.I.C. indigo merchants. Mrs Roberts had been something of an invalid during her married life, which spanned the years 1859 (when she was 19) to 1880. Many of these years were given to producing and caring for eight children. As a widow, she gained a new lease of life, showing herself resilient and energetic. She lived to a fine old age. Thomas and Myra Roberts had lived in Gordon Square, Bloomsbury; on his death in 1880 Myra moved to Notting Hill, where she brought up her large family, whose ages at their father's death ranged from 19 to one year.

The move to Llwynderw was made at least in part as an economy, though in the event it was to prove financially disastrous. Myra Roberts raised a series of

mortgages on the property, but to no avail. She and her daughters were involved in unsuccessful ventures such as an attempt to breed polo-ponies. We find glimpses of the mother and daughters as local 'ladies of the manor' in the log-books of Abergwesyn school. Visits from Mrs Roberts are noted, and one September day in 1901 the Misses Roberts called to invite the children to a school treat at Llwynderw.

Finally the mortgagees foreclosed, and Mrs Roberts had to sell Llwynderw. Her god-daughter, the young local girl Elizabeth Jones, now Mrs 'Bet' Richards, survives at the time of writing as a centenarian in Llanwrtyd Wells, and remembers Mrs Roberts's tearful departure from her beloved Llwynderw, led away by Bet, but often stopping to look back. Myra went first to Bournemouth, then moved back to London, where she took a flat in the Temple. Right up to her death in 1929 she lived an active life. Family members recalled that at the age of 88 she was still regularly travelling by bus from the Temple to shop at the Army and Navy Stores in Victoria Street.

Among Roberts descendants who have gone back to visit Llwynderw was Major Chester Roberts, son of Richard Willett and his wife Annabella. In August 1936 he wrote to his niece Betty (Mrs Burrow) describing Llwynderw in the days when it was farmed by Mr Rhys Hope, brother and heir of John Jones Hope (who died in 1925), who as sitting tenant had bought Llwynderw, and made a great success of farming there. Major Roberts drove in a pony-cart from Llanwrtyd to Llwynderw. He found the house 'finely furnished', and noted the bathroom installed by one of his Roberts kinsfolk (a reminder of how little we can take for granted about the amenities even of substantial houses in the comparatively recent past). The house looked well kept, with new stabling. Major Roberts went up from the Irfon valley and photographed the solitary houses of Llanerch-yrfa and Penyrhuddfa (the latter long demolished now) near the limit of Llwynderw lands. He found 'the whole valley . . . beautiful and very little changed'.

Down the Irfon valley towards Llanwrtyd the Robertses visited the Dôlycoed Hotel, where (according to a later letter) the Major's parents had spent their honeymoon. 'It's an expensive place now, and as a result almost empty', he commented; it was then owned by 'the Bank'. They left Llanwrtyd by bus for Cardiff, and then took a boat to Weston-super-Mare.

A letter to Betty dated August 1953 refers to her recent visit to Llwynderw, including a picnic by the nearby river Culent. Roberts describes the lay-out of Llwynderw as he remembered it – the separation we have discussed between front and back; 'a hall with a room each side on the ground floor (drawing-room and parlour), and two rooms over them on the floor above, with a little room between them over the front door'. With the Major's letter, but headed with a New South Wales address, is a list of rooms. On the first floor were the visitors' room, schoolroom and girls' room (said to be haunted). On the second floor were

the boys' room (where 'Uncle W.' slept), a spare room and the parents' bedroom. The nursery was on the first floor at the side of the house, and above it a servants' bedroom and store-room. At the back of the house was the scullery, and behind it, outside, a big room used as a carpenter's shop. The dairy was under the parlour, and the wine-cellar under the passage, while the coal-cellar was under passage and kitchen.

The kitchen-garden lay on sloping ground 'at the side and back of the house'; beyond that was a plantation of larches and pines, and oak-trees beyond them. (The name of the house means 'oak grove'). 'Grandfather Roberts's' land had supported about 2000 sheep and a few cows and ponies. There were stables 'on the left adjoining the house', and across the track were cow-barns.

Accompanying the letters in family records are two poems, dated 18 and 21 August 1860. They extol the beauty of the valley, even in dreary weather when Dôlycoed was 'jolly' with its bright fire and 'cheerful converse', and then in mild and brilliant weather when fishing and pony-riding were enjoyed, though the road was still flowing as wetly as the river! In the recent past, Mr B. D. Clarke and Mr J. Safford stayed at Llwynderw Hotel.

Another relative who revisited her family's past was Mrs (Janet) Griffiths, a niece of Chester Roberts. She came with her husband Captain Griffiths to see Llwynderw, home of her great-grandfather and great-great-uncle, and the childhood holiday home of her uncle Chester. She was remembered by Mr and Mrs David Jones of Abergwesyn Post Office and Shop, with whom she chatted about Llwynderw and the Roberts family. (Mr Jones was the brother of Mrs Myra Roberts's god-daughter Bet, so was keenly interested in giving all the help he could to Mrs Griffiths). All the Roberts family members who came back to visit Llwynderw had in common a great attachment to the house and the valley, seeming to find there something spell-binding and unforgettable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For much information about the history of the Roberts family I am indebted to descendants, in particular Mr Bruce Clarke and Mr John Safford, who have drawn in their turn on accounts by earlier members of the family, including Miss M. E. Cameron and Sir Archibald Safford. I should like to thank also Ms J. Evers, the late Mr David Jones of Abergwesyn, Mr John D. Roberts of Kohimarama, New Zealand and Mrs S. Campbell. The following institutions also provided valuable assistance: the National Army Museum, Pembrokeshire County Library and Pembrokeshire Record Office, Tenby Museum and Worcester Library and History Centre.

NOTES

¹ The article is a sequel to my 'A Gentleman of the Name of Jones' in *Brycheiniog* vols. 28 and 29. A photograph of Llwynderw appears in vol. 28.

² Information from descendants (see Acknowledgements), drawing on family memoirs; and from parish registers.

³ Burke concurs (1852, *Landed Gentry*).

⁴ Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*.

⁵ It has not yet been possible to place this school.

⁶ *Berrow and Worcester Journal*, 1 April 1819.

⁷ Foster, *Al. Ox.*

⁸ Records at National Army Museum.

⁹ P.R.O., pr. PCC 4 Aug. 1855 by his widow.

¹⁰ N.L.W., Wooding deposit.

¹¹ Worcester Land Tax Returns for 1825 show Thomas Roberts, Esq., Horsham as owner of an unnamed property in Horsham, occupied by Jno Davis. The Tithe Apportionment for Martley (1843) names him as owner of the house, again unnamed, and associated with it 17 plots of fields. The occupier was George Gould.

¹² Summarizing a reference in a privately-printed book about Jane Roberts's father by the Archdeacon of Johannesburg, *Charles Cameron, Non-Juror* (1922).

¹³ Jones, R. G., Aug. 1861, *Y Ddiwigiwr*, 'Abergwesyn'. Rhys Gwesyn notes that Captain Roberts's regular attendance (with nine children at the time and the maids) kept the little churches going.

¹⁴ 'Religious Census'.

¹⁵ In a letter of 1953.

¹⁶ 1851 Census.

¹⁷ Correspondence (2004) with John Douglas Roberts.

¹⁸ 1965, *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society*, pp. 51 ff.

¹⁹ See footnote 15, above.

2. THE WILLIAMS FAMILY

Part of the Roberts story at Llwynderw runs concurrently with that of a tenant family of some local distinction.

In the old churchyard of St David's, Llanwrtyd, about a mile out of Llanwrtyd Wells on the Abergwesyn road, is a group of tombs once enclosed by an iron railing. The older tombs are now very dilapidated. They are of a Williams family of the Llanwrtyd-Abergwesyn area during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. Among them we find the Rev. Rhys (Rees) Williams, vicar of Merthyr Cynog and Tirabad, who died in 1845 aged 76,¹ and his wife Elizabeth, who died at Llwynderw on 4 January 1859, and was buried in the family plot on 10 January.

This clerical Rhys was the 'white-headed boy' of Rhys Williams of Maesgwaelod Farm, Llanwrtyd, who was nearly 60 when his wife Gwen bore him a son. There was a daughter, too, Kitty, who became the wife of Rees Powell.²

The Rev. Rhys Williams married on 21 April 1809 Elizabeth, daughter of 'Siôn o'r Clun', John Morgan, who died in 1817 aged 77. Clun (later Glangwesyn) had come into the Morgan family by marriage; John's father, David Morgan, son of one 'Morgan Bach' of Llanafan Fawr, had married Sybil, daughter of Siôn Dafydd of Clun. Elizabeth's mother Margaret was the daughter of Rees Evan Morris of the well-known Tywi valley farm of Nantystalwyn.³

In the later nineteenth century, Llwynderw was farmed as a 'bytake' of Glangwesyn – in other words, its lands were managed by the farmer of Glangwesyn, though he did not occupy the house itself. Ultimate ownership was still with members of the Roberts family.

A portrait, not without an element of caricature, in the possession of a descendant of the Williamses, Mrs Evered of Birch, near Colchester, shows the Vicar as a merry red-faced farming parson, who looks as though he had hunted many a fox and tilted many a tankard. On the back of the portrait is written 'To Master Rhys Williams . . . (a portrait?) . . . of Ein Gweinidog' (Our Minister). Mrs Evered's brother, she said, had other family portraits, including one of Elizabeth Williams, which was taken to New York by an aunt, and pictures of the Llwynderw children playing in the woods. It is not known where these pictures are now.

Rees (sic) Williams is listed in several of the early clerical directories.⁴ There is no record of a degree; Rhys did not go to Oxford or Cambridge, and he lived too early to attend St David's College, Lampeter, which admitted its first students in March 1827. Rhys was in all likelihood one of the 'mountain clergy' whose education might have been gained at one of the grammar schools in the diocese which Bishop Horsley had licensed between 1788 and 1793 as suitable for those

seeking to enter the ministry of the established church.⁵ Earlier, some were educated at one of the nonconformist academies.⁶

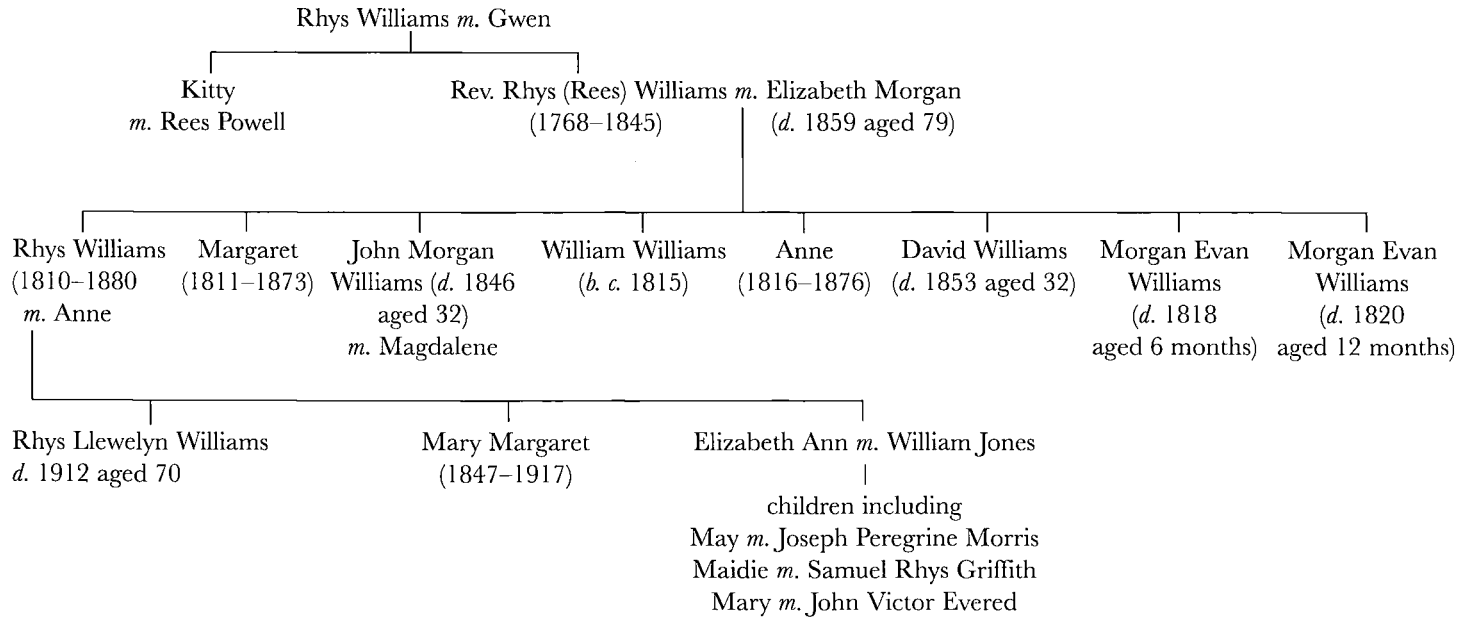
For part of his ministry Rhys lived at his farm, Henfron, Llanwrtyd, and travelled on horseback to his parishes; but later, by the Census of 1841, he was living in a house (unnamed) in Merthyr Cynog, with Elizabeth and their two daughters and youngest son David. When he made his will⁷ on 2 August 1844 his address was given as Vicarage House, Merthyr Cynog. He died on 27 June 1845; his funeral at St David's, Llanwrtyd was taken by his curate in Merthyr Cynog, Watkin Williams.⁸

In his will, proved by his widow on 2 January 1846, Rhys left her his personal estate and appointed trustees, his 'friends, Rees Morgan of Trawsgeirch, Llanfihangel Abergwesyn, Gentleman [Elizabeth's brother] and the Rev. David Price Lewis [J.P.] of Gilfach, Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire' to deal with his property, including Henfron, Henbant and Tirlwynbedw in Llanwrtyd (occupied by Isaac Price and his undertenants). They were to ensure that the profits were received by Elizabeth to hold in trust for one or both of his daughters Margaret and Anne Williams. There was a warning for Margaret! If 'at any time hereafter' she were to marry the farmer John Williams of Nantygrithin, Merthyr Cynog (which her father 'urgently requested' her not to do), she would immediately forfeit her inheritance 'as the penalty of her disobedience', and her share would go to Anne. Neither daughter married. Their father's goods and stock were valued at £163.5.0; he had horses, cows, pigs and poultry – no sheep. Rhys did not provide for his sons; they seem to have been leading independent lives.

The first of Rhys and Elizabeth's large family was Rhys junior, born in 1810; Margaret followed in 1811, John Morgan in 1813, William probably in 1815, Anne in 1816, Morgan Evan in 1818, and after his death aged six months another son of the same name in 1820, who died aged one year. Last came David, born in 1821, who was to die in London aged 32. His tombstone tells us he lived in Mornington Place.

The eldest son, Rhys (1810–1880) and his wife Anne (1812–1907) spent some years in London too. Their descendants believe the family to have lived at Llwynderw for two distinct periods. They may have rented it for some time from Captain Roberts after he bought it in 1833; we do not know the exact dates of Rhys junior's time in London, where he was on the staff of the G.P.O. Those were interesting and sociable years during which he made many friends, including a fellow employee who was to become a famous novelist – Anthony Trollope. Trollope was in London, a junior clerk, from 1834 to 1841, when he was promoted and left for Ireland. We have seen that in 1841 only the farmer Thomas Price was at Llwynderw; before the 1851 Census the Roberts family had come to live at the Hall. Elizabeth Ann, a daughter of Rhys and Annie Williams, was born in Middlesex about 1845, so it is not clear when either period of

WILLIAMS FAMILY TREE



After Mr Jones

Williams occupation began; the second, surely, not until after Captain Roberts's death in 1855, and the dispersal of his family. Certainly Rhys's widowed mother died there at the beginning of 1859.

Rhys Williams seems to have lived at Llwynderw in some style. He had visiting cards printed, some of which came into the possession of his great-great-granddaughter Mrs Evered, who owned too a most interesting relic rescued from an outhouse at Llwynderw – an oak table said to be the one at which Trollope wrote during a visit to Llwynderw. For this compulsive writer, then in the early stages of his career, it seems that a Welsh holiday was no excuse for idleness. Whether the visit happened while Rhys Williams and Trollope were both working for the G.P.O. in London, or whether Trollope holidayed at Llwynderw after he had moved to Ireland, is not known.⁹

The 1861 Census shows that (with John Lewis, his wife, five children and mother-in-law at Llwynderw Farm) the Hall was inhabited by Rhys's unmarried sisters Margaret (1811–1873) and Anne (1816–1876), Rhys's 19-year-old son Rhys Llewelyn Williams (1842–1912), a servant and a labourer. Rhys, Annie and their daughters Mary Margaret and Elizabeth Ann were then living at the villa he had built in Llanwrtyd Wells – Brynderw. It is still to be seen in Station Road. Rhys died intestate in 1880; administration was granted to his widow on 22 April 1881, at Hereford, sureties being Rees (sic) Llewelyn Williams of Irfon Cottage and Rees (sic) Morgan Hope of Pentwyn, both farmers.

Rhys's brother John Morgan Williams, who like David died at the age of 32, lived at the substantial house of Abernant in Llanwrtyd. He was obviously named after his maternal grandfather. His wife Magdalene (who died in 1862 aged 47) is buried with him.

Another brother, William Williams, was at Trawsgyrch farm in Llanfihangel Abergwesyn in 1841, 'of independent means', working for his uncle Rhys Morgan. By 1851 he was the farmer there. In 1861 we find him at Glangwesyn, his mother's childhood home, with his wife, their nieces Phoebe Williams and Eliza Richards, six employees and John Jones, an eight-year-old 'motherless child'.

In 1871 a bailiff, John Wild was at Llwynderw with his family.¹⁰ At some point between 1861 and 1871 the two unmarried sisters, Margaret and Anne, had left with their reputedly wealthy bachelor nephew Rhys Llewelyn Williams for Irfon Cottage, where Elizabeth, wife of Peter Jones, had ended her days, and from which Peter had set out for his son's farm in Llanwrthwl. In Irfon Cottage Mr Williams lived until his death in 1912 aged 70, his aunts having died in 1873 and 1876 respectively. In 1871 the house was held by William Jones on a 99-year-lease.¹¹ Rhys Llewelyn's name occurs frequently in the log-books of Abergwesyn school (1894–1927), of which he was a governor and in which he took an active interest.

His sister Mary Margaret never married. She was the much-loved aunt of May, Mrs Evered's grandmother, one of Elizabeth Ann's children. May was

brought up with Mary Margaret and her parents at Brynderw. In 1818 Elizabeth had married William Jones of Nantyrhŵch, a Tywi valley farm in Llanddewi Abergwesyn; he was a descendant of the red-haired matriarch 'Gwen Nantyrhŵch'. This marriage to the niece of William Williams of Glangwesyn, who farmed Llwynderw land, was no doubt the reason for William Jones's obtaining the tenancy of Llwynderw, where he went to live some time before the 1881 Census. William Williams had died by that time; his widow continued to live at Glangwesyn – in 1881 the 'motherless child' had become her cowman. In 1881 we find William Jones, aged 40, at Llwynderw, with his 36-year-old wife, children Rhys, William, Evan, Anne, Margaret, David, Elizabeth and Llewelyn, a 21-year-old servant and 19-year-old niece, both from Llanddewi Brefi.

POSTSCRIPT

Between the time of the William Jones family at Llwynderw and the return of Mrs Myra Roberts to live there, a number of tenants successively occupying the house included Rhys Morgan Hope of Pentwyn (a kinsman of Elizabeth Williams), whose family were later to own Llwynderw; Thomas Williams of Llwyngwychwydd, Llanwrtyd, a bailiff; and John Price of Blaencwm in the Camarch valley, Llanfihangel Abergwesyn. After Mrs Roberts's abortive attempts to revive the fortunes of Llwynderw came a time of sundry changes of ownership, from Mr Earl to the Hopes; from them to the Economic Forestry Group; to Mr Hutton, a Roman Catholic who made an upstairs room into a private chapel; and from him to Mr and Mrs Pruden, who opened a small hotel there. In 1968 this was bought by Mr J. M. L. Yates (a second Roman Catholic proprietor), who transformed it into a most elegant country-house hotel.

The change from gentry-house-cum-farmhouse to hotel allowed Llwynderw to keep in another form the animation of comings and goings and the tradition of hospitality which had often been a feature of its life. At Mr Yates' retirement and departure for Merthyr Cynog in 1989, Llwynderw reverted to being a private house, owned first by Mr Rhys-Burgess, and at the time of writing by the veterinary surgeon Dr Robert Ellis, his wife Sara and their family. Restoration work in keeping with the original style of the house is in progress.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mrs May A. Evered; Dr N. Yates, U.C.W., Lampeter; Brecon Area Library; Cardiff Central Library, Reference Department; National Library of Wales; Powys County Archives.

NOTES

¹ Llanwrtyd parish register shows he was baptised on 28 December 1768.

² N.L.W., Wooding deposit, transcript and annotation of Llanwrtyd parish registers.

³ Cardiff Central Library, Notebooks of David Lewis Wooding, 1.89.

⁴ The Clerical Guide of 1836 confirms that the Rees Williams appointed curate of Llanlleonfel in 1811 was identical with the one made vicar of Merthyr Cynog in 1828, and curate of 'Tyr Abbott' (Tirabad). According to Theophilus Jones in his *History of Brecknockshire* (Glanusk edition, vol. 2, 1909), before and during the Rev. Rhys Williams's time there the church was like a derelict barn, and 'remained in (this) pitiable condition' until it was restored in 1862.

⁵ Yates, Dr Nigel, St David's College, Lampeter, letter of 16 Jan. 2004.

⁶ Jones, O. W., 'The Welsh Church in the 18th Century' in *A History of the Church in Wales*, ed. D. Walker, Penarth, Historical Society of the Church in Wales, 1976, p. 116. Reference supplied by Dr Yates.

⁷ N.L.W., Archdeaconry of Brecon Wills.

⁸ As note 2.

⁹ While there is no reason to doubt this strong family tradition, it has not been possible to date to confirm it. Trollope's chief friends among his fellow-clerks seem to have been Henry Merivale and Walter Awbry. For a general description of the work of the G.P.O. clerks (almost entirely copying) and their leisure activities (often 'seedy') see Mullen, Richard (1990), *Anthony Trollope, A Victorian in his World*: Glendinning, Victoria (1992), *Trollope*.

¹⁰ 1871 Census; a single entry for Llwynderw.

¹¹ 1871, Breconshire Electoral Roll.

THE LANDED FAMILIES OF BRECONSHIRE

It is a great honour to give the annual Sir John Lloyd Lecture, for Sir John must be the greatest county patriot in the modern history of Wales. And for me, the invitation to address the Brecknock Society is particularly gratifying, for so close is my wife's association with Breconshire that we have given the surname Brychan to our four children. In addition, my wife is the author of what I believe is the only novel set in Brecon. Published in 1997, it is called *Amser i Geisio*; set in the early nineteenth century, it has the beginnings of the Brecon and Abergavenny canal as its background.

