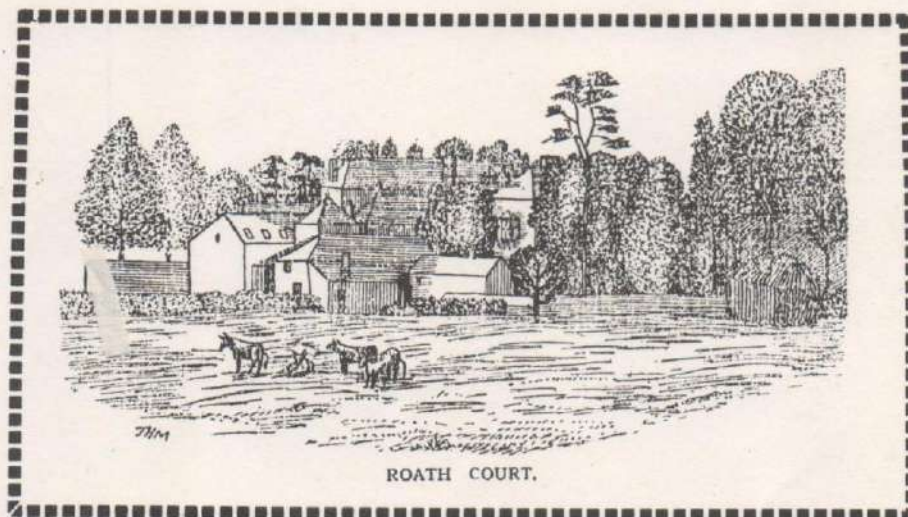


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# Roath Local History Society

## Project Newsletter



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## SOCIETY NEWS

Starting on Thursday January 7th 1988 a series of monthly talks will be held at the Roath Community Hall, Ninian Road. Martin Sheldon, our programme organiser, has already succeeded in booking some first class guest speakers. A leaflet is enclosed with this Newsletter giving details of meetings which have been planned so far. Further details of these meetings will be notified to all members when arrangements have been completed. Except for the first Thursday each month (which has been reserved for meetings at Roath Community Hall) we shall continue to meet during school term for group project work every Thursday at 7.15 p.m. at Howardian High School.

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THANKS TO ALL MEMBERS WHO HAVE RENEWED THEIR SUBSCRIPTION OF £8 FOR 1987/8 AND A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS! IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID, THE TREASURER WILL BE PLEASED TO RECEIVE YOUR MEMBERSHIP SUB. WHICH WAS DUE 1st SEPTEMBER.

## NOTES ON FIELD VISITS 1987

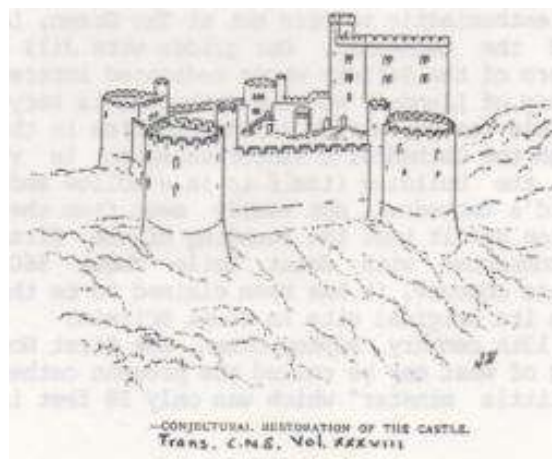
### Castell Morgraig:

Having organised a short programme of field visits during June and July, hardy members of the Society gathered on the evening of the 4th June in the car park of the "Traveller's Rest" at Thornhill for the first visit. Our objective was Castell Morgraig, or rather the remains of the castle. The chairman's son having recently visited the vicinity had remarked that it was not difficult to reach the ruins, one had only to climb over the barbed wire fence at the end of the car park. As we discovered, this was not practicable and set about finding an alternative approach. After negotiating a muddy path and a couple of gates, we arrived in the fields surrounding the ruins. The view over Cardiff was impressive, and while we enjoyed the view, our chairman gave us some information about the castle,

It was partially excavated and cleared around 1905 and a survey made. The enclosure was pentagonal in shape, about 118 feet by 140 feet with four rounded angled towers and a fifth larger rectangular tower projecting beyond the curtain wall - the keep. This structure appeared to be the only one large enough for residential purposes, but it seemed unlikely that the building was ever completed. It was estimated that the castle was built in the 13th century. Unfortunately we discovered that we were quite unable to view the ruins properly as the wire fence completely enclosed the area, no doubt to keep away visitors such as ourselves.

We speculated whether the castle may have been built by a Welsh lord to protect his land against possible incursion by the powerful Lord of Glamorgan. This would account for its dominant position overlooking the lowland coastal area. The castle was significantly situated on the boundary between the ancient commote of Kibbor (Cibwr) (traditionally under the direct administration of the Anglo-Norman lords of Cardiff Castle) and the highland zone (Blaenau) held by Welsh lords, the most famous of whom was Ifor ap Meyric or Ivor Bach, lord of Senghenydd. According to a survey of the manor of Roath Keynsham of 1702 the boundary between the manor and the lordship of Senghenydd is described as proceeding along the course of the Castan brook to the "ruins of an old castle near Drainan-pen-y-Graig". These are clearly the ruins of Castell Morgraig.

Feeling a little disappointed, but having enjoyed the fresh air and the view, we adjourned to the "Traveller's Rest" for refreshment and a convivial chat.



### **Cosmeston Medieval Village:**

On 25 June a sizeable group of members met at Cosmeston, between Penarth