But, to business. My theme tonight is the landed estates of Breconshire. In his poem to Wales, composed in the late 1880s, Sir John Morris-Jones wrote:

'Mi wn nad yw ei gwerin
Yn meddu ohoni gwys,
Na'r Cymro ond pererin
Ar ddaear Gymru lwys.'¹

If by *gwerin*, Sir John meant the cultivators of the land of Wales, he was guilty of some poetic exaggeration, for the first official statistics on the matter – those of 1887 – reveal that in that year 338,596 acres of Wales were owned by the people who farmed them. Yet, in so far as Sir John was seeking to portray Wales as a landlord-dominated society, his picture was essentially correct, for those 338,596 acres constituted but 10.2% of the cultivated surface of the country; the other 89.8% was in the possession of landowners who rented their land to the cultivators of the soil.²

By the 1970s – the peak decade in terms of owner occupation of rural land – the situation had changed dramatically. The 1970 agricultural statistics reveal that, in that year, 61.7% of the land of Wales was owned by its cultivators.³ Thus a change of the greatest significance has occurred. The dream of the nineteenth-century land reformers of destroying the grip of the great estates and of turning the mass of Welsh tenants into freeholders has been largely achieved. To all intents and purposes, the great estates have gone. In order to appreciate the extent to which their disappearance represented a break with the past, it is necessary to bear in mind how long they had been a dominant element in Welsh life. In the late nineteenth century, twenty Welsh estates exceeded 20,000 acres in extent; of these, over three-quarters were in existence, at least in embryonic form, when Henry VII came to the throne.

By the 1880s, the division between the business of landowning and the business of farming was more marked in Wales than in almost any other part of western Europe. In 1887, when 10.2% of the cultivated land of Wales was held

by freeholders, the figure for Scotland was 12.7% and for England 15.5%. In 1877, estates of a thousand acres and more covered 60.6% of the cultivated land of Wales and 53.5% of that of England.⁴

Yet, the erosion of this formidable concentration of landed property has aroused curiously little interest. The decline of the landowner's political power is a saga much sung, but the final triumph of anti-landlord agitation, the liquidation of the estates themselves, has been virtually ignored. Sir John Clapham, writing of the break-up of estates in Britain in general, described the process as a 'major breach in continuity which in any other country would have been a matter of the widest discussion. Perhaps it was', he continued, 'because it occurred in the field of rural economy that it received, and still receives, curiously little attention in Britain.'⁵ That this should be true of Wales is especially peculiar, considering the heat engendered by the Land Question in the late nineteenth century.

And now to Breconshire. Here, the figures were very similar to those for Wales as a whole, for 9.4% of the county's farmers were freeholders in 1887 and 64.2% in 1970. But the land situation in nineteenth-century Breconshire had some unique features. One of them was the high proportion of the county that still constituted common land. The *Return of Owners of Land* of 1873 showed that, in that year, 28% of Breconshire was common land compared with 3% in Anglesey and 4% in Carmarthenshire. The *Report* of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales published in 1896 stressed that Breconshire had the largest area of common land in Wales, and that thus a substantial proportion of the county was outside the concern of the Commission – which was the relationship between landlord and tenant. The issue of common land explains one of the oddest features of landownership in nineteenth-century Breconshire. That feature becomes apparent in the Schedules prepared in the mid and late 1830s at the time of the Commutation of the Tithe, schedules which are available at the National Library for all the parishes of Breconshire. They show that one of the largest landowners in the county in those decades was a man who was not a landlord in any traditional sense. He was Joseph Claypon of Boston, Lincolnshire, who had acquired huge tracts of the vast parishes of Defynnog and Ystradgynlais, parishes in which another untraditional landlord – Anthony Story – was also a major landowner. Their property was the result of one of the most inept land transactions in the entire history of Britain – the enclosure of the Great Forest of Brecknock – a transaction disentangled by John Lloyd (our John Lloyd's uncle) and by one of Breconshire's greatest gifts to Welsh historical studies – the excellent historian, William Rees.⁶ They explain how the Claypons and the Storys acquired their huge estates following the Enclosure Act of 1815 and describe how their estates had collapsed by the 1870s – although the *Return of Owners of Land* shows that in 1873 Story's descendants, the Maskeleynes and their associates the MacTurks, were still substantial landowners in Breconshire.

But to turn to more traditional estates – those consisting of farms and other property and centred upon a country mansion. Here again Breconshire is something of an anomaly. In most of the counties of Wales – indeed, in most of the counties of Britain – the dominant estate had deep roots and had been built up over many generations. In Glamorgan, the dominant estates were those of the Talbots of Margam and the Butes of Cardiff, estates whose origins can be traced back to the sixteenth century. Elsewhere, even earlier origins can be found – the twelfth-century origins of the estate of the Vaughans of Trawsgoed in Cardiganshire, for example, or the thirteenth-century origins of the estates of the Penrhyn family in Caernarfonshire. But by far the largest estate in 1870s Breconshire – 21,979 acres, well over twice the size of its nearest rival – had not been in existence half a century earlier. That was the Glanusk estate, accumulated by Joseph Bailey, the Nantyglo ironmaster, from the 1820s onwards. The Glanusk phenomenon – the creation of a vast estate in little more than a single generation – aroused widespread interest. The *Estates Gazette* – the journal serving those concerned with the management of landed estates – published an article in 1910 marvelling at the phenomenon and noting that the first Baron Glanusk had in 1902 compiled a volume for his children containing a description of the acquisition of the estate.⁷ If that volume still exists – and I once made fruitless enquiries concerning it – it would be of great historical interest.

The 21,979 acres owned by the Glanusk family in Breconshire represented 78% of the landholdings of the family; the rest – a mere 22% – consisted of lands in Monmouthshire, Radnorshire, Herefordshire, Buckinghamshire and Suffolk. Thus, there could not be any doubt that Breconshire was the centre of the Bailey family's landed interests. That was not true of the landowner families who had traditionally dominated the county, a fact which brings us to another feature of Breconshire's tenurial peculiarities. The general pattern elsewhere was that the dominant families, in particular those who provided the county and borough MPs, were those whose main landed interests were within the county concerned – the Vaughans in Carmarthenshire, for example, or the Watkin Wynns in Denbighshire or the Bulkeleys in Anglesey. But what we find in Breconshire is that the dominant factor in the parliamentary history of both the county and the borough was the alliance of two families – the Morgans of Tredegar and the Somersets, dukes of Beaufort. Both families were certainly landowners in Breconshire and, indeed, both families had residences here – Y Dderw, Llyswen, in the case of the Morgans, and Llangatock Park in the case of the Somersets. Yet, the county was peripheral to the interests of both families. Their Breconshire estate constituted 18% of the landholdings of the Morgans and a mere 10% of their income. The equivalent figures for the Somersets was 8% and 5%.

In order to appreciate Breconshire's pattern of landownership, it may be useful to list the top ten families in terms of acreage:

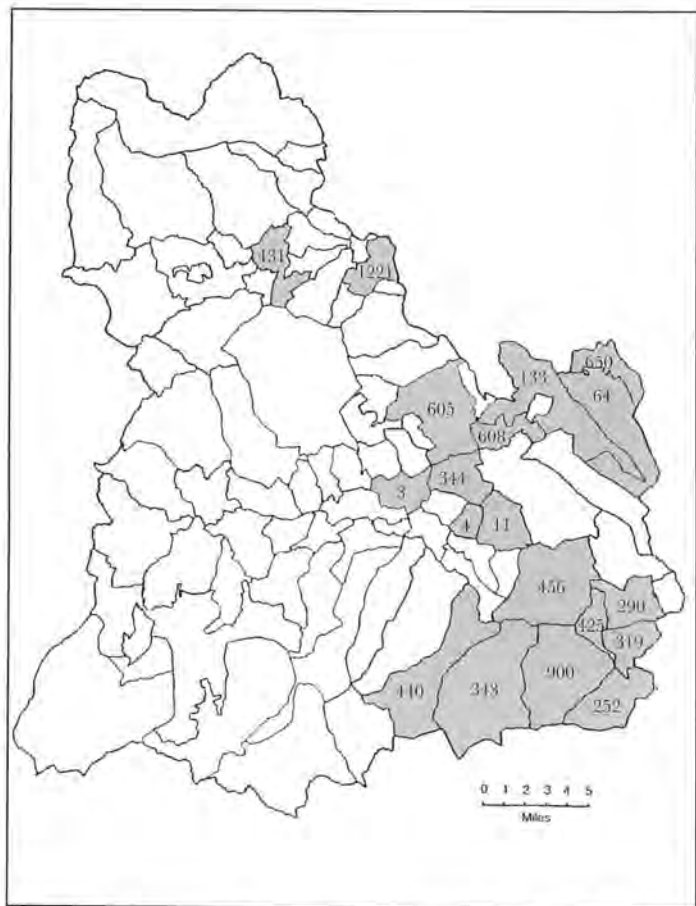
1. As we have seen, the largest of Breconshire's estates was Glanusk – 21,979 acres, with a gross rental of £19,367.
2. The Llwynmadog estate of Clara Thomas – 8,910 acres. However, it would be misleading to consider Llwynmadog to be one of the county's major estates. Although second in size, its location in land of low fertility meant that it was twelfth in rental, producing only £2,730 a year.
3. The Buckland estate of the Gwynne-Holford family – 7,741 acres: rental £10,079.
4. The Tredegar estate of the Morgan family – 7,362 acres, rental, £6,280, part of an overall rental of some £60,000.
5. The Brecon Priory estate of Marquess Camden – 6,430 acres; rental £3,625.
6. The Penpont estate of the Williams family – 6,329 acres; rental £4,099.
7. The Llangattock estate of the dukes of Beaufort – 4,019 acres; rental £3,625, part of an overall rental of some £56,000.
8. The Garth estate of the Fuller-Maitland family – 3,841 acres; rental £1,587.
9. The Swansea estate of John Dillwyn-Llewelyn – 3,587 acres; rental £1,848
10. The Gwernyfed estate of Thomas Wood – 3221 acres: rental £4,050.

These figures give no indication of where within the county the estates were located. To obtain that information it is necessary to examine the National Library's collection of Tithe Schedules relating to the parishes of Breconshire, schedules compiled in the mid and late 1830s.

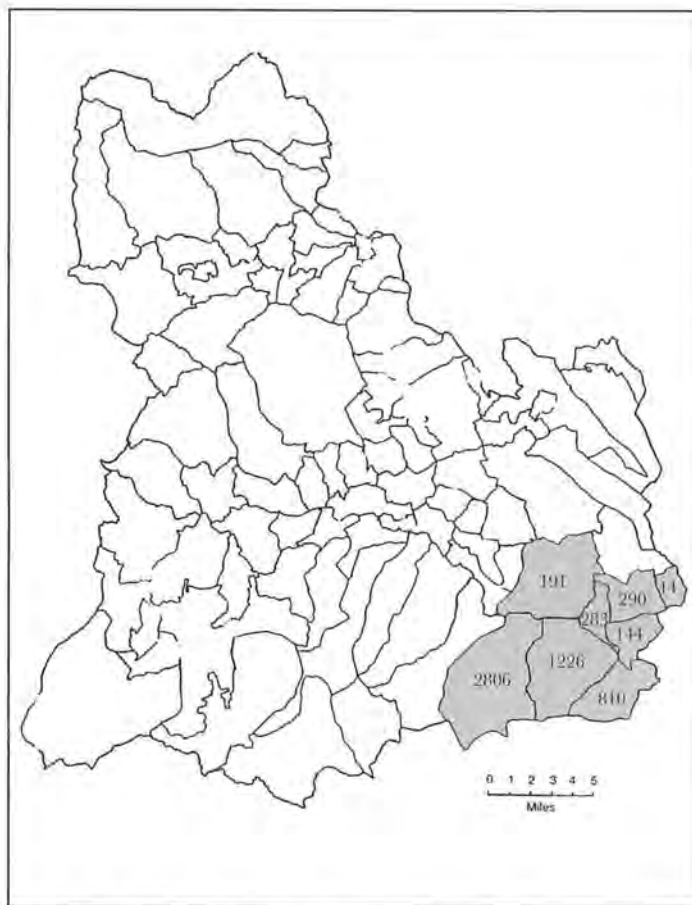
Map 1 shows where the Glanusk estate was located in those years. In the late 1830s, the estate consisted of 7,500 acres, so it clearly tripled in size between c1840 and 1873.

It is informative to compare the location of the Glanusk estate with that of the dukes of Beaufort (Map 2). The centre of both was in the parish of Llangattock, where the imposing Glanusk Park and the more modest Llangattock Park stood cheek by jowl. There can be little doubt that the Baileys were concerned to show that a 'new' family could make a more dynamic contribution to a locality than that made by scions of the old aristocracy. In the fascinating material on Llangattock published in this society's journal, *Brycheiniog*, it is noted that although the rector of Llangattock for much of the nineteenth century was Lord William Somerset, son of the duke of Beaufort, he seldom visited the place and the refurbishment of the vestry and the installation of heating in the church was paid for by Joseph Bailey.⁸

It is equally informative to compare the location of the Beaufort estate with that of the Morgans of Tredegar. (Map 3). The Tredegar estate consisted of three areas – that around Llyswen (the core of the Dderw estate acquired by marriage in 1661), the lands around the Great Forest acquired following Charles Morgan's acquisition of the lordship of Brecknock in 1660, and purchases of land around Brecon, aimed in part at strengthening the family's influence over the parliamentary representation of the borough.⁹ The far-flung estate of the



Map 1 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Bailey family of Glanusk.



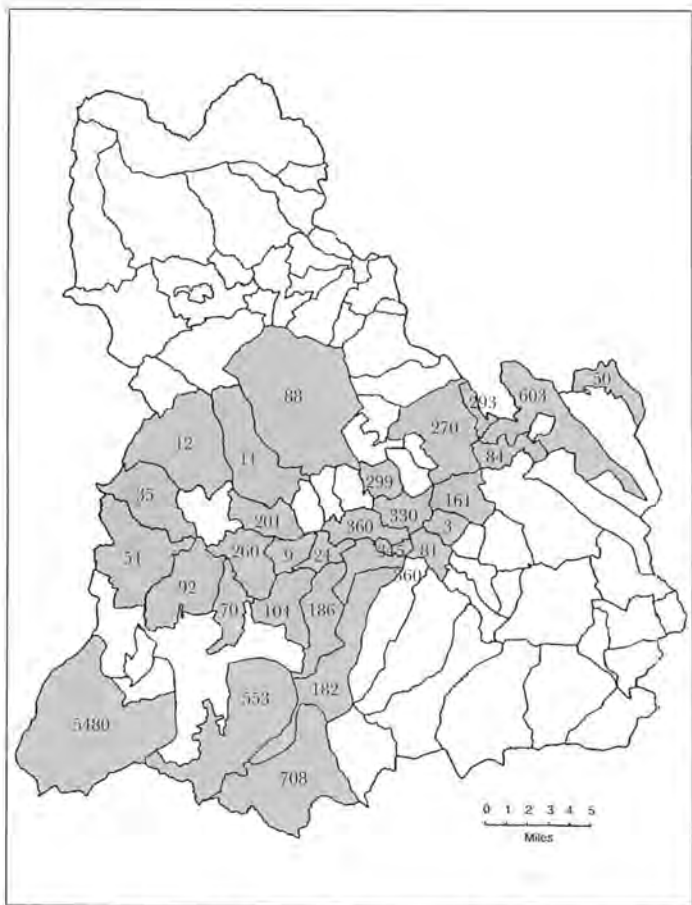
Map 2 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Somerset family, dukes of Beaufort.

Morgans meant that they had a strong position right across the centre of the county and down to the southwest. Where they lacked influence was in the well populated southeast; it was their alliance with the Beauforts, who were entrenched in that area, which allowed the Morgans to dominate Breconshire's politics for so long. (A similar alliance in Monmouthshire was equally effective in that county, an alliance which members of the Somerset family made more use than they did in Breconshire. Indeed, so widespread was the influence of the Somersets that they had a choice of seats in at least four counties. In the late seventeenth century, one member of the family, Charles Somerset, was in turn MP for the counties of Brecknock, Monmouth and Gloucester and the boroughs of Brecon and Monmouth. It is a record, for no one else in the whole history of British politics has ever represented a total of five constituencies.)

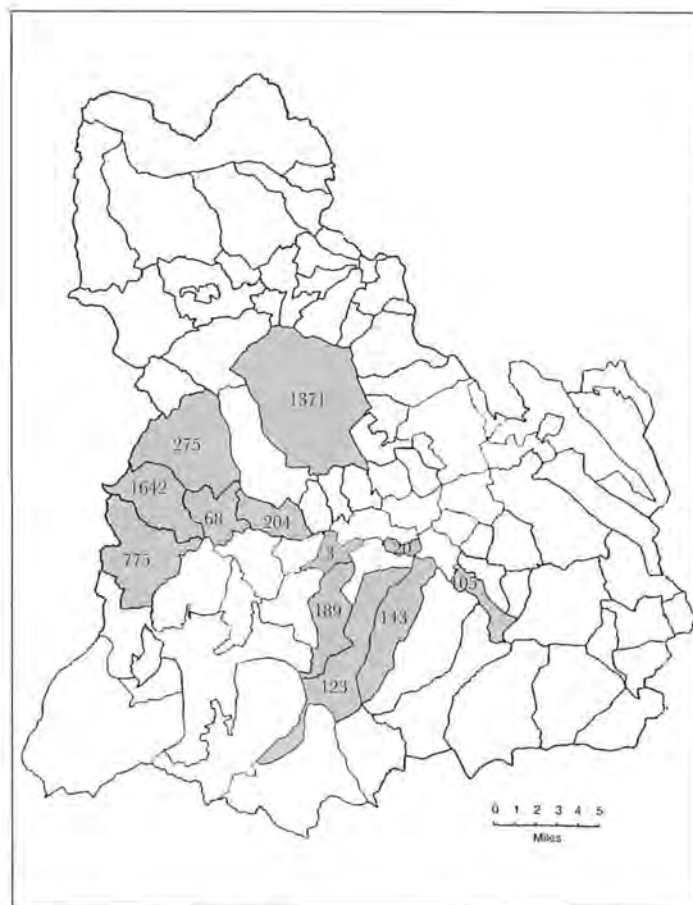
These fascinating details are to be found in the work of another of Breconshire's gifts to Welsh historical studies – William Retlaw Williams of Talybont-on-Usk. His *Parliamentary History of Wales* (1895) provides extensive evidence concerning those of the landed families of Breconshire who were active in politics. If we look at the representation of the county of Brecknock from 1750 until its merger with the borough seat in 1885, we find that, in those 135 years, the constituency was held by members of the Morgan family or their close relations for 73 years – 54% of the period. Where the borough seat was concerned, the family's prominence was even more overwhelming for members of it held the borough for 104 years – 77% of the total. The other members of local gentry families elected to represent the county were Thomas Wood of Gwernyfed (41 years), Joseph Bailey of Glanusk (11 years) and William Fuller-Maitland of Garth (10 years). In the borough, they were John Watkins of Penoyre (20 years), James Gwynne-Holford of Buckland (10 years), Howel Gwyn of Duffryn (3 years) and John Pratt of Brecon Priory (6 months – he had to give up his seat on inheriting the marquessate of Camden in August 1866.). For the county to be represented for an unbroken 135 years by members of local landed families, and for the borough to be similarly represented for 92% of that period is a remarkable record, for it is proof that Breconians had an ability to keep carpet-baggers at bay on a scale unmatched by other counties.

In addition to showing the location of the estates of the Glanusk, Beaufort and Tredegar families, it may be useful to indicate where the estates of some of the county's other leading landed families were situated.

Map 4 highlights the parishes in which the Pratts – the Marquesses Camden and earls of Brecknock – held land. It was the estate they had acquired by marriage with the Jeffreys family, who had in turn acquired by marriage the estate created in the sixteenth century by that great Welsh patriot, Sir John Price, the subject of an earlier Sir John Lloyd Lecture. Although elected to represent Brecon in 1866, it cannot be claimed that the marquess was primarily a



Map 3 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Morgan family of Tredegar.



Map 4 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Pratt family, Marquesses Camden.

Breconshire landowner, for his land in this county represented hardly a third of his acreage and less than a fifth of his rental.

Map 5 shows the location of the estates of three of Breconshire's landowners. At the top, we have the estate of the Fuller-Maitland family, who acquired land in northern Breconshire through marriage with the heiress of the Gwynnes of Garth. Although their Breconshire represented more than half the landed possessions of the Fuller-Maitlands, it was marginal to their interests, for three-quarters of their income came from their rich estate in Essex.

In the east was the estate of the Wood family of Gwernyfed, who acquired it through marriage with the Williams family, descendants of Sir David Williams (died 1613) who built up his estate using the wealth he secured through his successful career as a judge. Again, Breconshire was not central to the interests of the Woods, for they possessed a rich estate at Chertsey in Surrey.

In the southwest was the estate of the Williams family of Penpont, an amalgamation of the lands of a number of old Breconshire families, including the Gamses of Newton. As their Penpont estate represented almost 90% of the Williams family's land and income, they were Breconshire's best example of a long-established landed family whose interests were centred upon the county.

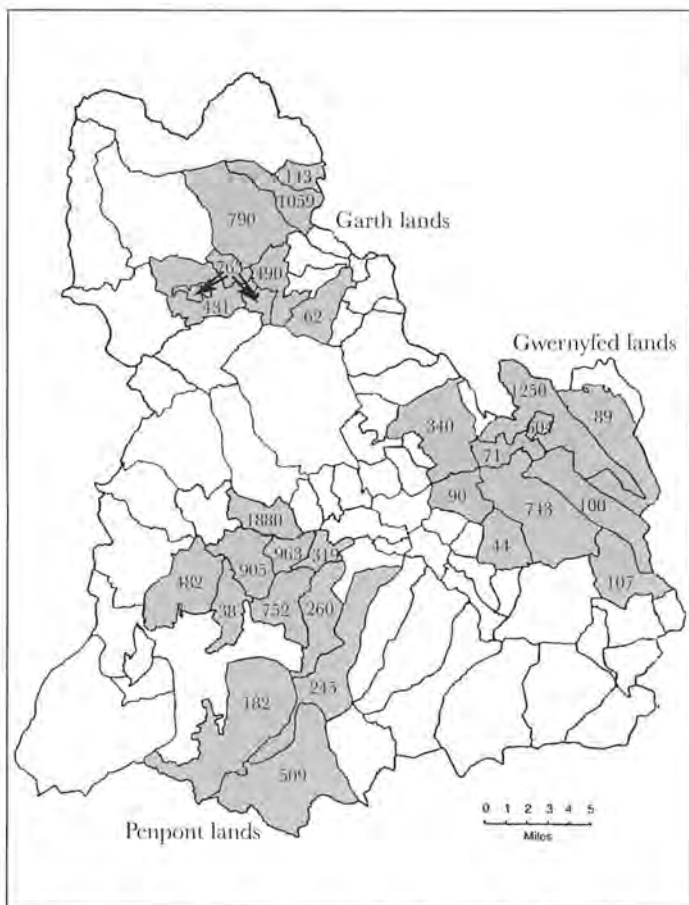
Map 6 shows the location of the remaining three estates owned by families which produced MPs for Breconshire or Brecon in the period 1750 to 1885.

In the centre and the north lay the lands of the Watkins family of Penoyre, whose estate owed its origins to land accumulation by a rich seventeenth-century Brecon lawyer, Penoyre Watkins, originally from Llanigon.

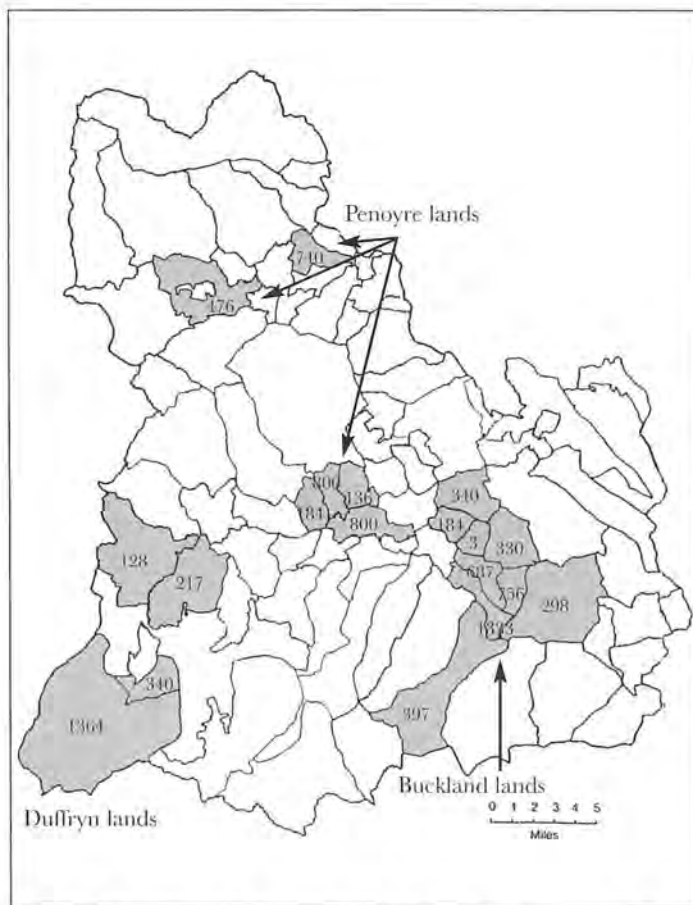
In the east lay the estate of the Gwynne-Holford family of Buckland. It represented the lands purchased by the Gwynne family from the Joneses of Buckland, who had accumulated land in Breconshire from the early seventeenth century onwards. Although half the family's land was situated in Breconshire, by far the greater part of the Gwynne-Holford income came from Glamorgan. In 1922, the Buckland estate was sold to Henry Seymour Berry, who was raised to the peerage as Baron Buckland of Bwlch in 1926. In 1929, he died after being thrown from his horse, shortly before he was to open this museum. A ruthless asset stripper, so disliked was he by the members of the Cardiff Stock Exchange that they considered raising a monument to the horse.

In the southwest lay the estate of the Gwyn family of Dyffryn, near Neath. Although the Gwyns owned Abercrave House in the parish of Ystradgynlais, they were essentially a Glamorgan family, their Breconshire lands representing a northern extension of their substantial holdings in the Neath valley.

These families, despite the fact that many of them had English names, were almost all essentially Welsh, the English names having come in through marriage with Welsh heiresses. This is one of the main factors which distinguishes the Land Question which loomed large in late nineteenth-century Wales from that



Map 5 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Fuller-Maitland family of Garth, the Williams family of Penpont and the Wood family of Gwernyfed.



Map 6 Acreage of Breconshire lands of the Gwyn family of Dulfryn, the Gwynne-Holford family of Buckland and the Watkins family of Penoyre.

which, at the same time, loomed even larger in Ireland. Most of the landed families of Ireland were members of an English Ascendancy imposed upon the country following the confiscation of the lands of the native Irish. In Wales, on the other hand, almost every landed family held its land by virtue of descent from native Welsh stock. Even that quintessentially English aristocrat, the duke of Beaufort, held his estate in Breconshire because he was descended from William ap William ap Thomas of Raglan, one of the main patrons of the bards of fifteenth-century Wales. The major exception was the Bailey family of Glanusk, but they made up for their lack of Welsh ancestry through an enlightened contribution to Welsh studies, in particular the splendid Glanusk edition of *A History of Brecknockshire* (1900–1930), the work of Breconshire’s chief gift to Welsh history, the incomparable Theophilus Jones.

Having mentioned Breconshire’s ten largest landowners and those landed families who had held the county and borough seats, it could be considered that that completes a survey of the Breconshire’s landed class. That, however, would be misleading, for there were other families, who, although not in Breconshire’s top ten in terms of acreage or had not provided MPs for the county or the borough, had large holdings in other counties and therefore played a role in this county greater than that which their Breconshire holding would suggest. Chief among them were the de Wintons of Maesllwch, Radnorshire, owners of an 9,900 acre estate, 2,458 acres of which lay in Breconshire. In addition, there were their kinsmen, the de Wintons of Maesderwen, who also owned a substantial estate in the county. Mention should also be made of that ancient aristocratic family, the Viscounts Hereford of Trecoyd south of Hay, of Crawshay Bailey of Maindiff Court, Abergavenny, of the Watt family of Doldowlod, Radnorshire, and of the Ashburnham family, who through a marriage in 1677, had acquired the lands of the Vaughan family of Porthaml. Furthermore, as the chief interests of most of the major landowners of Breconshire lay outside the county, leadership of the county’s elite devolved upon owners of smaller estates, perhaps the most prominent of whom were the Lloyds of Dinas, owners in 1873 of an estate with a rental of £1,269 – the family which produced Sir John Lloyd, whose commemorative lecture I am honoured to give tonight.

The precise acreages provided by the Return of Landowners of 1873 may give the impression that the structure of landownership in Breconshire was at that time set in stone. Thus would be highly misleading, for in this county, as in all the counties of Britain, that structure was always in a state of flux. Failure of heirs, financial difficulties, the desire to sell off outlying land in order to consolidate estates, and sales by small freeholders seeking to share their assets equally among their children meant that, throughout the nineteenth century, there was a lively land market. As we have seen, the Glanusk family was able, between the 1830s and the 1870s, to purchase 14,000 acres of land in

Breconshire. The difficulties of the Ashburnham family led to the disposal of much of the old Porthaml estate and there were other families too who were obliged to dispose of some of their ancestral lands. Yet, until the later nineteenth century, a lively land market served to increase rather than to reduce the property owned by the landed elite.

Change is observable from the late 1880s onwards, when the *Estates Gazette* begins to note that, when auctions occurred, an increasing proportion of the farms on sale were bought by their tenants. The pace of change accelerated in the early years of the twentieth century. The extensive range of Breconshire sale catalogues in the National Library contains those relating to the disposal of a large part of the Glanusk estate in 1906, of much of the Garth estate of the Fuller-Maitlands in 1910 and of the sale of virtually all that had survived of the Ashburnham estate in 1913. The war years saw vaster disposals of land, with 1915 being a particularly dramatic year – the year in which the duke of Beaufort sold virtually the totality of his Breconshire estates and in which Lord Tredegar auctioned off much of his land around Brecon.¹⁰ Such sales are usually ascribed to death duties, but those duties, first introduced in 1894, were initially not onerous, representing as they did a tax of 8% on an estate worth £1 million pounds. The true reason for the willingness of landowners to dispose of their lands was given in 1894 by Joseph Bailey – later the first Baron Glanusk – in his evidence to the Royal Commission on Land in Wales in its meeting at Crickhowell. He claimed that his annual return on his land represented hardly more than 1% of its capital value. ‘I would have been better off by £200,000’, he declared, ‘had I put my money into government funds.’¹¹ Other evidence points to the same conclusion, the major Cardiff auctioneer D. T. Alexander noting in 1913 that ‘the landowner is selling because he has come to the conclusion that it is better for him to invest his money in something more lucrative’.¹² However, land had always produced a poor return on capital compared with other forms of investment, but in an era when the possession of land provided virtually the only route to political power and when it bestowed unique social prestige upon its owners, the non-economic returns outweighed this disadvantage. By the end of the nineteenth century, that era had come to an end. This was particularly true in Wales, where virtually no major landlord was elected to Parliament following the widening of the franchise in 1884.

The experience of the First World War, when death duties became far more onerous and when the value of land soared but net rentals declined, made landowners even more anxious to sell. Between 1918 and 1922, the floodgates opened; in those four years, at least a quarter of the land of Wales changed hands. It became increasingly usual for landlords not to auction their farms but rather to sell them privately to their tenants. Thus in 1920, when 72 lots of the Glanusk estate were disposed of, 50 were sold privately to the tenants.¹³ The

following year saw the final extinguishing of the Morgan estate in Breconshire, an extinguishing symbolized by the sale of the Tredegar estate office in Brecon.¹⁴ The market became increasingly sluggish with the onset of depression – in 1935, for example, the disposal of the Buckland estate produced very disappointing results for the heirs of the Berrys¹⁵ – but from the Second World War onwards, the pace of land disposal has ensured virtually the extinction of the pattern of landownership which had prevailed two generations earlier.

But if the landlords had ample motives for selling, had tenants ample motives for buying? There is much evidence that where the landowner was benevolent, the majority of tenants preferred to remain tenants rather than risk the hazards of a rigid mortgage. As Joseph Bailey pointed out in 1894, tenants preferred to be part of large rather than small estates,¹⁶ and this was particularly true on those estates where agricultural rents could be kept low because the landlord could draw upon industrial income. Yet, the selling of a farmer's home and livelihood to an unknown purchaser was naturally viewed with alarm. The worst eventuality was a purchaser himself intent upon making a career in farming, for that meant eviction. When, as in the mid nineteenth century, there was a steady demand from purchasers seeking to acquire entire estates, a sale was not preceded by a general issuing of notices to quit, for those purchasers did not want untenanted holdings. With the decline in demand from such purchasers, the issuing of notices to quit became virtually universal, for the price received would be higher if the vendor could offer vacant possession. Thus, the selling boom created a deep seated sense of insecurity among farmers, especially when sales proved to be protracted – indeed, there were cases where tenants were living under the threat of a notice to quit for as long as twelve years. Thus, the fundamental reason for the purchase of their holdings by tenants was their craving for security of tenure.

The consequences of the end of the great estates were manifold. Some of them are a matter for regret. There was a significant architectural loss. Thomas Lloyd in his *Lost Houses of Wales* (1986) lists a number of demolished country houses in Breconshire, among them Glanusk Park, its neighbour, Dan-y-parc, Buckland and Tregunter. The deflation which accompanied the interwar depression played havoc with those who had bought their holdings at high prices during the immediate post-war boom. The massive contraction in the availability of farms to rent coupled with the huge inflation in the price of land in the years since the Second World War means that no-one without access to large sums of money can consider a career in farming – a marked contrast with the estate era, when people with virtually no capital could, as tenants, begin to climb the agricultural ladder. Furthermore, estate officials, in seeking tenants, are concerned to attract those who have knowledge and experience of local conditions, for landowners have a permanent interest in the condition of their

land. Sellers have no such permanent interest and are only concerned with securing the highest price. Therefore, sellers of land scour a far wider area when seeking prospective buyers than do landowners when seeking prospective tenants. As a consequence, local people can be priced out of any hope of remaining rooted in their ancestral communities, an issue of increasing concern over almost the whole of rural Britain.

Nevertheless, in these democratic and egalitarian times, the vast gulf between the wealth and status of a landowner and those of their tenants – the rich man in his castle and the poor man at the gate – is surely indefensible. There is much evidence of a settled will in the countryside in favour of the transfer of land from landlord to cultivator, a settled will symbolized by the enthusiastic cheering of neighbours when a tenant succeeded in buying his holding and by the firm tradition that there were few crimes more heinous than for a neighbour successfully to outbid a tenant intent upon buying his farm. As T. J. Wheldon, grandfather of the distinguished broadcaster Sir Huw Wheldon, put it in his evidence to the Select Committee on Town Holdings in 1887: ‘By paying a rent to his landlord, a tenant satisfies his conscience, but by buying the freehold, he feels himself a nobler man. The one would be an act of justice, the other would be an act of joy to him.’¹⁷ A similar sentiment is expressed by a country poet, William Roberts, in about 1900:

‘Rhy ddrud, ddywedsoch, am bedwar cant,
Tyddyn fy ngeni a chartref fy mhlant.
Nid prynu yr oeddwn ’rhen fur a’i do
Na’r tipyn daear o’i amgylch o.
Rhy drud, ddywedsoch, am bedwar cant,
Tyddyn fy ngeni a chartref fy mhlant.’¹⁸

What, therefore, did he believe he was buying – this thing that had no market price? Was it his own personal freedom? Or was it – and the warm approval of its neighbours suggests that it was – something of community significance? May I suggest that he was entering at last into his inheritance, that he was committing an act of atonement?

JOHN DAVIES

NOTES

A version of this study, relating to Wales as a whole, was published in the *Welsh History Review*, vol. 7, no. 2

¹ 'I know that her *guerin* own not a furrow of her, and the Welshman is but a pilgrim on the land of Wales' (J. Morris-Jones, *Caniadau* (1907) p. 2).

² *Agricultural Returns*, 1887, pp. 80–81.

³ *Agricultural Statistics*, 1970–71, p. 92.

⁴ Calculated from *The Return of Owners of Land*, Parliamentary Papers (1874), vol. LXXII. See also Ashby, A. W., and Evans, I. L., *The Agriculture of Wales* (1944) and Thompson, F. M. L., *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (1963) pp. 32, 113.

⁵ Clapham, J. H., *An Economic History of Modern Britain* (1938), vol. III, p. 534.

⁶ Lloyd, J., *The Great Forest of Brecknock* (1905); Rees, W., *The Great Forest of Brecknock* (1966).

⁷ *Estates Gazette*, 8 October 1910. All statistics in this article relating to overall estate acreages and incomes are based upon Bateman, J., *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*; first published in 1881, the volume consists of a reorganization and refinement of the material published in *The Return of Owners of Land* of 1873.

⁸ 'The Llangattock Parish Scrap-book', *Brycheiniog*, vol. VIII (1962) p. 107.

⁹ See Phillips, R., *Tredegar, The History of an Agricultural Estate, 1300–1956* (1990).

¹⁰ *Estates Gazette*, 27 November 1915; Phillips, R., *op.cit.*, pp. 244–45.

¹¹ The Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, *Evidence*, vol. III (1895), p. 767.

¹² *Estates Gazette*, 1 February 1913.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 13 November 1920.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9 July 1921; Phillips, R., *op.cit.*, pp. 245–46.

¹⁵ *Sale Catalogue*, Buckland, 1935 (National Library of Wales); see also the *Brecon and Radnor Express*, June 1935.

¹⁶ The Royal Commission on Land in Wales and Monmouthshire, *Evidence*, vol. III (1895), p. 753.

¹⁷ *Parliamentary Papers* (1887) vol. XXII, p. 220.

¹⁸ Four hundred, you say, is more than the worth/ Of the home of my children, the farm of my birth./ It wasn't the roof or the walls I was buying/ Or the piece of land around them lying/ Four hundred, you say, is more than the worth/ Of the home of my children, the farm of my birth.

BEATING THE BOUNDS: PERAMBULATIONS OF THE MANORS OF TRETOWER AND CRICKHOWELL IN 1863 AND 1864

PROLOGUE – THE OLD CUSTOM

‘The priest of the parish with the churchwardens and parochial officials headed a crowd of boys who, armed with green boughs, beat with them the parish borderstones. Sometimes the boys themselves were whipped or violently bumped on the boundary stones to make them remember. The object of taking boys was to ensure that witnesses to the boundaries should survive as long as possible . . . A parish-ale or feast was always held after the perambulation.’¹ This description of ‘beating the bounds’ of a parish is one of many, for this very ancient custom had innumerable variations of detail in different places. There was also a religious dimension to the event. It took place in Rogation week and the clergy accompanying the boys were supposed to beseech divine blessing on the land for the ensuing harvest – though the blessing was officially prohibited during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

For the chapelry of St. Mary, Brecon, in 1819, observance of the custom was an earnest and dignified occasion. Immediately after Divine Service the Archdeacon and Vicar of Brecon, accompanied by churchwardens and a great number of parishioners, proceeded to the church porch, where a Collect, the Lord’s Prayer and Psalm 130 were read and sung; then the procession moved through the streets of Brecon and into nearby meadows, the Vicar reading Collects and Psalms as they went. Reading and singing also took place at various points en route – until back in the church porch thanksgiving was said, and the whole ceremony concluded with a prayer and a blessing. An account of this particular occasion was written by the Vicar and put into the front of the parish register, where it was found in the 1980s.²

Practically speaking, the perambulation of a piece of land was undertaken to determine, confirm and perhaps enforce its boundaries. In ancient times it was essential. How could a tribal chief, a petty king or a conquering Norman knight keep his lands free of intruders if he did not patrol them? At the end of a war – most wars were about the possession of land – some boundary must be agreed, and marked, to ensure the peace. Anglo-Saxon charters contain perambulations as part of written conveyances of land.³ But it is the beating the bounds of ecclesiastical parishes, small and large, which are the best known today; and were perhaps the most practised in early times long before there were maps. Then the custom, with its bumpings and whippings and feasts – all good aids to memory – was intended to protect the parochial land; but it also promoted a sense of communal identity among the parishioners, reinforced by initiation of the young, who were their future on this earth.

Manorial perambulations served the same purpose as ecclesiastical ones, without the religious element. They might be made round the whole manor, or parts of it and could cover much larger areas than a single parish. In a borough it would have been relatively easy to fix boundary points, such as a house, bridge or wall, but in the countryside different landmarks had to be used. Oliver Rackham, in *The History of the Countryside*, writes that perambulations described in Anglo-Saxon charters ‘conduct us through a familiar world of rivers, mill-streams, ditches, hedges and hedgerow trees, roads, lanes, paths, bridges, heaths, thorns, small named woods, stumps, pits and old posts’, and concludes that England has altered surprisingly little in the last thousand years.⁴ In a Welsh mountain landscape the courses of rivers and streams, the valleys, the springs, rocks, boulders, stones flat and upright, marked and unmarked, singly or in piles, were the boundary markers of the uplands, and many – less surprisingly – survive today.

Descriptions of perambulations are few in Breconshire records at the National Library of Wales. (Of nineteen documents in the Manorial Documents Register eight refer to Tretower or Crickhowell manors.) Parish walks may have been perfunctory or, more likely, too well known and often repeated to have been considered worth recording in detail. But among the Badminton collection are records of the 8th Duke of Beaufort’s manorial perambulations for Tretower in 1863 and Crickhowell in 1864.⁵ They have been transcribed for this article, and appear as Appendices, together with a fold-in map showing the routes taken (Fig. 1). Tretower manor forms the western part of the Duke’s territory in this area, comprising the parishes of Llanfihangel Cwmdru and Llangynidr, and Crickhowell manor the eastern part, comprising the parishes of Crickhowell, Llanbedr, Llangenny, Partrishow, Llanellay and Llangattock. The two perambulations together encircle both manors, covering a total distance of some forty-five miles. The boundary between the manors was not included, an indication that the Duke was concerned only with boundaries which separated him from neighbouring manors owned by other landowners.

At a time when tithe maps recording parish boundaries were available for this area, and considering that the Dukes of Beaufort had for centuries made their own estate maps, one has to ask why these perambulations were undertaken at all? The manor boundaries were the same as parish and county boundaries in the area, but while central government determined those boundaries for purposes of civil administration, manors were the responsibility of individual landowners and their boundaries were determined by deeds or by whatever ancient rights were recognised. The value of land in areas of south Wales being mined for coal and iron rose enormously in the nineteenth century, so that the Dukes of Beaufort, and landowners like them, could increase their incomes accordingly. Grazing rights of manorial owners and tenants were also tenaciously

guarded. Just where the boundary lay could therefore become a matter of dispute if its position were not mutually agreed.

The Tretower and Crickhowell perambulations of 1863 and 1864 were well publicised and the occasions were popular, judging by the number of people who attended. They were led by Henry Maybery of Brecon, steward of both manors. The routes had evidently been inspected in advance, for where the boundary was uncertain or obliterated one or more local men met the perambulators to show them where the route had been – some drawing on childhood memories to do so. Some people just appeared at various points and joined the group for part of the way. Not least important were the supplies of food and drink provided. On the appointed day the participants assembled at a given point. The Tretower perambulation covered some twenty-five miles, and was spread over two days. On the first day a crowd of fifty-four people, ranging in age from nine to eighty-five years, turned up at the starting point on Cwm Banw brook, to set out over the mountain, to finish near Llangynidr village. On the second day thirty-six people started from Llangynidr on a thirteen-mile trek, up Cwm Crawnon, over four miles of moorland to the southern part of the parish, where they picked their way through industrial spoil left by mineworks in the region, and across waste ground, following the courses of streams. The perambulation ended in Beaufort town.

The Crickhowell perambulation of the following year was organised on similar lines, and also took two days. Henry Maybery's description of it contains a lively narration of incidents occurring en route and comments on some of the participants. No doubt he was inspired by the presence of the Duke of Beaufort himself, accompanied by four young sons, on the first day. It must have been a special occasion, as His Grace did not attend any later perambulations, nor did any of his eminent neighbours attend these events in person. The account portrays a mood of deferential festivity, animated by moments of humour, with hearty cheers at suitable places. Twenty-nine men and boys started from the same point on the Cwm Banw brook as in 1863, but they headed east, then south, flanking the Sugar Loaf mountain and finishing by the river Usk at Glangrwyney (thirteen miles). It was a stifflingly hot, airless day in August, and their progress up Cwm Pitt dingle (1,000 feet to the brow of the hill) was arduous and proved a trial of endurance to older perambulators. The ascent, the steward grimly recorded, was 'to be long held in remembrance'. But the Duke, keeping them all in sight, rode his horse round one side of the hill and then right up to the top to show his sons the line of the boundary from there. By the time they had all descended to the Grwyne river the four young lords, who had been 'somewhat tested' by pangs of hunger, borne 'with the greatest fortitude', could hardly wait to sample the 'ample provisions' awaiting the whole company. After the meal the steward proposed a toast to the health of the Duke, accompanied by cheers, which His Grace graciously acknowledged.

Feasts were a traditional part of beating the bounds, as a reward, some have said, for attendance. Less attractive were the harsh methods employed to instil in young minds the memory of boundary markers. On the Tretower and Crickhowell perambulations gentler versions of whipping and stone-bumping were the order of the day – more as an acknowledgement of the custom, or a bit of fun perhaps, than a demonstration of the serious purpose of old. The Duke's agents lightly administered the 'reminders' of boundary sites, but things did not always go quite as planned. On the Tretower walk a small boy on being touched lightly with a rod burst into tears and had to be comforted with a present. On the Crickhowell perambulation, in the presence of the Duke, a certain Thomas Watkins had the novel idea of commemorating the occasion by dipping boys' heads in a well. But when he seized one of the young lords for the purpose – not knowing who he was – he committed an enormous social gaffe which caused him utter confusion and embarrassment before the Duke, with profuse apologies, amid great hilarity among his companions. The Duke pardoned the unlucky man 'with all possible marks of kindness and good humour' and the young lord vowed to forget the occurrence; but the steward noted that 'this event most probably will effect what was required.' (The account of this incident seems to imply that the Duke's sons were not mounted on horseback, nor were they wearing clothes which would make them easily distinguishable from the other boys.)

On the second day of this perambulation the journey started at Beaufort town and ended near Crickhowell. Twenty people set out and many more joined on the way. For the most part the boundary ran over upland waste, with cinder tips and quarries, but there were a number of public houses en route. At Brynmawr they were greeted enthusiastically by 'a great concourse of people' primed with ale; but elsewhere the boundary line was disputed by representatives of the Earl of Abergavenny, who owned the adjoining manor. Eventually they descended to the river Usk near Gilwern, where a few of them dashed into the river on horseback and rode upstream to where the perambulation ended.

Perhaps this day was best remembered by Lord Arthur Somerset. His father the Duke had sent him to join part of the Tretower perambulation the previous year, at the age of eleven. This year he was accompanied by his father and brothers on the first day, but on this second day he was the only family member present, slogging over the cinder tips with the rest and watching the boundary disputes. At the last feast, held by the roadside, this 'embryo orator' of twelve years old proposed a toast to their manorial neighbour the Earl of Abergavenny, 'in a truly noble and gracious manner'. The toast was 'rapturously received', and a laudatory report sent to his father. For all the young lords this 'beating the bounds' excursion was not just a school holiday trip but a practical demonstration of a manorial landowner's responsibilities and demeanour

towards his tenants. It was part of their initiation into their adult world, a much wider world than that of the country boys, but as traditional, full of social imperatives and long-held customs, and sometimes more perilous than being bumped or beaten on the manor boundary.⁶

Manorial perambulations on the scale and for the purposes just described are rare today. They would no longer be needed to clarify existing boundaries, even in a mountainous area such as this, and the identity of the manor as a social community is all but defunct. In some places however, especially parishes and old boroughs, the custom has persisted, or been resurrected. A search on the Internet revealed some quaint and attractive examples of present-day celebrations. In Dorset, boys' memories were encouraged by cakes thrown down the hill for them to run after and scramble for. In Devon, they 'made a shout'. At Rochester, Kent, beating the bounds required a boat to carry the Mayor of Medway, as Admiral of the river, to trace the boundary down the centre of the estuary. At Richmond, Yorkshire, every seven years, halberdiers and sergeants-at-mace lead an eighteen-mile walk, and the water bailiff strides out into the river Swale. Then a horse race takes place.

Wales has its share of perambulatory festivities. In Newport, Pembrokeshire, youngsters are beaten only 'symbolically' at one place in beating the bounds. Laugharne's 'famous Common Walk is held every three years, being over twenty miles long and led by the Portreeve and Aldermen of the Corporation. Many places mentioned in the Charter of 1291 granted by Sir Guy de Brian are retraced.' Residents of Crickhowell and Llangattock parishes recall expeditions to beat the bounds in the 1950s, when as children they were members of Sunday school or a church choir. Crickhowell choirboys used to climb up to the Darren in their surplices, skirts hitched up round the waist, to sing hymns and recite prayers for the occasion. An entry in the parish magazine for June 1959 reads as follows: 'It was a perfect evening when we set off, a large crowd of children and the Rector, and the climb to the Darren was wonderful. We were welcomed at the Darren by three ladies, and we were joined by two men. Prayers were said for the parish and the youngest boy and girl, Richard Webb and Jennifer Davies, duly bumped on the boundary cairns . . . Two prizes will be given for the best essays written by those who took part.' Perhaps the most celebrated event of 2003 was that of the old Glamorgan borough of Llantrisant, when on Saturday 7th June five hundred people beat the bounds of the area granted to the freemen of the town for trading by a fourteenth century charter. Parts of this event were filmed by B.B.C. television as a news item, showing a colourful cheering crowd of men, women and children parading the streets, with balloons and a band, waving excitedly at the cameras – and an anxious small boy being cautiously lowered onto the town's 'bumping stone'. The Clerk of Llantrisant Town Trust, whose grandson had the 'honour' of being the first boy to be bumped, explained to the

interviewer, 'he was picked up by two men, one by the shoulders and the other by his feet, and his backside was bounced on the stone . . . They used to do it quite hard because they always said a bit of pain helped the memory go a long way . . . I do know some of the old men here who still remember the pain of it . . . but it isn't done as hard as that now . . .'

THE PERAMBULATION ROUTES

The boundaries of Tretower and Crickhowell manors perambulated in the nineteenth century were old: exactly how old is impossible to determine. But we can speculate. The manors themselves date from soon after the Norman conquest, when they were part of the larger lordship of Blaenllynfi.⁷ As already mentioned, they encompass a group of ecclesiastical parishes whose outer boundaries are the same as those of the manors. The parishes themselves (except Crickhowell) bear the names of Celtic 'saints' – Christian missionaries – and came into being before the Norman invasion, during the fifth to eighth centuries.⁸ Nineteenth century perambulators, then, walked along boundaries perhaps a thousand years old. Parochial land in the Breconshire countryside usually stretched up from a river valley, where the church was, to the upland where it met the bounds of another parish, usually rising from the other side of the mountain. This means that the perambulation routes were often not on well-trodden tracks to anywhere, they were rough going over sometimes featureless country. The northern boundaries of the manors penetrate the Black Mountains, the summits of which run in a series of broadly rounded ridges north-south, a direction which coincides only at intervals with that of the manor boundaries. As a result only short stretches of these boundaries run along mountain ridges; usually the perambulations progressed in a series of ascents and descents over them. Boundary stones were the main if not the only markers in this high region, but lower down the courses of mountain streams were used where possible. South of the river Usk boundary stones were also used on Mynydd Llangynidr, but then the route follows first the Rhymney then the Sirhowy rivers in the upper part of their courses until they meet other streams running in approximately the desired direction (west-east). East of Brynmawr a variety of markers – stones, farmsteads, fences, quarries – were resorted to on difficult ground.

The Dukes of Beaufort had been great landowners in south-east Wales for five centuries, and their manor boundaries must have been perambulated on innumerable occasions. There are no detailed records of the routes before 1863 (unless some are as yet undiscovered among manorial court documents), but there are indications elsewhere that the practice went back much further. One of the earliest surviving surveys of the manors, in 1587,⁹ combines written

descriptions of the boundaries of high commons and rural parishes with maps of tenements in the lower, agriculturally richer land beside the river Usk and its tributaries, where most people lived. By the mid-eighteenth century the population had increased, and a set of maps of the manors by Meredith Jones, commissioned in 1760,¹⁰ show many more tenements, in particular along the southern boundaries of Tretower and Crickhowell manors. In the north, where the boundaries met Dinas manor and where there are no settlements, Sir Edward Williams, lord of Dinas, had made his own survey in 1759, in which the boundary stones on this part of the boundary are numbered on the map.¹¹

The Duke of Beaufort and Sir Edward Williams were not the only landlords to commission estate maps at that time. Many other Welsh landlords were doing the same; indeed, very few estate maps were made before 1750.¹² The need to record individual tenements in this way, with acreage, boundaries and type of land, arose from the unsatisfactory nature of written descriptions, at a time when land was becoming more valuable. The growing population had spread into areas previously uncultivated, and landlords realised that some of their land could bring vast profits because of the presence of minerals, especially coal and iron. Already in the 5th Duke of Beaufort's 1760 map of Blaen Ebbw in Crickhowell manor there is a note of an area of 'about ten acres destroyed by the coal and mine work'. A little later the presence of coal on the southern boundary near what is now Brynmawr gave rise to a dispute between the Duke and the Earl of Abergavenny, who owned the adjoining manor of Abergavenny (in Monmouthshire). Edmund Jones, historian of the parish of Aberystwith, wrote in 1779 that this boundary was shown by 'a small ditch of running water and by certain landmarks which parts it from the parishes of Llangattock and Llanelly in Breconshire. About these landmarks there hath been some disputes between the inhabitants of both counties'.¹³ The Breconshire rector of Llanbedr, Henry Thomas Payne, observed in 1806 that 'about twenty years ago a misunderstanding having subsisted between the Duke of Beaufort and the Earl of Abergavenny respecting those parts of the Boundaries designated Y Groes Blaen y Llamarch and Maen y Tarw, it became necessary to institute an enquiry into the circumstances of the case'.¹⁴ Rather than go to court the two manorial lords decided to settle the matter between themselves.¹⁵ Each chose an arbitrator, and the two men met at The Bear, Crickhowell, with one agent of each manorial lord, on four occasions between May and July 1783. They heard depositions from local inhabitants from both manors as to where they thought the boundary was. Many witnesses were described as yeomen, some in their seventies claiming recollections up to fifty years previously. An 'Opinion' was drawn up, to which both arbitrators contributed. It describes a walk over the disputed area, the 'Monmouthshire men' going where they claimed the boundary to be, and the 'Breconshire men' doing likewise. Needless to say, in ascertaining the reliability of

evidence the two arbitrators sometimes came to different conclusions. Some farmers were anxious to assert that the digging for coal on their own land had stopped at the boundary; others asserted the contrary. One finding was that boundary stones had been moved.¹⁶ Two maps of the route from Beaufort to Gilwern show the areas of dispute (totalling 56 acres – a significant amount if minerals were present), one stating that the boundary was finally established by survey in 1792.

The ironworks of South Wales were becoming important. By the mid-nineteenth century the Duke of Beaufort's Tretower and Crickhowell manors were surrounded by the property of other landowners (Fig. 1), who derived a considerable part of their income directly or indirectly from the coal and iron industries. Dinas manor was owned by Sir Joseph Russell Bailey;¹⁷ the manors of Blaenllynfi and Pencelli were the property of the Gwynne-Holfords;¹⁸ short stretches of land in the south touched on land belonging to the Marquis of Bute¹⁹ and Lord Tredegar;²⁰ and in the south and east there was a long border along the lands of the Earl of Abergavenny.²¹ This was a clutch of very wealthy landowners, most owning 20,000 – 30,000 acres in Wales, from which they derived annual incomes ranging from £20,000 to more than £200,000.²²

The southern parts of Tretower and Crickhowell manors ran along about nine miles of the northern edge of a strip of land stretching from Hirwaun to Blaenavon which was valuable because it contained the minerals essential to the production processes, most of which were taking place further south. The Dukes of Beaufort did not exploit these minerals themselves, but leased the land to others, very profitably.²³ Only two ironworks were built on the Duke's southern manorial boundaries of the perambulation. The Union ironworks, in the far south-western corner of Tretower manor, was built about 1800, but was amalgamated in 1825 with the newly-formed Rhymney Iron Company on Bute land downstream.²⁴ The Beaufort ironworks was established when the land was leased to the Kendall family in 1779,²⁵ and was still in production in 1864. There was new and thriving industry but much of it was situated further south and beyond the Duke's manors because there was more space on the lower land to build larger works for more modern methods of ironworking. Despite the upheavals in the landscape the manorial steward was able to perambulate most of the southern boundaries by following boundary streams, the only problem being minor tiffs with the Earl of Abergavenny's men over the boundary stones in Crickhowell Manor which had been disputed in the previous century.

* * *

The documents describing the 1863 and 1864 perambulations have been transcribed in full as Appendices to this article, for the reader to enjoy. The

routes were easy to map, not just because they follow parish boundaries but because many of the boundary markers and streams are still visible. Henry Maybery (a descendant of the family who founded Brecon ironworks the century before²⁶) wrote a very clear account of the proceedings, and there are many details of local interest, for example the name, age, and place of residence of each participant is given, which has enabled us to discover their occupations, family and sometimes size of farms, from Census records. But because these expeditions had a specific and limited purpose, much is left out which one might hope to find included, and other things are not explained. The following commentary, therefore, is intended to highlight or to explain only a few aspects or features of the walks which might be of interest.

THE TRETOWER PERAMBULATION took two days, with a day's rest in between. Among the participants on the first day were a number of farmers and sons of farmers, some of whom had properties of 100 acres or more in the Usk or Rhiangoll valleys. Their interest in the perambulation probably concerned grazing rights on the mountain, in particular possible trespass of the boundaries by grazing animals from adjacent manors in areas not well defined. Such problems were not uncommon, but there is no mention of difficulties on these perambulations.

The route started over a high area of the most northerly part of the manor, with steep climbs and descents, an area which is known today to be peppered with prehistoric settlements sites, some only recently discovered and recorded.²⁷ But the perambulators were concerned with much later and more prominent evidence of land ownership: eighteenth and nineteenth century boundary stones. Walkers today may be intrigued by small, round-headed stones on the bare mountain, looking rather like tombstones, above Cwm Banw (Plate 1) where Tretower manor meets that of Dinas, and likewise on the Crickhowell manor boundary to the east where it too meets the manor of Dinas. Neatly incised on some stones are dates and the names of Williams, Macnamara or Bailey. These stones bear witness not to a frontier battle between manorial lords but to events concerning the ownership of Dinas manor. Sir Edward Williams, whose ancestors had been great landowners in Breconshire for centuries, had been forced by debts to sell his Llangloed estate (which included Dinas manor), in 1796. The purchaser was a John Macnamara Esq., of London, and the sale took a remarkable thirty years to complete. The legal convolutions of that sale have recently been the subject of a study by Rob Adams, who describes the whole process as Dickensian.²⁸ Newly-established, the Macnamaras were a colourful couple, and tales about them attracted travel writers seeking to put local colour into their impressions of this wild and beautiful region.²⁹ The perambulators of



Plate 1 Boundary stones on Pen Twyn Glas. Pen Allt-mawr in background.

By kind permission of Chris Barber.

1863 and 1864 saw only that Mrs. Macnamara had planted stones in her own name (John Macnamara died in 1818) firmly next to those of the adjoining manor, asserting her rights against the inheritors of Sir Edward (who had also died). But after winning their case in 1828, the Macnamara family enjoyed possession of their lands for scarcely twenty years. In 1847 Sir Joseph Bailey, ironmaster turned landowner, bought Llangoed and Dinas, adding the property to his purchases of land around his new house at Glanus. His grandson Sir Joseph Russell Bailey put up boundary stones bearing his own name and the date of his grandfather's purchase of Dinas. He also sent representatives in 1863 to meet the Beaufort party at the boundary, where courtesies were exchanged.

On the second day of the perambulation the changes in landscape would have been startling to anyone unacquainted with the area. For the first four miles, up Dyffryn Crawnon, they passed farms with crops in the valley and pastures on the hill slopes. The valley is narrow and steep-sided, a classic example of a U-shaped glaciated valley, and at the end towers a cliff, where the geology changes dramatically. Hitherto the perambulation had been entirely on old red sandstones, but up this cliff are bands of limestones, the broadest of which at the top continue along the northern edges of Mynydd Llangynidr and Mynydd Llangatock but are overlaid by millstone grits further south. Near the cliff top, round a curve and over a waterfall, ran the Brinore tramroad. Horse-drawn trams ran on a plateway over rough mountain territory with dangerously steep gradients, between Rhymney and the canal at Talybont-on-Usk, via Trefil, carrying wood and limestone one way and coal and iron the other. The tramroad was an ambitious enterprise, built in 1815, but by 1863 it had become redundant and was about to close.³⁰

After a glance back at the valley, golden with corn 'ripe for the sickle', the party reached the top of the cliff and followed a line of boundary stones south across a high, undulating plateau, with wide vistas, rocky outcrops, shake holes and swallow holes, patches of bog, and stretches of heather turning purple in August. This was the Duke of Beaufort's grouse moor, a sporting playground for generations of dukes and their friends (and probably a reason why they made Llangatock Park house a summer residence). About a mile to the east of the boundary, in a sheltered spot by the Trefil brook, is the Duke's Table, a circular stone, now turf-covered, with a bank round it on which to sit and a space dug out between for the ladies to place their feet to avoid revealing their ankles. The Duke and his entourage had their picnics here when grouse shooting. A tiny stone-lined leat took water from the stream to a stone basin where the dishes were washed. It is said that the Duke employed quarrymen as beaters on his shoots.³¹ These nineteenth-century gentlefolk disported themselves in an area rich not only in geology but in prehistory – did they know it? – ancient settlements, stone circles and bronze-age cairns, three of the latter quite near the picnic site.³²

Also on the moor is a large cave, called *Ogof Fawr*, or *Stabl Fawr*, for animal shelter. Today it is known as the 'Chartists' Cave', recalling the dramatic events of the 1830s, of which the Duke and his fellow landowners would have unhappy memories.³³

After going south for about two miles, the boundary turns sharply south-east. There is no mention of this change of direction in the perambulation document, but on maps is written '*Odyn Fach*'. In 1587 it was described as a 'great limekiln'.³⁴ The rocks here are at the southern tip of a tongue of limestone reaching south into an area of millstone grit, which could have been used by people living in the valley further to the south, most likely for agricultural purposes. The next place mentioned in the perambulation document is *Rhyd-y-milwr*, (the warriors' ford) not far from the source of the *Rhymney* river. Nearby is *Traed-y-milwr* (the warriors' 'tread'). Both are in 'ancient' writing on early maps, the latter also described as 'supposed site of battle'. These names have inevitably given rise to much imaginative speculation. In his book on the early history of *Sirhowy* and *Tredegar*, *Oliver Jones* quotes from earlier 'historical' accounts, innocent of evidence but fun to read.³⁵ It is clear that the 'visible impression' of the 'footmarks of horses, cows, calves and men' recorded by the manorial steward are a natural phenomenon caused by water erosion.

From here is a steep descent down the *Rhymney* stream to its junction with *Nant Melyn*. On the right bank was the *Glamorgan* land of the *Marquis of Bute*, on the left were *Beaufort* smallholdings. The first, *Pyllau-duon*, ('black pools' or 'black pits', the name may refer to 'thin coal' in the area) is one of several recorded in the volume of estate maps of 1760. It then consisted of 81 acres, characterised by large rounded fields up to the edge of the open mountain. Some of these field boundaries can still be found on modern *Ordnance Survey* maps, though the farm itself is derelict. Further down, past three more farmsteads, the perambulators came to the south-western corner of the manor, at the junction of the *Rhymney* stream with *Nant Melyn*. In 1760 this corner contained a smallholding with a patchwork of fields, arable and meadow. The track by the house later became part of a turnpike road, and by 1863 the fields by the stream had been taken over to build the *Union Ironworks*, which had flourished, then declined and by 1840 had ceased working, leaving derelict or ruinous buildings and a mass of industrial spoil.

The perambulators may not have noticed the old ironworks, but they could not fail to see the changes in landscape which now put obstructions in their path. Turning east to follow the *Nant Melyn* ('yellow stream'. There are four streams of that name along this strip of land, two of them on this perambulation; the name probably refers to water tinted yellowish by ironstone in the vicinity) they immediately met a road over the stream, which passed through a culvert. Two young men from *Blaen Rhymney* were there to climb up the bank and confirm

the route. Next they had to negotiate the industrial spoil left from the old ironworks, the presence of which had diverted if not hidden the course of the water in a number of places.

Throughout their journeys through the southern part of both Tretower and Crickhowell manors the perambulators had to go round or over large quantities of industrial waste, described as 'cinder tips' in the perambulations. It must have been dirty and unpleasant work after the green farmlands and the high grouse moor. At various points they were joined by men living locally, most probably ducal tenants, who showed the way. Among others they met David Williams of Llechryd, a timberer, and Lewis Powell of Dukestown, a mine and housing agent. Also among the perambulators were farmers who had smallholdings along this southern boundary of the manor. The estate map of 1760 shows houses located by the streams, where the land was comparatively fertile, with fields used for arable and hay, while the rougher land up the mountainside was pasture. Unfortunately it was the fertile lower land which was taken for industrial purposes. Fast-flowing water was needed to power the ironworks, which were therefore located on the streams' banks, and a railway was built for transporting industrial products. Thus the best land on the farms was lost, leaving the occupants with fewer acres of poorer land higher up the mountain. These mountain smallholdings, probably never very profitable, must scarcely have offered even a subsistence living by the time of the perambulation. Their tenants probably had incomes no higher than the wages of the low paid industrial workers not far away, and their work was hardly less gruelling. Yet, far from rising in revolt, these tenants paid tribute to their lord, cheering as they paused on a cinder tip to drink his health – unaware that a long era of lords and manors with a pastoral tenantry was coming to an end, fast disappearing under the advance of industrial and social revolution.

After passing near Brynbrith pond (in 1760 Brynbrith was a smallholding with 80 acres) to Nant-y-bwch, then to the Sirhowy river, the party reached the junction with another Nant Melyn, up which they turned. Immediately on their right, on the other side of the stream was the Sirhowy ironworks, then in full production. The tremendous noise, smoke and dust from the huge works must have made a considerable impression. On the Duke's side of the stream, opposite the ironworks, was a place called Scwrfa (the name means a place for scouring ironstone from the surface, using water). In the vicinity on the Duke's land was the Duke's Pit, claimed to be the first deep pit to be sunk in Wales, and Dukestown, where workpeople lived.³⁶ The perambulators would have crossed near or even over 'Star Field' where in 1839 Chartist leaders had addressed enthusiastic supporters from all parts of the coalfield. The manorial steward made no reference to the industrial surroundings through which they were passing. But a little further on, he conceded that this Nant Melyn 'had been

much altered in late years, deviations through houses and gardens and some buildings pointed at us where the course of the brook ran and in other parts is now concealed by The Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway now in progress'.³⁷ The perambulators negotiated more cinder tips, and traversed Rassau (a name derived from water-races for scouring). The walk ended at a bridge immediately below the new industrial town of Beaufort, where the gallant company gave 'long and hearty and lusty cheers' for the Duke, the Duchess and their sons the Marquis of Worcester and Lord Arthur Somerset.

THE CRICKHOWELL PERAMBULATION, 16th and 18th August 1964

Almost exactly a year after the Tretower perambulation Henry Maybery, the steward, now aged 58, set out from Cwm Banw to perambulate Crickhowell manor, accompanied on the first day by Henry Charles Fitzroy Somerset, 8th Duke of Beaufort, on horseback, the Duke's sons, Henry Adelbert Wellington Somerset, Marquis of Worcester, aged 17 (later the 9th Duke of Beaufort), Lord Henry Somerset, aged 14, Lord Arthur Somerset, aged 12, Lord Edward Somerset, aged 11, and by his solicitor, Charles Baker esq., two of his agents and their clerk, the superintendent of police of Crickhowell, and a number of local farmers, agricultural labourers and boys.

The Duke, then aged 40, had been living at Badminton since his succession to the dukedom in 1853. Before that he had followed in the footsteps of his renowned ancestors by having a military career. He married at 23, having proposed in truly romantic style at Badminton in a thunderstorm. He and his wife led a 'normal army life, often in much discomfort, with 4 rooms for themselves, two baby boys and their nurses, which did not prevent them from entertaining'.³⁸ After his retirement to Badminton he became 'the best-known sporting figure in England, and extravagantly popular with every class'. His horses had much success on the racecourse and he himself was 'a marvel on the hunting field'. The year before this perambulation he had gone wolf-hunting in France with twenty-five couple of hounds, eighteen horses, two carriages and a baggage cart, and brought home a wolf. So an outing on horseback round the boundary of one of his manors was no doubt a sedate pleasure, taking him over his grouse moors above Cwm Banw, followed by provisions for a feast – throughout his life he enjoyed entertaining – with his tenants, among whom he was personally popular for his generosity and his charming manner.

Some account of the day has already been given earlier in this article. They were joined by the agents of Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, lord of the manor of Dinas, for part of the way. There was much hill climbing, on a hot day. Lower down small rivers were clear and unchallenged boundaries, and the wooded banks of the Grwyne Fawr afforded cool and sheltered places for a summer



Plate 2 The Eighth Duke of Beaufort (1824–1899) by Ellis Porter.

By kind permission of The Duke of Beaufort. Photographic Survey, Courtauld Institute of Art.

picnic. There seemed to be no problems and no need to summon local inhabitants to show the way. The land on this boundary contains no mineral deposits, so there were no cinder tips, and no representatives of the Earl of Abergavenny appeared. Attention was concentrated on the Duke and his sons, and on the feast, details of which unfortunately were not recorded.

Two days later another party, without the Duke but with Lord Arthur Somerset, set out from Beaufort on the last stage of these perambulations. Beaufort town was built on land previously a farmstead called Blaen Ebbw, to house the workers and to service the ironworks nearby. (The district was described as a 'hotbed of Chartism' in the 1830s.) By 1864 the Beaufort ironworks was the only ironworks on the boundary of Beaufort land in production. By then it was operated by the Baileys, but was soon to close. The core of industrial activity was moving south, here as in the upper Rhymney and upper Sirhowy valleys, leaving a wilderness of cinder tips, prills (little streams), waste land, the new Abergavenny and Merthyr railway, and an occasional farmstead with enclosures.

The Duke of Beaufort's men were accompanied by representatives of the Earl of Abergavenny, led by his steward, Richard Baker Gabb. The Earl's men made their own report of the journey,³⁹ and thus we have two accounts of the same occasion from different participants. The route was almost identical to the one agreed in 1792, but both reports refer to areas of dispute, though not in terms which might lead to a further altercation between the two landlords. As would be expected they differ in detail. For example, in the Earl of Abergavenny's document, the following incident is recorded. ' . . . at Wayn Pwll Dwr our attention was directed to a stone in Meadow Fence marked M [i.e. Monmouthshire] on the out and B [i.e. Breconshire, it being a county boundary as well as a manor boundary stone] on the inside. Edmund Evans (alias Edmund the Founder) was immediately sent for to account for this stone being in his fence. The stout true hearted old Welshman soon appeared and explained that as his fence was near the Boundary he had picked up and economised this stone for fencing purposes but had unfortunately so placed it that the M Monmouthshire appeared where the B Breconshire should have been. Mr Daniel Morris [clerk to the Duke's agents] sharply reprimanded him for doing that which he was cautioned not to do. Horsemen and Footmen gathered round and poor Edmund trembled at this sight of the whip and spur, however finally and much to his comfort it was agreed that he would reverse this stone and allow the B to appear on the proper side . . .'. As well as this glimpse of the way minor manorial officials dealt with erring tenants, the incident shows that some participants, probably officials or other important people, were on horseback, while the rest walked. The account continues with complaints from both parties that refuse and slag from the iron mines had been unfairly tipped on their territory by the other

party. However, 'near the Mountain gate above Ty Gwyn a very substantial luncheon awaited us prepared by the Duke of Beaufort', and when they arrived down by the river Usk 'adventurous spirits plunged into the river up to their horses' girths' but found the river too deep and had to join the rest 'proceeding quietly along the bank' to the end of the perambulation.

LATER PERAMBULATIONS

There were more perambulations in the following years (1871, for Tretower, 1872, 1885, 1892 and 1902 for Crickhowell⁴⁰) but they are less interesting. The text of the documents gives the impression that each was copied from the last, with different names and a few minor alterations. In 1902 the steward, R. H. A. Davies, was more meticulous than his predecessors in noting changes and in recording more of the boundary stones, as well as details such as the cost of refreshments, all done in an exercise book. One participant on that walk was Thomas Watkeys, aged 72, 'his third time round' on a mare aged 21 years. There is also a curious statement in the 1892 perambulation, that following the course of the Grwyne Fawr they went under the bridge at Pont Escob, but due to much rain, when they got to Craig-y-bwla bridge 'the river being in flood the flag was excused from going under the bridge'. What does this mean? Was there really a flag carried on these occasions, perhaps with the Beaufort arms upon it?

EPILOGUE – THE END OF AN ERA

The young Marquis of Worcester, who participated in the 1864 perambulation, attained his majority in 1868, an occasion of great celebrations in Monmouthshire, where the Duke was Lord Lieutenant. 'A public dinner and ball for the quality, boat races, sports, fireworks for the general amusement, and for the indigent, never overlooked by the Dukes of Beaufort, 2,500 loaves of bread, a ton and a half of beef and the customary ox.'⁴¹ The 'unbounded generosity' of the Duke was accompanied by his usual lack of thought as to whether he had the resources to pay. On hunting days he would give breakfast to a thousand people, and have four or five hundred for lunch. His interests were not limited to sport and entertaining. In the year of the perambulation he published privately 'An Account of the Progress of Henry the First Duke of Beaufort, as Lord President of the Council in Wales and Lord Warden of the Marches, through the Principality in 1684' from the original manuscript by Dinely (this five-week 'perambulation' was made not only to display the first duke's official status as Lord President but also to encourage expressions of Tory political loyalty.) Between 1885 and 1896 he published 'The Badminton Library of Sports and

Pastimes', a 28-volume work, some written by himself, which he explained in the Preface was a 'modern encyclopaedia in which the inexperienced man, who seeks guidance in the practice of the various British Sports and Pastimes, can turn for information.' It included volumes on golf, yachting, athletics and football, shooting, coursing, falconry, cricket, riding, tennis, boating, mountaineering, racing, billiards, driving, skating, hunting, big game hunting, fencing, fishing, archery, dancing, and 'The Poetry of Sport'. The Duke died in 1899. To some his death marked the end of an era.

In 1902 three young Somersets attended the Crickhowell perambulation: William Horace Boscawen Somerset, aged 21, Charles Henry Plantagenet Somerset, aged 17 and Noel Henry Plantagenet Somerset, aged 16. It looks as if this attendance by teenage sons was part of a family tradition. There is a small but delightful memento of this perambulation, namely a bill made out to the (9th) Duke of Beaufort by the Bear Hotel at Crickhowell (Plate 3), headed 'Boundary walking, 1902'. At the beginning of the second day of the perambulation, Thursday, 4th September, a brake with four horses (such a vehicle, a kind of waggonette with seats along the sides, might hold up to fifteen or twenty people) was hired to go to Abergavenny L.N.W.R. station, from which they could take a train to Beaufort, where the perambulation began. The steward noted in his exercise book that 12s. 3½d. was spent on rail fares. Of the 32 participants about six lived near Beaufort, and may have joined them for only part of the way. There were thirteen boys aged from nine to twenty-one years, including the three members of the Somerset family, and most of the rest were middle-aged officials. The party stopped at an inn called 'Josiah the Racehorse' for bread, cheese and beer, (2s.6d.) and again for lunch at 3.15 p.m. as they were descending the mountain, at or near the picnic place of earlier occasions. It was probably here that the meal provided by The Bear was consumed: beef (58 lbs.), cheese (10 lbs.), bread and pickles, washed down with ginger beer (3 dozen bottles, for the boys), ale (18 gallons, for the thirsty – including the servants who brought the feast up the hill?) and smaller quantities of stronger drink (no doubt for the worthies). The walk ended at 5.30 p.m., and another brake awaited them at Glangrwyney. The total cost of the previous day's boundary walking, entered on the bill, is only a little less, suggesting that the provisions were similar, though the steward noted that on that day 6s.6d. was spent on refreshments at the Bell Inn, Glangrwyney. At the end of the bill is a stamped acknowledgement of payment, dated 28th January 1903.

The 1902 perambulation may have been the last. In that year there occurred 'one of the greatest transfers of land ever seen in Wales, the liquidation of the Beaufort estates in Monmouthshire when over 27,000 acres were sold.²⁴² Sales of land were taking place all over Britain, as a consequence of, among other things, agricultural depression, falling land values and the introduction of death duties

His Grace The Duke of Beaufort.

THE BEAR,
 FAMILY & COMMERCIAL
 Hotel & Posting House,
CRICKHOWELL.

ABERGAVENNY ST. TELEPHONE 8 P.O.

J. W. ABERNETHY,
 PROPRIETOR.

1902 Boundary Walking

Sept 4.	Break 4 for Horses & L.T.W.			
	In Abergavenny	-	10	-
	Break 4 for Horses to			
	Langroyney	-	5	-
	58 lbs Beef	2	18	-
	12 loaves Bread	-	6	-
	10 lbs Cheese	-	6	8
	4 bottles Pickles	-	6	-
	18 gals Ale	1	16	-
	4 bottles Scotch Whisky	-	18	-
	2 do Sherry	-	10	-
	6 Siphons Soda	-	3	-
	3 dozen Ginger Beer	-	6	-
	Tobacco	-	2	-
	Use of Cutlery, Crystal			
	Plates Knives &c.	1	-	-
	Waiters		7	6
			<u>9</u>	<u>142</u>
" 3	Boundary Walking as per aff annexed		8	172
	Received cheque of			
	38th			
	18-11-12			
	J. W. Abernethy			
			<u>18</u>	<u>114</u>

Plate 3 Bill for refreshments, 1902 Crickhowell Perambulation.
 By kind permission of the National Library of Wales (Badminton II 6058).

in 1894. The extravagance of the 8th Duke had contributed to the sales of his own land, but considering that the Dukes and their forbears the Herberts of Raglan had been landowners here for five centuries, such a sale was breathtaking if not catastrophic. They were not alone. 'Between 1910 and 1914 every major landowner in Wales, with the significant exceptions of the giants of the South Wales coalfield, Tredegar, Bute, Talbot and Dunraven, sold some land.'⁴² On the 16th and 17th November 1915 the 9th Duke of Beaufort offered for sale a total of 3,300 acres of farms and smallholdings in Tretower and Crickhowell manors, in 87 Lots, including his country seat of Llangattock Park.⁴³ (The properties were not all sold.) The ducal shooting box, called Golden Castle, was also offered with the option of a 21-year lease of the shooting on the Duke's moors on Llangattock and Llangynidr mountain, comprising Trefil moors, Llangattock Hill, Pen Tir, Cwm Banw and Partrishow hills, an area of 20,000 acres, at an annual rent of £75.

The disposal of manorial properties had not happened all at once. The 8th and 9th Dukes had sold land in the manors to the Bailey family in the early- and mid-nineteenth century (ironically, in 1919 Lord Glanusk held a sale of some land he had purchased from the Duke only decades before), and properties were also sold in individual plots over a period of time. Crickhowell manor still exists today, but as a shell of its former self, with a Court Leet dealing mainly with matters concerning common land.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PAMELA REDWOOD (text);
MARTIN REDWOOD (research and map)

APPENDIX 1

Transcript of National Library of Wales Badminton Manorial 420, by permission. Square brackets [] indicate insertions, e.g. age, occupation and residence as recorded in the 1861 Census. They are not part of the original document. Spelling as in the original documents.

An asterisk * indicates a person also present in 1864 (Appendix 2).

Many of the places visited will be found on the map of Fig. 1. Others will be found on the current Ordnance Survey 2.5 inch map, and earlier 6 inch maps. A few remain unidentified.

THE PERAMBULATION OF THE MANOR OF TRETOWER as perambulated on Tuesday the 25th and Thursday the 27th of August 1863. Notice thereof having been advertised in the Brecon Journal of the 15th and 22nd of August and in the Hereford Times and Journal Newspapers on the 22nd and handbills thereof posted in all public places in and around the Manor and directed and addressed to the Lords and Stewards of the adjoining manors – present on the first day

Charles Baker Esq. Solicitor to His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, Lord of the Manor, aged 42.*

John Thompson of Badminton Esq., Agent to His Grace, aged 43.*

David Thompson of Llangatock Esq., Agent to His Grace, aged 37.
[Glannoney, Llangatock]*

George Morgan, Cwmdy, aged 58. [Post office, schoolmaster and ?registrar]*

George Powell, Llangatock Place, Esq. aged 43. [Landed proprietor]*

William Parry Esq., Tretower Court, aged 54. [Landed proprietor]*

Henry Herbert, Nantyeften, Cwmdy, aged 44. [Farmer, 51 acres]

William Chapman, Tyr Ash, aged 34. [Servant of William Chapman farmer, 88 acres, aged 69 in 1861]

Daniel Morris, Clerk to the Messieurs Thompson, aged 29. [Cwmnantgam, Llanelly, Mineral agent]*

Mr William Myrick, Clerk to Mr Pratt, Agent to Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, Baronet, aged 27. [John Pratt, 62, Estate Agent, recorded at Penydre, Crickhowell in 1861; William Merrick, 42, Land Agent, recorded there in 1881 census].

Thomas Parry of Llangunnider, one of His Grace's gamekeepers, aged 63.
[Cyffredyn Common, Woodward]*

John Williams, Panteg, Llangunnider, aged 51. [Farmer]*

John Parry, Cwmbanw, Llanigunnider, aged 38. [Shepherd]

Henry Parry, Llangunnider, son of the gamekeeper, aged 32. [Labourer]*

- Thomas Jones. Bwlch, aged 65. [Blaen-y-cwm, Farmer, 60 acres]*
 Ebenezer Rumsey of Tyn-y-wlad, Crickhowell, aged 62. [Son of widow aged 89, farmer 110 acres]*
 John Jones, Bwlch, aged 47. [Not found in Census]
 Philip Jones, Crickhowell, aged 39. [Silver Street, Agricultural labourer]
 William Phillips, Gaer, Cwmdu, aged 16. [Son of William Phillips, farmer, below]
 Philip Bevan, Cwmdu, aged 9. [Son of Philip Bevan, below]
 John Powell, Tretower Court, aged 17. [Son of Thomas Powell, aged 60, farmer, 150 acres]
 George Woolley, gamekeeper to His Grace, aged 23. [Brynair, Son of gamekeeper]
 John Phillips, Gaer, Cwmdu, aged 19. [Son of William Phillips, farmer, below]
 William Parry, Llangunnider, aged 25. [Agricultural labourer]*
 Thomas Games, Heoldra, aged 21. [Agricultural labourer]
 James Powell, Tretower Court, aged 15. [Brother of John Powell]
 Walter James, Cille Groyney fechan, aged 24. [Woodward]
 Thomas Jones, The Hermitage, Groyney fechan, aged 41. [Woodward]
 Charles Baggot, The Hermitage, age 39. [Gamekeeper, Allt, Pennorth, 1861]
 William Jones, Groyney fechan, aged 44. [Farmer, 25 acres]
 George Christopher, Tyr llys, Cwmdu, aged 37. [Son of William Christopher, farmer, below]
 John James, Ty-yn-y-airw, Groyney fechan, aged 14. [Ty-yn-y-cwm, son of John James aged 40, farmer, 30 acres]
 George Barnes, Llangattock, aged 44.
 John Pratt of Crickhowell, Esq. Agent to Sir Joseph Russell Bailey Baronet, aged [blank in document but aged 65 of Penydre, Crickhowell]
 William Williams, Groyney fechan, aged 62. [Not in Census]
 William Isaac, Penylan, Cwmdu, aged 26. [Farmer, 50 acres]
 Charles Watkins, Tyllyda Groyney fechan, aged 36. [Tyle da fach, farmer, 15 acres]
 William Phillips, the Gaer. [Farmer, 108 acres, aged 46]
 Benjamin John Davies, Glanusk lodge (Sir Joseph Russell Bailey's) aged 17. [Gamekeeper, and son of gamekeeper]
 Benjamin Isaac, Cwmgau, aged 17. [Son of William Isaac, farmer, 170 acres]
 Thomas Francis, Noyadd, aged 45. [Farmer, 300 acres]
 The Reverend John Howell, Llangattock. [curate, aged 31, nephew of George Howell, rector]
 Thomas Davies, Gilvach, Crickhowell, aged 19. [Not found in Census]
 The Reverend John Hughes, Rector of Saint Michael Cwmdu, aged 50.*
 Lord Arthur Somerset, aged 11. [Son of the Duke of Beaufort]*

- William Christopher, Tyr llys, Cwmdu, aged 78. [Aged 65 in 1861 Census, farmer, 160 acres]
- Henry Maybery of Brecon, Steward of the Manor, aged 57. [Probably the Henry Maybery JP who was Mayor of Brecon in 1847]*
- Edward Edwards of Cilwych, aged 85. [In 1851 Census aged 70, farmer 280 acres]
- David Richmond of Bwlch, aged 65. [Pentwyn, farmer, 20 acres]
- Samuel Wright, forester at Buckland, aged 40. [Heol y felin, Cathedin]
- James ?Jugo (Ings?), gamekeeper to Mrs. Gwynne Holford, aged 38. [Not in Census]
- Thomas Powell, Farmers Arms, Cwmdu. [Farmer, 68 acres]
- John Edwards Tyfrû, Cwmdu. [Ty fry, timber merchant]*
- Thomas Hale of Crickhowell, aged 25. [Not in Census]
- Edwin Price do 25. [Gwernvale cottage, general servant, aged 18 in 1861 Census?]
- Henry Earle do 14. [Not found in Census]
- Philip Bevan, Cwmdu, aged 45. [Six Bells, victualler]

We commenced at the Banw brook at the point where the parishes of Llanbedr, Saint Michael Cwmdu and Talgarth meet as also the Manors of Tretower and Crickhowell and Dinas and proceeded up this brook about 66 chains to a large stone upon which the Steward sat and it having previously rained the Steward took down the names residences and ages of all those present at the commencement of the perambulation and then present and where a suggestion was thrown out by Mr Myrick as coming from Mr Pratt the Agent of Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, the Lord of the Manor of Dinas, that it would be expedient and desirable that some definition inscription designating the stone to be the boundary of the respective Manors of Tretower and Dinas should forthwith be effected, a suggestion thought very reasonable and intended to be adopted. This large stone lies upon the right side of the brook proceeding upwards and facing the brook you have the declivity reaching down to the basis of Penallt Mawr. Turning our backs upon this stone we proceeded in a straight line at a right angle with the brook up to a small clump of hawthorn trees immediately above which there are two stones lettered one with 'Tretower M' on the northern side and the other with 'Mrs. Macnamara 1821' on the southern side.

Pursuing a straight course we shortly came to two similar stones and upon the brow of the hill we came again to two similar stones where Mr John Pratt the Agent of Sir Joseph Russell Bailey joined us from whence we took a straight course to the northward (Lord Arthur Somerset overtaking and joining us as we proceeded along) with here and there similar stones dotting the boundary line to a mound upon which there is a stone called 'Cerrig Clishon'. Thence we came to

two stones one with 'Tretower M' and the other with 'Sir Edward Williams' thereon dated 1759 . Thence down to a spring called Ffynon-y-pistill thence we went downwards along the course of a little brook called Cwmnantyrychan to the junction of the brook called Cwmnantyvedw, thence along the course of these waters under the bridge over which the road leading from Cwmdu to Talgarth passes to the junction of the Cwmnantyrychan with the Cwmdu brook. Thence up the Cwmdu brook to its junction with Sorgwm brook – Thence up the Sorgwm brook to Ffynon-keil-haul where we were joined by the party of James Price William Gwynne Holford Esq. and where the party of Sir Joseph Russell Bailey courteously left us (The Manors of Blaenllynvy, Dinas and Tretower meeting at this point).

We then proceeded in a straight line through two inclosures to the hill called Pentir. Thence up the course of a small prill of water to its source about the middle of the hill. Thence upwards to the summit and thence continuing the straight line to a mound there. Thence to Ffynon-ore spring where the initials 'D B' on the left hand side of the bridleway there and 'Bly' on the right hand side were discovered cut into the turf the letters 'D B' being renovated upon this occasion. Then taking the line of this bridleway gradually inclining to the south on the way having the like letters cut in the turf the letters 'D B' being so renovated to a wall recently erected and built being the boundary between the parishes of Cathedine and Saint Michael Cwmdu and continuing our course along the wall until the immediate descent to and through the lane leading to the Turnpike road from the town of Brecon to the town of Crickhowell at the top of Bwlch. Here Lord Arthur Somerset, the Reverend John Howell and Mr G.J. Powell left us.

Thence taking the road to Brecon for 30 yards more or less thence up the roadway ascent to the boundary of the parishes of Llansantfread and Saint Michael Cwmdu – Pursuing that roadway along the wall boundary of the parishes to a large inclosure still continuing the course of the wall downwards to the end of the inclosure. Thence taking a course along the angle of a field then in barley we went to a thorn tree in the hedge which was pointed out as the proper point of the angle. Thence continuing in a straight line down by the side of the hedge and crossing the drive belonging to Mrs. Gwynne Holford from Buckland to the Llangunnider road down in a straight line to the precipice overhanging the River Usk where the perambulation of the Manor of Tretower ceased for the first day.

On the 27th the Perambulation was resumed, there being present

David Roberts of Llangunnider, aged 42. [Coed-yr-ynys common, builder/
carpenter aged 38 in 1861 Census]

John Williams of Panteg. [see previous day]*

John Thompson Esq. [see previous day]*
David Thompson Esq. [see previous day]*
Daniel Morris, Crickhowell [see previous day]
John Watkins of Aberhoil, aged 35 [Farmer, 60 acres]
John Edwards Smith Llangunnider aged 45 [Blacksmith].
David James Tyr David Peter aged 34. [Ty Peter, farmer, 20 acres]
Thomas Jones Bwlch aged 63. [see previous day]*
John Jones, ditto aged 47. [Not found in Census]
Joseph Williams Pantypirey aged 29. [son of Thomas Williams, aged 63, farmer]
Thomas Williams labourer Llangunnider aged 50. [Not found in Census]
Richard Howells Blaen Rhymney aged 51. [Ty Isaf, farmer]
Edward Williams Blaen Sirhowy aged 51 [Not found in Census]
Thomas Parry. [see previous day]*
Henry Parry his son [see previous day]*
Thomas Davies Tailor Llangunnider aged 34. [Coed-yr-ynys common]
David Davies Hirgan aged 47. [Hirgan cottages, farmer, 14 acres]
Joseph Gibbs near Rhydyblew aged 47. [cottage, lower Rassau, coal mine contractor]
Richard James Robins Glanrhyd aged 38. [Farmer, 40 acres]
Charles Davies Blaen Sirhowy aged 50. [Garnddu farm, farmer, 20 acres]
William Jenkins Nantybwch Coedca(?) aged 50. [Ty Gwyn, farmer]
Morgan Jones Three Salmons Llangunnider aged 14 [scholar?]
Thomas Owen Torfach (White Horse) aged 54 [Not found in Census]
John Thomas Pwlyduon aged 73. [Farmer, 30 acres]
John Morgans, Tyr Morgan Howell aged 32. [Son of Mary Morgan, 62, Farmer, 32 acres]
Joshua Williams Coach and Horses Llangunnider aged 36. [Innkeeper]
William Prosser Beaufort Arms Llangunnider aged 55 [Innkeeper, Labourer]*
Charles Baker Esq. [see previous day]*
The Reverend John Hughes, Rector of Cwmdu [see previous day]*
Edward Edwards Cilwych [see previous day]
George Morgan Cwmdu. [see previous day]*
Edward Jones Bwlch aged 14 [Not found in Census]
James ?Jugo (Ings?) aged 38. [see previous day]
William Chapman Tyr Ash aged 34 [see previous day]
Henry Maybery Steward [see previous day]*

We commenced at the junction of the Crawnant brook with the river Usk and proceeding long the line of the hedge on the Llanthetty side of the brook. Up the same brook occasionally on both sides of the brook but generally on the Llanthetty side the whole of the brook being in fact within the Manor of

Tretower up to the Dandarren hill (where Mr Phillips of Cefn-crug aged 60 joined us, [not in Census]) near the summit of which the Brynore tram road passes along and under which tram road the little Crawnant brook pours in a cascade its large or small volume of water according to the season and where are seen to great advantage limestone cliffs having the appearance of fortifications frowning upon the golden valley below, an appearance which the valley presented to us at the time from the quantity of corn then ripe for the sickle. Thence proceeding in a westerly direction up the bank to a junction with two prills of water and from thence in a straight line from the fork of the two prills to the source of the Rhymney river along which are standing here and there at certain distances along the line stones lettered 'G H' on the northern side representing Gwynne Holford and 'D of B Tretower' representing the Duke of Beaufort as the Lord of the Manor of Tretower on the reverse or southward side – Arriving at the stones so marked at the head or supposed source of the Rhymney river we proceeded down its course the water disappearing under the ground being slightly visible here and there with similar stones marking the boundary and where approaching Rhyd-y-milwr we were joined by Mr Luard the solicitor and two or three others forming the party of those representing the young Marquis of Bute – Reaching Rhyd-y-milwr where there are visible impressions in the bed of the brook upon the rock of the footmarks of horses, cows, calves and men.

After partaking of the hospitable cheer provided by His Grace the party of the Marquis left us when we proceeded down the Rhymney brook or river to a point where the three counties of Brecon Glamorgan and Monmouth meet. Thence taking a straight line in an easterly direction Edward Howells aged 24 John Howells aged 26 and Thomas Morgan aged 35 of Blaen Rhymney climbed up the almost perpendicular bank and over which and across the road went in a straight line to a culvert through which the Nantmelin brook passes under the road there – Here we were joined by Mr Lewis Powell of Dukestown aged 60 [Greenfield cottages, mine and housing agent] who came seated upon a chair in a cart being unable to walk. Then the company proceeded up the Nantmelin brook pursuing its ancient course which from the cinder tips has been here and there diverted the course of the Nantmelin being formerly the visible boundary of the Manor of the parishes of Llangunnider and Bedwellty and of the counties of Brecon and Monmouth.

Passing over the tops of cinder tips and down along the ancient course of the brook where it is still maintained we reached the summit of one of the cinder tips where Richard Jones of the Nower aged 46 [iron worker in 1881 Census] and his two sons Thomas and David of the respective ages of 18 and 16 were called to us and who drank to the health of His Grace the Duke of Beaufort which was followed by loud and hearty cheers from all the Company. Thence up

the ancient course of the same brook near to Brynbrith Pond immediately before which we spoke to and were joined by David Williams of Llechryd aged 44 [timberer] Thomas Richards of Llechryd aged 32 [iron miner] John Collins of Twyncanno aged [blank] Thomas Williams then living above Rhymney aged 10 [son of William Williams, coal miner, of Hirgan cottages] upon whose shoulder Mr Baker gently let fall as a manoric remembrancer the small rod in his hand which alarmed the little boy his tears beginning to flow but which however were soon stopped by a kind present from Mr Baker. Thence we proceeded through a garden to the margin or bank of the Brynbrith pond where the boundary was there pointed out as in a line across the Brynbrith pond to a portion of the Brynbrith Buildings the house and the greater portion with but one unmentionable exception being all in the parish of Bedwelty in the county of Monmouth. We then continued the boundary of the two counties Brecon and Monmouth and came to a stone upon one side of the road with Rhydyblew thereon immediately below which David Herring of Nantybwhch aged 52 [farmer] joined us and pointed out the ancient course of the Nantybwhch brook which we had been following from its source as the boundary of the counties and which David Herring pointed out as formerly passing through an old covered and then shut up culvert under the road above his house there (and which house was in Monmouthshire) the brook having formerly run across the corner of his small garden and under the cinder tips there the top of which was walked down to an inclosure through a part of which about 30 or 40 yards from the roadside down to the junction of the Nantybwhch brook with the Sirhowy river. Thence down along the Sirhowy river to its junction with another Nantmelin brook at Sirhowy where we were joined by Joshua Jones of the Trevil Railway machiner aged 67 who there pointed out to us the bank upon which we were then standing as covering three of six houses he remembers there three of which are now there in a straight line from the brook.

Proceeding up the brook Nantmelin the course of which has been very much altered of late years deviations through gardens and some buildings pointed out as where once the course of the brook ran and which in other parts is now concealed by 'The Merthyr Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway' now in progress. Thence over cinder tips down to a brook called Rassa brook. Thence along that brook to a bridge immediately under Beaufort town the termination of the outer boundary of the Manor of Tretower where the parishes of Llangunnider Llangattock and Bedwelty meet reaching which long and hearty and lusty cheers were given for His Grace, one cheer for the Duchess, one cheer for the Marquis of Worcester, and one cheer for Lord Arthur Somerset, which concluded the Perambulation.

(signed) Henry Maybery, Steward of the Manor W. Baker, His Grace's Solicitor.

APPENDIX 2

Transcript of National Library of Wales Badminton Manorial 422, by permission. Square brackets [] indicate insertions, e.g. age, occupation and residence as recorded in the 1861 Census. They are not part of the original document. Spelling as in the original documents.

An asterisk * indicates a person also present in 1863 (Appendix 1).

Many of the places visited will be found on the map of Fig.1. Others will be found on the current Ordnance Survey 2.5 inch map, and earlier 6 inch maps. A few remain unidentified.

THE PERAMBULATION of the MANOR of CRICKHOWELL (of which His Grace the Most Noble Henry Charles Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort is Lord) as perambulated on Tuesday the 16th and Thursday the 18th days of August, 1864. Notice thereof having been advertised in the Brecon Journal, Hereford Times, and Hereford Journal, newspapers of the 6th and 13th days of August, 1864, and handbills thereof posted in all places within and around the Manor, and particularly directed and addressed to the Lords and their Stewards, and Agents, of the adjoining Manors --

Present on the 16th August 1864

His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, aged 40

The Marquis of Worcester aged 17

Lord Henry Somerset, aged 14

Lord Arthur Somerset aged 12*

Lord Edward Somerset aged 11

Charles Baker Esquire aged 43 solicitor to His Grace*

John Thompson Esquire aged 44 Agent to His Grace [Badminton]*

David Thompson Esquire aged 38 Agent to His Grace [Glannoney, Llangattock]*

Mr Daniel Morris aged 30 Clerk to the Agents [Cwmnantgam, Llanelly, Mineral agent]*

John George Powell Esquire aged 41 of Llangattock Place [Landed proprietor]*

Mr Ebenezer Rumsey aged 63 formerly of Tyn-y-wlad but now of Crickhowell
[son of widow aged 89 farming 110 acres]*

Mr William Christopher aged 68 Tyr-llys [Farmer, Cwmdu, 160 acres]

Mr George Morgan aged 59 of Cwmdu [Post office, school master and
?registrar]*

Mr John Williams aged 52 of Panteg [Farmer]*

John G. Morris, son of Mr Daniel Morris [aged 10 or 11 years scholar]

John Edwards aged 49 of Cwmdu [Ty fry, timber merchant]*

Thomas Jones aged 65 of Bwlch [Blaenycwm, farmer, 60 acres]*

Thomas Parry aged 64 of Llangunnider [Cyffredyn common, woodward]*
William Parry his nephew aged 26 [agricultural labourer]*
Henry Parry aged 33 Thomas Parry's son [labourer]*
Mr Edward Eldred aged 29 of Crickhowell [not found in census]
Mr Thomas Prothero aged 26 of Crickhowell [not found in census]
Mr William Parry aged 55 of Tretower [landed proprietor]*
Mr Henry Herbert aged 45 of Nantyffeen [farmer, 51 acres]*
John Lacey aged 12 of Crickhowell [Standard Street, son of John Lacey, smith's shop]
John Powell aged 15 of the Ffyddog [son of Thomas Powell, labourer]
Daniel Stice aged 12 of Crickhowell [not found in census]
David Evans Superintendent of Police at Crickhowell [Police Station, New Bridge Street, aged 39 years]
Henry Maybery aged 58 Steward of the Manor. [Probably the Henry Maybery JP who was Mayor of Brecon in 1847].*

We commenced at the Bannw brook, at the spot where the three parishes of Llanbedr, Saint Michael Cwmdru and Talgarth; and the Manors of Crickhowell, Tretower and Dinas meet, and were accompanied by Mr William Myrick, clerk to Mr Pratt agent to Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, Baronet, Mr Myrick attending on behalf of the Baronet – Taking the course of the brook downwards, we entered immediately enclosed lands, the little brook running through pasture, meadow and cornfields, and some distance below the Cwmbannw bridge, upon the Groyneyvechan road, where the Bannw brook empties itself into the Groyneyvechan brook; and from thence, up the Groyneyvechan brook to the Groyneyvechan mill, where we were joined by Captain Parkinson [Charles Parkinson, retired army captain aged 47] of Sunny Bank [now called Glangrwyney Court] the Reverend John Howell of Llangattock [curate, aged 32] and two lads from Crickhowell of the names of John Morgan, aged 11, and John Phillips, aged 10 [son of Thomas Phillips, gas stoker?], and soon afterwards by Mr Pratt – thence we proceeded along the Groyneyvechan river till we came to where the Nantyffeen brook empties itself into the Groyneyvechan, when we ascended through some thick underwood, following the course of the Nantyffeen brook up the Cwmpit dingle [named after Mr Pitt's land on the other side of the boundary in the manor of Dinas], to the open mountain, and thence ascending along the course of the brook to the summit or brow of the hill, very near to which is the source of the Nantyffeen, and lying by which there are two stones, one having 'Crickhowell M' upon it, and the other 'Mrs. Macnamara 1825'. The ascent up the Cwmpit dingle was a very severe task to some of the old perambulators, increased by the intensity of the heat then prevailing, not a breath of air stirring to give the party a momentary relief. This ascent will be

long had in remembrance. Seeing the perambulators ascending, His Grace (who had ridden along the side of the hill having them in full view constantly) went to the brow of the hill, where his four sons were, and bought them down to observe the line of the boundary up the ascent – The line however is very distinctly marked, even in a dry season, by the channel of the brook.

Previous to our arrival at the source of the Nantylfeen, we had been joined by Mr Thomas Watkins of Tyr ywen, who was very desirous that some notable commemoration of the spot should take place in the presence of all there assembled; and with that view, he took up a young lad, named Henry Lewis, and carrying him in his arms held his head downwards and dipped it in the well. Mr Watkins however, not content with this single instance of bodily commemoration, seized Lord Edward Somerset, intending to do the same with him, as he had done with Henry Lewis; but his lordship was too many for him. Mr Watkins, poor fellow, had no idea of the rank and quality of the young gentleman, that it was no less than a son of the Duke of Beaufort, he had carried in his arms; and much laughter was caused by his awestricken countenance, when informed who it was he had then just endeavoured to dip into the well – If possible he would have sunk into the earth, the perspiration streaming down his person, increased no doubt to a considerable degree by the warmth of the atmosphere. The apologies of poor Watkins to His Grace and the Noble Lords, were profuse, and were received with all possible marks of kindness and good humour; and although Lord Edward vowed he would not remember the occurrence, this event most probably will effect what was required.

We then proceeded up to another stone upon the open mountain about 70 yards further on, in a straight line, having ‘Crickhowell M’ upon it. Thence along a trench at the end of which were two stones one with ‘Mrs. Macnamara 1825’ upon it; the other with ‘Crickhowell M’ upon it. Thence at an angle in a southern direction for about 300 yards, or more, taking a sort of bridle way; along which we proceeded until upon a line with three stones, some 50 yards to the left, to which stones we descended one of which had ‘Sir Edwd. Williams Bart Lordship 1759’ upon it, another ‘Mrs, Macnamara 1825’ and the other ‘Crickhowell M’ upon it. Thence in an eastern direction to Blaen-cwm-frwd about 100 yards further to a stone at the top of the Blaen-cwm-frwd dingle, with ‘Crickhowell M.’ upon it. Thence down the dingle, following the course of a little brook there which Mr Ebenezer Rumsey informed us was never known to be dry, be the want of rain fell ever so much. At the bottom of this mountain dingle, on the roadway to Fforddlaes, we proceeded into the enclosed brake, following the course of the same brook to the junction with the Groyneyvawr river, where the party of Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, Baronet, the Lord of the Manor of Dinas, left us, and descending the said river, passing under the bridge at Pontyscib, we followed the course of the same river to Craig-y-bwla bridge [now called Pont

Newydd]. There we were met by the parties bringing the ample provisions ordered by His Grace. Most heartily were they welcomed; and by none more so, than by the young Lords, whose abstinence for some time previously has been somewhat tested, but to which they had submitted with the greatest fortitude, and good humour – His Grace here selected the place below the bridge, for the spread; and the calls of keen appetites were speedily attended to – Before rising the health of His Grace, was respectfully proposed by His Grace’s steward, and at the suggestion of Captain Parkinson rounds of enthusiastic cheers followed the toast – His Grace, with his usual urbanity and condescension, kindly acknowledged the compliment and expressed the gratification he felt, in having been attended by so many faithful and true friends, to whom he was obliged for the zealous exertions that day evinced.

We then recommenced the perambulation down the river to Craig-y-bwla mill, and thence up Cwmbwch dingle, near to the summit of the Sugar Loaf, where there are two stones denoting the boundary of the Manors. Thence, descending upon the opposite side, along the course of a little brook, called Cwmhaker [Cwm Gwenffrwd, corrected in later perambulation] and following the channel till the brook empties itself into the river Usk, which it does near the residence of Captain Parkinson called Sunny Bank; also near which there is a boundary stone upon the Brecon and Abergavenny road, having ‘Breconshire’ on one side, and ‘Monmouthshire’ on the other side, signifying the boundary line of the two counties. Here our perambulation for the day ended.

ON THURSDAY the 18th of AUGUST 1864, our perambulation was continued commencing at the point of the Ebbw brook, at Beaufort town, where the parishes of Llangattock and Llangunnider, in the county of Brecon, and the parish of Bedwellty, in the county of Monmouth, meet – there were present

Lord Arthur Somerset [see previous day]*

Charles Baker esquire [see previous day]*

John Thompson esquire [see previous day]*

David Thompson esquire [see previous day]*

Mr William Needham aged 49 of Beaufort [agent to J and C Bailey, owners of the Beaufort Ironworks]

Mr Joseph Needham aged 66 do [also agent, as above]

Mr Joseph Needham junior, aged 16 do [not found in census]

Mr John Lloyd aged 66 of Nantyglo [not found in census]

Mr Ebenezer Rumsey [see previous day]*

Mr John Edwards Ty frû [fry] Cwmdu [see previous day]*

Mr John Williams Panteg [see previous day]*

The Reverend John Hughes Rector of Cwmdu, aged 52*

Thomas Parry [see previous day]*

Thomas Jones Bwlch [see previous day]*

William Prosser Llangunnider, aged 55 [innkeeper/labourer]*

Henry Parry, Llangunnider [see previous day]*

Mr Daniel Morris [see previous day]*

John G. Morris son of Mr Daniel Morris [see previous day]

John Powell Ffyddog aged 15 [see previous day]

Mr Henry Maybery Steward of the Manor [see previous day]*

And very many besides joined out party in the course of our perambulation.

Before starting most of the party assembled at the Beaufort Arms, Beaufort, where we were met by John Berry Walford, and Richard Baker Gabb esquire, the Solicitors for the Earl of Abergavenny, and by Mr Henry Eden Sullivan of Abergavenny, who attended on behalf of the Earl as the owner of the adjoining Manor.

Following the downward course of the Ebbw brook, we came to the Beaufort Iron works, where the brook is arched over for a considerable distance; which tracing, as well as we could, from end to end, and thence continuing the course of the brook, we came to the mouth of a small prill, called Cwmgavilon, where the Manor of the Earl of Abergavenny commences.

We then ascended this little prill, marking its course as well as we could, here and there, where it made its appearance from under the cinder tips, up in the direction of cottages at the foot of an incline, and leaving these cottages about 60 links to our left, we thence ascended the incline, as high up as the little wooden office there erected for the Clerk engaged in regulating the working of the incline.

Here we waited a short time, to witness the ascent of an empty truck drawn up by the weight of a loaded truck, descending – From hence the mouths of several culverts over the Cwmgavilon became visible, and the course of the brook very palpable, along which we proceeded, reaching the summit where stands the Eagle Inn, kept by a person of the name of John Williams, and near to which, also stands, the Victoria Inn, kept by Francis Francis [aged 54]. (There is a small tunnel here through which the Abergavenny Tredegar and Merthyr railway passes.) Thence to a marked point in a fence on Waindeu farm; thence to a fence or earth bank, across the field, along which we went, following similar fences and earth banks, through several fields, for some distance; until we reached a small triangular inclosure, at the upper end of a piece of waste land – Just before we reached this spot we had been joined by the Reverend John Howell and Mr John George Powell.

This piece of waste land caused some little wrangling, a Mr Rogers [coal agent, aged 69], on the part of the Earl, giving some confused idea as to the

actual boundary; but which was ultimately settled, by the parties agreeing, that a roadway should be marked, by the Agents; and the middle thereof should be considered as the settled boundary line of the Manors. Thence in a straight line, to a boundary stone at the upper corner of Boundary Street, in the town of Brynmawr: where a large concourse of people was assembled, and being supplied with ale three hearty cheers were given for His Grace the Duke of Beaufort. (At this spot is the division of the parishes of Llangattock and Llanelly in the county of Brecon.) Thence along the Railway there to an inclosure, where there is a stone marking the line of boundary. Thence upwards, to the top of the inclosure, leaving a place called Twyn Blannant on our right. Thence to a stone, about 100 yards higher up, on the open mountain, called Tavern-maes-yr and sometimes called Tavern-y-garn. Thence in a straight line leaving Wayn-pwll-dwr on the right: and before which place there is a small inclosure – Thence outside this inclosure, to a small piece of other waste land, where a person of the name of Edmund Edmunds, 63 years of age [coal miner], a resident there at Wayn-pwll-dwr, met us, and walked the boundary for some distance; taking us to the corner of Mr Bailey's watercourse; agreeable with the knowledge and recollections of others, then present, who had previously perambulated the Manor. Thence by a small inclosure, thence over a little waste land up and across tips of cinder, by a little Public House, known by the sign and name of 'Josiah the racehorse' kept by Jane Williams: the place where it stands being called Llamarch. Thence across a small piece of waste land, to the 'Heath Bush Inn' kept by Zachariah Thomas [iron/stonemason]. Thence to a straight line across the waste land, following the ditch there, which is very visible; and crossing a mountain roadway, from whence a view is obtained of the Blaenavon Iron works. Thence along the same ditch, still upon the open mountain, to a quarry of iron stone, worked by the Clydach Company. Thence, taking an angle to a stone called Carreg maen tarw, where Joseph Jones of the Cwm, aged 13 years, the son of William Jones (who had been with us a considerable time) was by his father held with his head upon the stone and his legs in the air, Mr John Thompson at the time good humouredly giving him a gentle tap with his stick, on the usual unmentionable part of his body, and Mr Daniel Morris administering the like with his whip, to keep his mind in remembrance of the boundary line there of the Manor – Thence still upon the open mountain, in a line at a right angle (as expressed by Mr John Thompson and confirmed by Mr Daniel Morris) having the summit of the Sugar Loaf in full view in front of us, and in a short time descending to the Prince of Wales Public House, kept by William Awbrey. Thence leaving the Public house on the left, we ascended upwards, along waste land to a stone erected in the midst of other stones, upon a raised mound of earth, called Pen-carreg-llwyd thence downwards in a straight line to a stone called 'Carreg-pen-yr-heol-wyna' having the Gilwern village in full view below us

– Thence bearing off a little to the right, and at a small distance below, following a roadway, and taking a turn at the extreme bottom to the left, into a broad roadway or waste, with enclosures on either side, the field on the left side, in descending, having for some minutes occasioned some slight misunderstandings to the boundary of the Manor there; the same person named Rogers, having taken upon himself to walk down its centre, as showing where the boundary line ran, but which was repudiated and objected to, and for good reason too, the tenant producing a lease granted in 1769 for the whole field under His Grace; and to whom, and for which, he had for many years acknowledged suit and service, as Lord of the Manor of Crickhowell; while moreover, the appearance of the fence, and bushes around the field, bore the aspect of ancient growth and standing. Ultimately Mr Walford and Mr Baker Gabb, the Stewards and Solicitors of the Earl, with very good grace yielded all pretensions of title on the part of the Earl of Abergavenny, to any portion of the field; an announcement, which was received with a general cheer among the very many there assembled.

Near to the bottom of this broad roadway or waste, we all partook of such good things as were there provided for us by the hospitality of His Grace. The health of His Grace was proposed by his Steward and drunk with great enthusiasm, and to the great delight of the numerous party collected, young Lord Arthur, as an embryo orator, in a truly noble and graceful manner, proposed the health of the Earl of Abergavenny; a toast which was rapturously received; the more so from its having been proposed by young Lord Arthur. This circumstance Mr Walford promised to communicate immediately to the Earl, convinced that His Lordship would be highly pleased and delighted with the information.

When we all had sufficiently regaled ourselves, we proceeded (having crossed a road running at the bottom) down a narrow stony lane, called heol George, amid inclosures, in the direction of Aberbaiden; and crossing several fields, the canal, and passing through a culvert, which a little boy, of the name of Joseph Jones, aged 13 years, gallantly effected; to the astonishment and delight of those present. We ultimately reached the bank of the river Usk, on the eastern side of Aberbaiden house, where Mr Daniel Morris, and some few others, dashed into the stream on horseback; and thence taking the centre of the river upwards, came opposite the place where the Cwmhaker [Gwenffrwd] brook empties itself into the river Usk; and where, immediately above, on the Brecon and Abergavenny road, is erected a stone, with ‘Breconshire’ on one side, and ‘Monmouthshire’ on the other side: which completed the boundary of the Manor of Crickhowell.

[Signed] Henry Maybery

Steward of the Manor

NOTES

¹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th edition, 1929, Vol 3, pp. 964–5.

² From a transcript kindly lent by Olive Bacon. A similar perambulation was held on the following day, 1st June, of the upper division of St John the Evangelist, described in Walker, M. 'The Priory church of St. John Evangelist 1782-1808', *Brycheiniog*, XXVIII, 1995–6, p. 124 and 123 (feast).

³ Rackham, O., *The History of the Countryside*, 1986, p. 9.

⁴ Rackham, O., *op. cit.* p. 10.

⁵ N.L.W. Badminton Manorial, nos. 420 (Tretower 1863), 422 (Crickhowell 1864).

⁶ As was customary at this time, the Duke's sons served in the army. Lord Arthur was educated at Eton, and served with the Royal Horse Guards 1869-1883. He was in the Nile Expedition in 1884–5, and present at the actions of Abu Klea and El Gubat, where he was slightly wounded (Medal with 2 clasps). He was Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales, 1885–9, and Deputy Lieutenant of Wiltshire. His brothers also attended Eton and the Marquis of Worcester and Lord Edward served in the Royal Horse Guards. Information from Badminton Archives.

Lord Henry attempted to follow a political career, but failed to win a seat in Parliament. He is still remembered as a songwriter. Two of his songs *Echo* and *A Song of Sleep* have recently reappeared on a CD *More Songs My Father Taught Me*.

⁷ The early Welsh kingdom of Brycheiniog had probably been divided into three cantrefs before the Norman conquest, with Talgarth cantref including as its southern half two cwmwds or lordships, Ystrad Yw Uchaf and Ystrad Yw Isaf, which later became the manors of Tretower and Crickhowell. Rees, W., *An Historical Atlas of Wales*, 1951.

⁸ 'The ancient parish was the community which, by payment of tithes and other obligations such as Easter dues, supported a priest in the parish church, who in return was responsible for the cure of souls, that is the spiritual needs of all the inhabitants within the parish community.' Winchester, A. *Discovering Parish Boundaries*, 2000, p. 11 and pp. 86–7. This does not say how parish boundaries were first established. The earliest extant list of parishes is the Papal Taxation of 1291, which does not give boundaries, though Winchester suggests that the stability of parishes from then to the nineteenth century can be attributed to the assiduity with which the parish priests, and later owners, guarded their right to take tithe.

⁹ The Survey of Crickhowell and Tretower manors of 1587 (NLW Badminton 3) gives lengthy descriptions of the boundaries of the commons of Llangattock and of Llangynidr. See also Lloyd, John, *Historical Memoranda of Breconshire*, Vol. 1, pp. 31–2, 'Welsh Penkelly' in 1898, and Vol. 2, p. 121. 'Tallachduy' in 1765. There are other perambulations in Brecknockshire in the Manorial Documents Register of the Historical Monuments Commission. For an authoritative account of manorial perambulations in Wales, see Watts, H. *Welsh Manors and their Records*, NLW 2000, pp. 89–90 and 92–3.

¹⁰ N.L.W. Badminton no. 14. Volume of estate maps made for the Duke of Beaufort by Meredith Jones 1760.

¹¹ N.L.W. Breconshire MSS Estate Maps, PE 1267.

¹² N.L.W. *Estate maps of Wales*, 1982, pp. 8-9, and Thomas, H.M. *A catalogue of Glamorgan estate maps*, 1992, pp. 2–4.

¹³ Jones, Edmund, *The History of Aberystwith, 1779*, facsimile edition, 1988, p. 11.

¹⁴ Payne, Henry Thomas, *Parochial Notices of the Deanery of the third part of Brecknock*, 1806, pp. 189–90. Powys County Archives, A104/1/1.

¹⁵ N.L.W. Badminton, 11,660-3. (c. 1780–1790). Depositions, opinions etc. relating to the boundaries between the lordships of Crickhowell and Abergavenny, cos. Brecs. and Mon. 11,666-7. 1792 and n.d. Plans of the boundary line dividing two manors between the Duke of Beaufort and

the Earl of Abergavenny in the parishes of Llanelly, Llangattock, Llanwenarth, and Aberystroth in cos. Brecs. and Mon.

¹⁶ N.L.W. Badminton, 11660 records Carreg Pont Evan (at Clawdd-y-mwyn) as being moved, and Carreg Croes Blaen Llamarch as being a stone added in about 1770 and perhaps also being moved. Henry Thomas Payne (Note 14) records Carreg Maen y Tarw as having 'been moved by the Monmouthshire Commoners thereby defrauding the parishioners of Llanelly of about 24 acres of pasturage and making a still more important transfer of the subcumbent strata to the injury of the noble Duke. Similar frauds had been practised upon the Common of Blaen y Llamarch'.

¹⁷ Sir Joseph Russell Bailey (1840-1906) was a prominent local landowner, Lord Lieutenant of the County and 2nd Baronet. He was the grandson of Joseph (later Sir Joseph) Bailey (1783-1858) who as a young man had come from Yorkshire to work at Cyfarthfa ironworks, owned by his uncle. He bought Nantyglo ironworks in 1811 and Beaufort ironworks in 1833. Having amassed a large fortune he set about purchasing estates in Breconshire, Radnorshire, Herefordshire, Glamorganshire, etc., including Glanusk Park, where he lived after his retirement in 1830. His grandson inherited the title of baronet, continued purchases of land, and became Baron Glanusk in 1899. He was also responsible for a new edition of Theophilus Jones's *History of Brecknockshire*, enlarged and updated, published after his death. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, 1959.

¹⁸ Jones, Theophilus, *History of Brecknockshire*, Glanusk edition, Vol.3, 1911, p. 213. Pencelli manor comprised five lordships, extending from the river Taf nearly to Brecon. See Lloyd, John, *Historical Memoranda of Breconshire*, 1903, Vol I, pp. 130-54.

¹⁹ The 3rd Marquis of Bute (1847-1900) was the son of the 2nd Marquis of Bute called 'the creator of modern Cardiff', who had so much to do with the rapid growth, commercial and otherwise, of Cardiff and surrounding districts during the first half of the 19th century. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, 1959.

²⁰ Phillips, R. *Tredegar: the History of an Agricultural Estate 1300-1956*, pp. 23-54.

²¹ The Rev. William Nevill, 4th Earl and 18th Lord of Abergavenny (1792-1868) succeeded his brother in 1845. The family seat was at Eridge Castle in Sussex and most of his lands were in England.

²² James, Brian Ll, 'The great landowners of Wales in 1873', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 1966, Volume XIV/3. This article gives a list of 'great landowners' who had estates exceeding 3,000 acres and a rental of at least £3,000 p.a. in respect of their estates in Wales alone. The figures are based on the Return of owners of land of 1873.

²³ Jones, Theophilus, *History of Brecknockshire*, 1898 edition, p.408, states concerning Llam-march that the Duke of Beaufort received from these and other mines in the neighbourhood 'near £2000 p.a., which did not produce him 20 years ago above £60 annually'. This was written in 1805.

²⁴ The Union Iron Works, as it was known, was partly in the county of Breconshire and the property of the Duke of Beaufort, part in the county of Monmouthshire and the property of Mr Glover, and part in the county of Glamorgan and the property of the Dowlais Company. It was working from about 1802. In 1825 it was amalgamated with the Bute Works newly formed on the other side of the Rhymney river to become the Rhymney Iron Company. Work was suspended at the Union Iron Works by 1840. Sources: Lloyd, John, *The Early History of the South Wales Iron Works*, 1906, pp.130-5, and Lewis, Samuel, *Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, 1840, (under Llangynidr, no page nos.)

²⁵ Lloyd, J., op. cit. pp. 178-82. states that the Beaufort Ironworks was one of the earliest to be established in the region. It was built on land leased in 1779 by the 5th Duke of Beaufort to the Kendall family, a lease covering almost all the waste lands in the parishes of Llangattock and Llanelly, 'with liberty to erect a furnace or furnaces . . . and to make ponds and railroads' including 'all coal and iron ore, lime and clay'. By the end of that century the Beaufort ironworks was in full production, but the Kendalls, who had been good paternalist employers, sold the business in 1833

to Joseph and Crawshay Bailey, who were not. From then on the ironworks was run in conjunction with Nantyglo ironworks, making a considerable profit, but it closed in 1872 following a depression in the iron trade. See Gray-Jones, A, *A History of Ebbw Vale*, 1970, pp. 70–5.

²⁶ Jones, Theophilus, *History of Brecknockshire*, Glanusk edition, Vol. 4, 1930, pp. 266–7.

²⁷ *Archaeology in Wales*, Vol. 41. pp. 108–9, gives an account of new sites recorded 1998–2000.

²⁸ Adams, R. 'Fishing in troubled waters – the purchase of the Llangoed estate', *Brycheiniog* XXXV, 2003, pp. 71–100.

²⁹ Massingham, H. J., *The Southern Marches*, 1952, pp. 21, 119; Malkin, B. H., *The Scenery, Antiquities and Biography of South Wales*, 1804, pp. 250–3.

³⁰ Brinore, an anglicised version of Bryn Oer, refers to an area of coal production on the watershed between Tredegar and Rhymney. After Rhymney abandoned Trefil in 1852 the tramroad lost business. In 1863, a few months before the perambulation, charges on tonnage were reduced in an effort to encourage traffic, but unsuccessfully, and the tramroad was later abandoned. The Brinore Tramroad Conservation Forum, *Walks and Rides along the Brinore Tramroad*, 2003, p. 3.

³¹ Information from Peter Morgan Jones.

³² Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, *Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Brecknock*, 1997.

³³ There is no proven connection with the Chartist, but the cave's situation, isolated but not far from centres of disturbance, makes it a likely place of refuge or to hold meetings. Workmen in the coal and iron industries suffered considerable hardship, and the brilliantly successful ironmaster Joseph Bailey (see Note 17 above) was infamous for his treatment of the workforce. The widespread Chartist movement is well chronicled as an attempt to improve social conditions through political change. (*The Chartists of Blaenau Gwent*, by Wybron, N., 1989, describes some local conditions.) The Duke of Beaufort privately added his voice to complaints of ill-treatment of children when in later life he wrote 'In the thirties and forties laws were passed for the protection of children in mines and factories, but nothing was done to defend rich men's sons from the violence of their school masters. A head master 'could with impunity seize a little boy by the collar and beat him systematically from the heels upwards till after some forty blows he flung away the stick exhausted . . .' The Duke had himself experienced such treatment at his preparatory school in Brighton and had run away. Durant, Horatia, *The Somerset Sequence*, 1951, p. 191.

³⁴ N.L.W. Badminton 3. *Survey of Tretower and Crickhowell manors in 1587*. The boundary is that of Llangynidr common.

³⁵ Jones, Oliver, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*, 1969, p. 15. The Glamorgan–Gwent Archaeological Trust comments: 'Rhyd-y-milwr (The soldiers' ford). The site of an old ford on the Rhymney river. A large common called Mynydd y Gaer on the north side of the parish (Gelligaer) is believed to be an ancient battle site. The authority for this battle is almost certainly a forgery; therefore this site should be discounted as an antiquity.'

³⁶ Jones, Peter Morgan, *Hills of Fire and Iron*, Abertillery, 1992, p. 16.

³⁷ Barrie, D. S. M., *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain, Vol. XII, South Wales*, 1980. The Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway Company was incorporated on 1st August 1859, but found difficulty in financing the project, and the London and North Western Railway agreed to lease the company (for 1,000 years) in 1861–2, and the company was finally absorbed by LNWR in 1866. The line was opened from Abergavenny to Brynmawr in 1862, to Beaufort and Trefil in 1864, to Nant-y-bwch and Rhymney Bridge in 1871, and finally to Merthyr in 1879.

³⁸ Durant, H., op. cit. pp. 193–4 and 196.

³⁹ Perambulation of the boundary between His Grace the Duke of Beaufort and the Earl of Abergavenny, Breconshire and Monmouthshire on Thursday 18th August 1864. Gwent Record Office, MAN/A/2/0306.

⁴⁰ N.L.W. Badminton: Presentment of boundaries of Crickhowell manor, 1872, no. 6023; Perambulation of Crickhowell manor, 1885, no. 424; Perambulation of Crickhowell manor 1892, no. 425; Perambulation of Crickhowell manor 1902, nos. 6026 (note book), 4978, 4979, 4980 (drafts and text). N.L.W. Badminton 4977, Presentment of the boundaries of Tretower manor, 1871. The perambulations of 1871 and 1872 were made at the behest of the manorial courts and are described as 'presentments [statements to the court] of the boundaries'. They were prepared for Tretower court, held at the Three Salmons inn, and Crickhowell court, held at the town hall, Crickhowell, by teams of local jurors under the direction of the manorial steward.

⁴¹ Durant, H., *op. cit.* p. 198.

⁴² Davies, John, 'The end of the great estates and the rise of freehold farming in Wales', *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 7, no. 2, Dec. 1974, pp. 186–212, especially p. 190

⁴³ Sale Catalogues of the Duke of Beaufort's estates in Breconshire, on 16th and 17th November 1915. Crickhowell Archive Centre

INDEX

- Aberbaiden 116
 Abercrave House 76
 Abergavenny 18, 42, 80, 114
 Earl of 86, 89, 90, 98, 114, 116
 LNWR station 100
 Abergwesyn 54, 60, 63, 66
 Abergwesyn churches 56
 Abernant 66
 Abersychan 12
 Aberyscir 9
 Aberystroth 89
 Adams, Rob 91
 Alexander, DT 79
 Allt (Pennorth) 104
 Amroth Castle 56
Amser i Geisio 69
 Anglesey 70, 71
 Antell, Fred 12
 ap Gruffydd, Llewellyn, Prince 18
 ap Maenarch, Bleddyn 18
 ap Thomas, William ap William (Raglan) 78
 Army Medal Office 12
 Army Museums Ogilby Trust 12
 Ashburnham family 78, 79
 Awbrey, William (Prince of Wales Inn) 115

 Bacon, Olive 102
 Badminton 96, 103
 Badminton Archives 5, 84, 102, 110
Badminton Library . . . , the 100
 Baggot, Charles 104
 Bailey family 98, 102
 Bailey, Crawshay 78, 115
 Bailey, Joseph 71, 74, 78, 79, 80, 92
 Bailey, Sir Joseph Russell 90, 92, 96, 103, 104, 105, 111, 112
 Baker, Charles (solicitor) 96, 103, 107, 109, 110, 113
 Barber, Chris 102
 Barnes, George (Llangatock) 104

 Bath 54, 57
 Beaufort, duke of 71, 72, 74, 78, 84, 86, 88, 89, 92, 94, 96, 98, 99, 100, 103, 108, 110, 112, 113, 115, 116
 Beaufort Arms 107, 114
 Beaufort estates 100
 Beaufort Iron Works 114
 Beaufort town 85, 86, 90, 96, 98, 100, 109, 113, 114
 Bedwelty 108, 109, 113
 Berry faily 80
 Berry, Henry Seymour 76
 Bevan, Philip (Six Bells, Cwmdu) 104, 105
 Bidgood, Ruth 5
 Birch, Essex 63
 Black Mountains 88
 Blaen-cwm-frwd 112
 Blaen Ebbw 89, 98
 Blaen Rhymney 95, 107, 108
 Blaen Sirhowy 107
 Blaen-y-cwm (Bwlch) 104
 Blaenavon 90
 Ironworks 115
 Blaenllynfi 88, 90, 106
 Bloomsbury 59
 Border Archaeology 5, 15, 39, 42
 Boston, Lincs. 70
 Bournemouth 60
 Brecknock Borough Council 9
 Brecknock, earls of 74
 Brecknock Great Forest 9, 70, 72
 Brecknock Scouts 10
 Brecknock Society 5, 69
 Brecknockshire 74
 Brecknockshire Agricultural Society 5
 Brecon County Council 5
 Brecon 17, 18, 19, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 69, 72, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 106
 Abergavenny road 113, 116
 Boar's Head 35
 Borough of 74

 Bridge Gate (Usk Gate) 17, 22, 34, 35, 36
 Camden estate 20, 23, 29, 34, 35, 37
 Canal 116
 Captain's Walk 19, 33
 Castle 18, 19
 Castle Street 19
 Clawdd y Gaer 19
 East Gate 19
 Festival of Learning 11
 Georgian Festival 11
 High Street 19
 Honddu bridge 37
 Horn Lane 19, 20, 22, 35
 Inner Relief Road 15
 Iron works 91
 Kensington 10
 Lion Street 19
 Lordship of 10, 72
 Market Street 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 31, 35, 37, 38, 42, 44
 Newton 76
 Old Port Superior 19
 Photographs of 10
 Porthbach 35
 Priory Estate 72, 74
 Priory Hill House 9
 Prison 35
 St Mary's 18, 83
 St Michael St. 35
 Shepe St. 21, 22
 Ship St. 5, 15, 19, 20, 31, 37
 Shire Hall 19
 Struet Gate 19
 Town Wall 21, 3 8
 Usk Bridge 20, 34
 Usk Gate 34
 Water Gate 17, 19, 22, 34, 35, 36
 Watergate 15, 23, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39
 Watergate Street 21
 West Gate 19, 34
 Workmen's Social Club 16
 Brecon and Abergavenny Canal 69

- Brecon & Radnor Farmer, the* 10
 Brecon Improvement Act 20
Brecon Journal and Town & County
 10, 103, 110
 Brecon Show 5
 Brecon Town Council 5, 12
 Breconshire 5, 10, 12, 42, 54,
 69, 70, 71, 72, 74, 76, 78,
 79, 80, 83, 88, 90, 91, 98,
 108, 109, 113, 115, 116
 Breconshire Electoral Roll 1871
 59
Breconshire Naturalist, the 10
 Breconshire Women's Conser-
 vative Association 10
 Breedon's Norton 51
 Bridgnorth 59
 Brinore tramroad 92, 108
 British Legion 10
 Brodwas 52
 Broekhuizen 12
 Brychan 17, 71
Brycheiniog 5, 72
 Brynair 104
 Brynbedw (Llanwrtyd Wells) 66
 Brynbrith 95, 109
 Brynderw (Llanwrtyd Wells) 67
 Brynmawr 86, 88, 89, 115
 Brynore tramway 92, 108
 Buckinghamshire 71
 Buckland 9, 72, 80, 106
 Buckland, Baron 76
 Builth Wells 10
 Bulkeley family (Anglesey) 71
 Burrow, Mrs Betty 60
 Bushley 51, 52
 Bute family 71, 90, 94, 102
 Marquis of 108
 Bwlch 76, 104, 105, 106, 107

 Caernarfonshire 71
 Callaghan, Yvonne 12
 Cambridge 63
 Camden, Lord 10, 72, 74
 Cameron, Anne 52
 Cameron, Archibald (solicitor)
 52
 Cameron, Revd C(harles)R 52,
 55
 Cameron, Charles, MD 52
 Cameron, Jane 52
 Cameron, Miss Mary Emily 51,
 52
 Canterbury 57
 Cardiff 60, 71, 79
 Stock Exchange 76
 Carmarthenshire 64, 70
 Carreg maen Tarw 115
 Carreg-pen-yr-heol-wyna 115
 Castell Madoc 10
 Cathedin 105, 106
 Caughley porcelain works 51
 Cefnrcrug 108
 Census 54, 57, 64, 66, 91, 110
 Cerrig Clishon 105
 Chambers, Edward 52
 Chapels:
 Moriah Congregational,
 Abergwesyn 56
 Salem, Sennybridge 9, 10
 Chapman, William (Tyr Ash)
 103, 107
 Chartists' Cave 94
 Chepstow 18
 Chertsey 76
 Christopher, George (Tyr llys,
 Cwmdru) 104
 Christopher, William (ditto) 105,
 110
 Churches:
 St Clement's (Worcester) 52
 St David's, Llanwrtyd 63, 64
 St George's, Hanover Square
 52
 St Helen's (Worcester) 52
 St Mark's (Surbiton) 57
 St Mary's (Brecon) 18, 83
 St Mary's (Tenby) 54
 St Michael's (Cwmdru) 104,
 105, 106, 107, 111, 114
 Ebbw Vale Parish 12
 Kensington Baptist, Brecon
 10
 Pershore Abbey 51
 Sardis Baptist, Llangynidr 10
 Sion Baptist, Sennybridge 9
 Worcester Cathedral 52
 Cilwch 105
 Clapham, Sir John 70
 Clarke, BRD 56, 57, 61
 Claypon, Joseph 70
 Clifton (Rugby) 59
 Clun (= Glangwesyn) 56, 63
 Clwyd Powys Archaeological
 Trust 15
 Clydach Company 115
 Coach & Horses (Llangynidr)
 107
 Coedymynach, Radnorshire 57
 Colchester 63
 Coleg Powys 12
 Collins, John (Twyncanno) 109
 Colt-Hoare, Sir Richard 35
 Commonwealth War Graves 12
 Commutation of the Tithe 70
 Contemporary Arts Society of
 Wales 5
 Cooken St., Worcester 51
 Cornwall 51
 Courtauld Institute of Art 102
 Craig-y-bwla 99, 112, 113
 Crickhowell 5, 18, 79, 83, 85,
 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 95,
 96, 99, 102, 103, 104, 105,
 106, 110, 111, 112, 116
 Archive Centre 102
 Police Station, New Bridge
 St. 111
 Silver Street 104
 Standard Street 111
 The Bear 89, 100
 Crofter, Annabella 57
 Cwm Banw (Llangynidr) 91, 96,
 102, 103
 Cwm Crawnnon 85
 Cwm Pitt 85
 Cwmbannw 111
 Cwmbwch 113
 Cwmdru 103, 104, 106, 110
 Cwmnantgam (Llanelly) 103,
 110
 Cwmpit 111
 CyMAL 7, 11, 12

 D-Day 11
 Dafydd, Sion (Clun) 63
 Dan-y-Parc 80
 Dandarren 108
 Darren (Crickhowell) 87
 Davis, Dr Saul 11

- Davies, Benjamin John (Glanusk) 104
 Davies, Charles (Garnddu, Blaen Sirhowy) 107
 Davies, David (Hirgan) 107
 Davies, David (Pencrug) 10
 Davies, CSM Evan 12
 Davies, Jennifer 87
 Davies, Prof. John 5
 Davies, Pte OH 12
 Davies, RHA 99
 Davies, Sylvia 12
 Davies, Thomas (Gilfach) 104
 Davies, Thomas (Tailor, Llan-gynidr) 107
 de Bohun 18
 de Brian, Sir Guy 87
 de Winton family 78
 de Winton, Mary 9
 Defynnog 10, 70
 Denbighshire 71
 Devon 44, 87
 Dillwyn-Llewelyn, John 72
 Dinas 78, 89, 90, 91, 92, 96, 105, 106, 111, 112
 Dinely (Richard) 99
 Doldowlod (Radnorshire) 78
 Dôlycoed 60, 61
 Dorset 59, 87
 Drybridge kilns, Monmouth 46
 Duke's Pit, the 95
 Duke's Table, the 92
 Duketown 95, 108
 Dunraven family 102
 Dyffryn 74
 Dyffryn Cwannon 92

 Eagle Inn (Beaufort) 114
 Earl, Mr 67
 Earle, Henry 105
 East India Co. 51, 52, 54, 59
 Economic Forestry Group 67
 Edmunds, Edmund (Wayn-pwll-dwr) 115
 Edward I 18
 Edwards, Edward (Cilwych) 105, 107
 Edwards, John (Ty fry, Cwmdu) 105, 110, 113
 Edwards, Revd William 52

 Elan Valley 57
 Eldred, Edward (Crickhowell) 111
 Elizabeth I 83
 Ellis, Dr Robert 67
 Ellis, Sara 67
 England 70
 Estates Gazette 79
 Evans, David (Supt. of Police, Crickhowell) 111
 Evans, Edmund 98
 Evered, Mrs May A 63, 66, 67
 Everett, Martin 11, 12
 Evers, Jillian 57

 Farmers Arms (Cwmdu) 105
 Ffordlaes 112
 Ffyddog, the 111, 114
 Ffynnon-keil-haul 106
 Ffynnon Oer (Merthyr Cynog) 9
 Ffynnon-ore 106
 Ffynnon-y-pistyll 106
 Francis, Francis (Victoria Inn, Beaufort) 114
 Francis, Thomas (Noyadd) 104
 Friendly Society (Sir Harri ab Gwilym) 10
 Friends of Powys Archives 7
 Fuller-Maitland family (Garth) 72, 74, 76, 79

 GPO 64, 66
 Gabb, Richard Baker 98, 114, 116
 Gaer (Cwmdu) 104
 Gallipoli 11
 Games (Newton) 76
 Games, Thomas (Heolodra) 104
 Garth 72, 76, 79
 Garlick, James A 56
 Garnddu (Blaen Sirhowy) 107
 Gibbs, Joseph (Rhydyblew) 107
 Gilfach 64, 104
 Gilwern 9, 86, 90, 115
 Glamorgan 71, 76, 87, 94, 108
 Glangrwyney 85, 104
 Court 111
 Bell Inn 100

 Glangwesyn farm (see also Clun) 56, 66
 Glanonney 103
 Glanrhyd 107
 Glanusk Estate 71, 72, 74, 79, 92, 104
 Glanusk, Lord 102
 Glanusk Park 80
 Glanymon 59
 Gloucestershire 74
 Glyndwr, Owain 36
 Glyndwr rebellion 18
 Glyntawe 9
 Golden Castle 102
 Golden Valley 43, 44
 Gordon Square, London 59
 Gough Constitutional WMC 10
 Grays Inn 57, 59
 Green, Celia 11, 12
 Griffiths, Captain 61
 Griffiths, Mrs Janet 61
 Grosmont 47
 Gwen Nantyrhwch 67
 Gwent 42, 43, 44, 45
 Gwernvale Cottage 105
 Gwernfyed estate 72, 76
 Gwyn, Hywel (Dyffryn) 74, 76
 Gwynne family (Garth) 76
 Gwynne-Holford family (Buckland) 72, 76, 90, 108
 Gwynne-Holford, Mrs 106
 Gwynne-Holford, James 74
 Gwynne(-)Holford, James Price William 106

 Hale, Thomas (Crickhowell) 105
 Hancock, Elizabeth 51
 Hay on Wye 18, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 78
 Heol-y-Dwr 42, 43, 44, 46, 47
 Heath Bush Inn 115
 Hembrow, Alison 12
 Henbant 64
 Henfron (Llanwrtyd) 64
 Henry VII 18, 69
 Heoldra 104
 Heol George 116
 Heol y felin (Cathedin) 105
 Herbert family (Raglan) 102

- Herbert, Henry (Nantyllyn) 103, 111
 Herbert, Mary 9
 Hereford 42, 43, 44, 45, 66
 Viscounts Hereford 78
 Hereford Times and Journal 103, 110
 Herefordshire 71
 Hermitage, the (Grwyne fechan) 104
 Herring, David (Nantyllyn) 109
 Horgan Cottages 107, 109
 Hirwaun 90
 History of Brecknockshire, A 78
 Hope, John Jones 60
 Hope, Rhys 60
 Hope, Rees (Rhys) Morgan (Pentwyn) 66, 67
 Horsham 52, 54, 56
 Horsley, Bishop 63
 Howell, George (rector, Llangattock) 104
 Howell, Revd John (curate, Llangattock) 104, 111, 114
 Howells, Edward 108
 Howells, John 108
 Howells, Richard (Blaen Rhymney) 107
 Hughes, Revd John (rector, St Michael, Cwmdu) 104, 106, 107, 114
 Hunt, Amelia Stephen 52
 Hutton, Mr 67
 India 59
 Ingram, Richard 52
 Ireland 64, 66, 76, 78
 Irfon Cottage 66
 Isaac, Benjamin (Cwmdu) 104
 Isaac, William (Penylan, Cwmdu) 104
 Isandhlwana 11
 James, David (Ty Peter) 107
 James, John (Ty-yn-yr-airw, Grwyne fechan) 104
 James, Walter (Cille Grwyne fechan) 104
 Jarrett, PC Thomas 9
 Jenkins, William (Nantyllyn Coedca) 107
 Jeffreys family 74
 Jones family (Buckland) 76
 Jones, Alan Baynham 12
 Jones, Calvert Richard 23
 Jones, David (Abergwesyn) 61
 Jones, David (Nower) 108
 Jones, David 67
 Jones, Edmund (Aberystroth) 89
 Jones, Edward (Bwlch) 107
 Jones, Elizabeth 60, 66
 Jones, John 'motherless child' 66
 and his children:
 Anne, 67
 Evan 67
 Llewelyn 67
 Margaret 67
 William 67
 Rhys 67
 Jones, John (Bwlch) 104, 107
 Jones, Joseph (The Cwm) 115, 116
 Jones, Joshua 109
 Jones, Lucy 12
 Jones, Marianne 54
 Jones, Meredith 19, 36, 89
 Jones, Morgan (Three Salmons, Llangynidr) 107
 Jones, Oliver 94
 Jones, Peter (Llwynderw) 57, 66
 Jones, Peter Morgan (Tredegar) 102
 Jones, Philip (Crickhowell) 104
 Jones, Revd Rhys Gwesyn 56
 Jones, Richard (Nower) 108
 Jones, Theophilus 78
 Jones, Thomas (Blaenycwm, Bwlch) 104, 107, 110, 114
 Jones, Thomas (The Hermitage, Grwyne fechan) 104
 Jones, Thomas (Nower) 108
 Jones, William (Irfon Cottage) 66
 Jones, William (Nantyllyn, Llanfihangel Abergwesyn) 67
 Jones, William 115
 Josiah the Racehorse (inn, Llamarch) 100, 115
 Kelleher, Sister Bonaventure 39
 Kendall family 90
 Lacey, John (Crickhowell) 111
 Lamb Hotel, Penderyn 10
 Lampeter 63
 St David's College 63
 Land Question 70, 76
 Laugharne 87
 Le Cateau 11
 Legg, Jean 12
 Leland, John 19, 34
 Lewis, John 57, 66
 Lewis, Henry 112
 Lewis, Revd David Price, JP 64
 Llamarch 115
 Llanbedr 105
 Llanfaes 18, 19, 34
 Llanafanfawr 10
 Llanbedr 9, 84, 89, 111
 Llanddewi Abergwesyn 54, 56, 59
 Llanddeilo'r Fan 9
 Llanddewi Brefi 65
 Llanddettly 107
 Llandoverly 10, 54
 Llandrindod 10
 Llanelly 84, 89, 103, 110, 115
 Llanerch-yrfaf 60
 Llanfihangel Abergwesyn 56, 64, 67
 Llanfihangel Cwmdu 8, 9, 84
 Llanfihangel Nant Brân 10
 Llangattock 84, 87, 89, 102, 104, 109, 113, 115
 Llangattock Park 71, 72, 102
 Llangattock Place 103
 Llangenny 84
 Llangoed estate 91, 92
 Llangynidr 10, 84, 85, 106, 108, 109, 113
 Llanigon 76
 Llanlleonfel 9
 Llansantffraid 106
 Llantrisant 87, 88
 Llanwrthwl 8, 66
 Llanwrtyd Wells 60, 63, 66

- St David's church 63, 64
 Station Rd. 66
 Llanwrda 64
 Llechryd 95, 109
 Lloyd family (Dinas) 78
 Lloyd, DW 9
 Lloyd, Sir John 5, 69, 74, 78
 Lloyd, John (Nantyglo) 113
 Lloyd, John 70
 Lloyd, Thomas 80
 Llwynderw 51, 52, 54, 56, 59,
 60, 63, 64, 66, 67
 Llwynderw Cottage 59
 Llwynderw Farm 66
 Llwynderw Hotel 61
 Llwngychwydd (Llanwrtyd) 67
 Llwynmadog 72
 Llysven 71, 72
 London 52, 56, 60, 64, 91
 Lost Houses of Wales 80
 Lower Chapel 10
 Luard, Mr (solicitor) 108

 Machynlleth 7
 MacNamara, John 91, 92
 MacNamara, Mrs 92, 105, 111,
 112
 MacTurk family 70
 Madeley, Salop 54
 Maen y Tarw 89
 Maesderwen 78
 Maesgwaelod (Llanwrtyd) 63
 Maesllwch (Radnorshire) 78
 Maindiff Court (Abergavenny) 78
 Malvern 42, 43, 44, 46
 Mann, Mary 51
 Mann, William 51
 Margam 71
 Martin, Karl 102
 Martley 52, 54, 56
 Mary Herbert's Charity 9
 Maskeleyne family 70
 Maybery, Henry (JP?) 85, 91,
 105, 107, 109, 111, 114
 Merthyr Cynog 9, 63, 64, 67
 Vicarage House 64
 Middlesex 64
 Ministry of Defence 12
 Monmouth 42, 43, 44, 45, 46,
 47, 74
 Monmouthshire 71, 74, 89, 90,
 98, 99, 100, 108, 109, 113,
 116
 Mons 11
 Moor, Revd James 59
 Moor, John 59
 Moore, David 5, 39
 Morgan family (Tredegar) 71,
 72, 74, 80
 Morgan, Andrew 35
 Morgan Bach (Llanafan Fawr)
 63
 Morgan, Charles 72
 Morgan, David 63
 Morgan, George (Cwmdu) 103,
 107, 110
 Morgan, Harry 10
 Morgan, John 63
 Morgan, John (Tyr Morgan
 Howell) 107, 111
 Morgan, Margaret 63
 Morgan, Rees (Trawsgeirch) 64
 Morgan, Rhys 66
 Morgan, Sybil 63
 Morgan, Thomas 108
 Mornington Place, London 64
 Morris, Daniel (Cwmnantgam,
 Llanelly) 98, 103, 107, 110,
 114, 115, 116
 Morris, CSM George, DCM 12
 Morris, John G (son of Daniel
 Morris) 110, 114
 Morris, Rees Evan (Nanty-
 stalwyn) 63
 Morris-Jones, Sir John 69
 Museums:
 Brecknock 5
 Imperial War 12
 Royal Albert, Exeter 11
 Royal Artillery 11
 Royal Regiment of Wales
 11-13
 Mynydd Llangynidr 88
 Mynydd Llangattock 92, 102
 Mynydd Llangynidr 92, 102
 Myrick, William 103, 105, 111

 Nantybwh 109
 Nantyfeen (Cwmdu) 103, 111
 Nantyglo 71, 113
 Nantyrgrithin (Merthyr Cynog)
 64
 Nantyrhwch (Llanfihangel
 Abergwesyn) 67
 National Farmers Union 10
 National Library of Wales 70,
 72, 79, 83, 103, 110
 Neath 76
 Needham, Joseph (Beaufort)
 113
 Needham, Joseph junior 113
 Needham, William (Beaufort)
 113
 Neufmarché, Bernard de 18
 New South Wales 60
 New Zealand 57
 Newport, Pembrokeshire 87
 Newton 76
 Notting Hill 59
 Nower 108
 Noyadd 104

 Oamaru, New Zealand 57
 Odyn Fach 94
 Ogof Fawr 94
 Otago, New Zealand 57
 Owen, Thomas (Torfach) 107
 Oxford 52, 63
 Hertford College 52
 Magdalene Hall 52
 Merton College 52
 Trinity Coll. Oxford 52

 Panteg (Llangynidr) 103, 110, 113
 Parkinson, Capt. Charles (Glan-
 grwyney Court) 111, 113
 Parliamentary History of Wales
 74
 Parry, Mrs D 9
 Parry, Henry (son of Thomas)
 103, 107, 111, 114
 Parry, John (Cwm Banw) 103
 Parry, Thomas (Llangynidr)
 103, 107, 111, 114
 Parry, William (Llangynidr)
 104, 111
 Parry, William (Tretower Court)
 103, 111
 Partrishow 9, 84, 102
 Payne, Revd Henry Thomas 89

- Pembrokeshire 54, 56
 Pen-carreg-llwyd 115
 Pen Tir 102
 Pen-gwrlodau 9
 Penallt Mawr 105
 Pencelli 90
 Pencrug, Llanafanfawr 10
 Penderyn 10
 Pentyre (?Penydre, Crickhowell) 103, 104
 Pennorth 104
 Penoyre 74, 76
 Penpont 72, 76
 Penrhyn family (Caernarfonshire) 71
 Pentir 106
 Pentrefelin 10
 Pentwyn 66, 105
 Penylan (Cwmdu) 104
 Penyrhuddfa 60
 Pershore 51
 Pershore Abbey 51
 Phillips, Mr (Cefn-crug) 108
 Phillips, John 111
 Phillips, John (Gaer, Cwmdu) 104
 Phillips, Tom 12
 Phillips, William (Gaer, Cwmdu) 104
 Pingry, Catherine 51
 Pitt, Mr 111
 Pole, Len 11
 Pont Craig-y-bwla 112
 Pont Escob 99, 112
 Pont Newydd (Pont Craig-y-bwla) 112
 Porthaml 78, 79
 Powell, (John) George (Llan-gattock Place) 103, 106, 110, 114
 Powell, James (Tretower Court) 104
 Powell, John (The Ffyddog) 111, 114
 Powell, John (Tretower Court) 104
 Powell, Lewis (Dukestown) 95, 108
 Powell, Peter 102
 Powell, Rees 63
 Powell, Thomas (Farmers Arms, Cwmdu) 105
 Powys 43, 44, 45
 County Archives 7, 8
 County Council 7, 12, 15
 Digital History Project 7
 Powys Farmer, the 10
 Pratt, John (Brecon Priory) 74
 Pratt, John (Penydre, Crickhowell) 104, 105, 111
 Price, Edward (Gwernvale Cottage) 105
 Price, Isaac 64
 Price, Sir John 74
 Price, John (Blaencwm, Llanfihangel Abergwesyn) 67
 Price, Thomas 54, 64
 Price, Mrs (cook, Llwynderw) 57
 Prince of Wales Inn 115
 Pritchard, David (Glanyrafon) 59
 Prosser, William (Beaufort Arms, Llangynidr) 107, 114
 Prothero, Thomas (Crickhowell) 111
 Pruden, Mr & Mrs 67
 Pyllau-duon 94, 107
 Rackham, Oliver 84
 Radnorshire 9, 57, 71
 Raglan 78, 102
 Railways 9, 10
 Merthyr, Tredegar & Abergavenny 96, 98, 109, 114
 Trefil 109
 Rassau 96
 Redmarley 51
 Redwood, Martin 5
 Redwood, Pamela 5
 Rees, John (skinner) 35
 Rees, William 70
 Return of Landowners 1873 78
 Rhayadr 9
 Rhyd-y-milwr 94, 108
 Rhydyblew 107, 109
 Rhymney 92
 Rhymney Iron Company 90
 Rhys, Major David, MC 12
 Rhys-Burgess, Mr 67
 Richards, Mrs 'Bet' 60
 Richards, Eliza 66
 Richards, Margaret 102
 Richards, Thomas (miner, Llechryd) 109
 Richmond, David (Pentwyn) 105
 Richmond, Yorkshire 87
 Rickmansworth 52
 Rivers, streams:
 Aisne 11
 Camarch 67
 Crawnant 107, 108
 Culent 60
 Cwm Banw brook 85, 105, 111
 Cwmdu 106
 Cwm Gwenffrwd 113
 Cwmgavilon 16
 Cwmnantlyrchan 106
 Cwmnantlyfedw 106
 Ebbw 113, 114
 Grwyne (Fawr) 85, 98, 99
 Grwyne fechan 104, 111
 Gwenffrwd 116
 Honddu (Brecon) 18, 19, 20, 31, 33, 34
 Irfon 60
 Monnow 44, 45
 Nant Melyn 94, 95, 96, 108, 109
 Nant-y-bwch 95, 109
 Nantylfin 111, 112
 Rassa 109
 Rhiangoll 91
 Rhymney 88, 94, 98, 108
 Sirhowy 88, 94, 95, 98, 109
 Sorgwm 106
 Swale 87
 Usk 9, 19, 20, 31, 33, 34, 36, 42, 85, 86, 88, 89, 91, 99, 106, 107, 113, 116
 Roberts family 54, 56, 57, 63
 Annabella 60
 Amelia Jemima 54, 59
 Charles Ingram 54, 57, 59
 Chester, Major 56, 59, 60, 61
 Fanny Theresa 57
 Frances Elizabeth ('Fanny') 54, 59

- George 59
Jane Sarah 54, 56
John Douglas 57
Lucy Barbara 54, 56, 59
Mary Ann 52, 59
Myra 59, 60, 61, 67
Revd Richard 54, 64
Richard senior 51
Richard junior 51, 52
Richard Willett 54, 57, 59, 60
Sophia Anastasia 54, 59
Thomas Archibald 54, 57, 59
Thomas Turner, Captain 51, 52, 56, 57, 59, 64, 66
William senior 51
William Hancock (William junior) 51, 52
William Henry Sherwood 54, 57
- Roberts, David (Llangynidr) 106
Roberts, William (poet) 81
Robins, Richard James (Glanrhyd) 107
Rochester 87
Rogers, Mr 114, 116
Rorke's Drift 11
Royal Artillery 11, 59
Royal Commission on Land in Wales 70, 79
Rumsey, Ebenezer (Tyn-y-wlad) 104, 110, 112, 113
- Safford, Sir Archibald, QC 57, 59
Safford, Frank 57
Safford, John 57, 61
Saintonge ware 45
Sandford, Charlotte 57
Scotland 70
Scouts 10
Scrwnfa 95
Select Committee on Town Holdings 81
Sennybridge 9, 10
Shellard, Doris 102
Shropshire 43, 54
Sirhowy ironworks 95
Six Bells (Cwmdu) 105
Sixth Bombay Native Infantry 52
- Smith, Herbert (Bridgnorth) 59
Smith, John Edwards (Llangynidr) 107
Snedshill, Salop 52
Society of Archivists 11
Somerset family (Dukes of Beaufort) 74, 100, 102
Charles 74
Lord Charles Henry Plantagenet 100
Lord Arthur 86, 98, 104, 105, 106, 109, 110, 113, 116
Lord Edward 96, 110, 112
Lord Henry 96, 110
Lord Noel Henry Plantagenet 100
Lord William 72, 96
Lord William Horace Boscawen 100
- Somerville, Brigadier DHS 12
South Wales Borderers 11
Speed, John 19, 21, 22, 34, 36
Stable Fawr 94
Staffordshire 44
Star Field 95
Stewkley, Bucks. 52
Stice, Daniel (Crickhowell) 111
Story, Anthony 70
Suffolk 71
Sugar Loaf 85, 113, 115
Sullivan, Henry Eden (Abergavenny) 114
Surrey 76
Sutton Coldfield 59
Swansea 72
- Talbot family (Margam) 71, 102
Talgarth 9, 10, 106, 111
Talybont-on-Usk 74, 92
Tavern-maes-yr (Tavern-y-garn) 115
Tawe Uchaf 9
Temple (London) 60
Tenby 54, 56, 57
St Mary's 54
Tewkesbury 51
Thomas, Pte A 12
Thomas, Clara 72
Thomas, Hugh 19, 34, 36
Thomas, John (Pwlllyduon) 107
- Thomas, Pte ZD, MM 12
Thomas, Zachariah (Heath Bush Inn) 115
Thompson, David (Llangattock) 103, 107, 110, 113
Thompson, John (Badminton) 103, 107, 110, 113, 115
Three Salmons (Llangynidr) 107
Tirabad 63
Tirlwynbedw 64
Tithe Schedule 56, 74
Torfach 107
Traed-y-milwr 94
Trawsgeirch (Trawsgyrch) (Llanfihangel Abergwesyn) 64, 66
Trawsgoed (Cardiganshire) 71
Trecastle 9
Trecoyd 78
Tredegar estate 71, 72, 74, 80, 94, 102
Tredegar, Lord 79, 90
Trefecca Fawr 10
Trefil 92, 102
Treflys 9
Tregunter 80
Tretower 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 95, 96, 99, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 111
Trollope, Anthony 64, 66
Turner, Dr 51
Turner, Mary 52
Turner, Dr Richard 52
Turner, Revd Richard, LID 52
Turner, Richard 52
Turner, Sarah 52
Turner, Thomas 52
Turner, Thomas, JP 51
Tuy-yn-y-Cwm 10
Tweedie, Myra Elizabeth 57
Twining, Glos. 5
Twyn Blannant 115
Twyncanno 109
Ty-fry (Cwmdu) 9, 105, 113
Ty Gwyn 99
Ty Peter 107
Ty-yn-yr-airw (Grwyne fechan) 104
Tyllyda (Tyle da fach, Grwyne fechan) 104

- Tyn-y-wlad (Crickhowell) 104
 Tyr Ash 103
 Tyr llys (Cwmdu) 104
 Tyr Morgan Howell 107
 Tyr Ywen 112
 Tyr-y-Gorse 10
 Tyr-y-Felin 10
- Union Hall, Rickmansworth 52
 Union ironworks (Tretower) 90, 94
 University of Wales:
 St David's College, Lampeter 63
 Swansea 7
- Vaughan family (Porthaml) 78
 Vaughan family (Trawsgoed) 71
 VE Day 12
 Victoria Inn (Beaufort) 114
 Vince, Dr Alan 43, 44
 VJ Day 12
- Waindew farm (Beaufort) 114
 Wayn-pwll-dwr 115
 Walford, John Berry 114, 116
 Walker, D 18
 Walter, David (shoemaker) 35
 Wars:
 Gulf 2003 12
 World I 7, 79
 World II 80
 Zulu 11
- Watkeys, Thomas 99
 Watkins family (Penoyre) 76
 Watkins, Charles (Tyllyda, Grwyne fechan) 104
 Watkins, John (Aberhoil) 107
 Watkins, John (Penoyre) 74
 Watkins, Penoyre 76
 Watkins, Thomas 86
 Watkins, Thomas (Tyr ywen) 112
 Watt family (Doldowlod) 78
 Wayn Pwll Dwr 98
 Waziristan 12
 Webb, Richard 87
 Welsh Assembly 7
 Weston-super-Mare 60
 Weston, Simon 11
- Wheldon, TJ 81
 Wheldon, Sir Huw 81
 White Ladies, Worcs. 52
 Wild, John (bailiff) 66
 Williams family (tenants, Llwnderw) 59
 Williams family (Penpont) 72, 76
 Williams family (Llwnderw) 63
 Williams, E 64
 Anne1 64
 Anne2 64, 66
 David 64
 Elizabeth 63, 67
 Elizabeth Ann 66
 Emma 57
 Gwen 63
 John (Nantygrithin) 64
 John Morgan 64, 66
 Kitty 63
 Magdalene 66
 Margaret 64
 Margaret junior 64, 66
 Mary Margaret 66, 67
 Morgan Evan1 64
 Morgan Evan2 64
 Phoebe 66
 Revd Rhys (Rees) 63
 Rhys (Maesgwaelod) 63
 Rhys junior 64, 66
 Rhys (Rees) Llewelyn 66
 Thomas (bailiff, Llwngygychwydd, Llanwrtyd) 67
 Revd Watkin 64
 William 64
 William (Glangwesyn) 67
 Williams, Sir David (Gwern-yfed) 76
 Williams, David (Llechryd) 95, 109
 Williams, Sir Edward (Dinas) 89, 91, 92, 106, 112
 Williams, Edward (Blaen Sirhowy) 107
 Williams, Jane (Josiah the Racehorse) 115
 Williams, John (Eagle inn) 114
 Williams, John (Panteg) 103, 106, 110, 113
 Williams, Joseph (Pantypirey) 107
- Williams, Joshua (Coach & Horses, Llangynidr) 107
 Williams, Thomas 109
 Williams, Thomas (Llangynidr) 107
 Williams, William (Grwyne fechan) 104
 Williams, William Retlaw 74
 Wood (cartographer) 23
 Wood, Susannah 52
 Wood family 76
 Wood, Thomas (Gwern-yfed) 72, 74
 Wooding, David Lewis 54
 Woolley, George (Brynair) 104
 Worcester 42, 43, 44
 Edward's Tower 52
 Free Grammar School 52
 Loughorough House School 52
 Marquis of 96, 99, 109, 110
 St Clement's 52
 St Helen's 52
 Worcester Cathedral 52
 Worcestershire 51, 54
 Wright, Major 59
 Wright, Edith Jane 59
 Wright, Samuel (Buckland) 105
 Wynn, Watkin 71
- Y Dderw (Llyswen) 71, 72
 Y Groes Blaen y Llamarch 89
 Yates, JML 57, 67
 Yates, Dr N
 Ystradgynlais 7, 10, 70, 76

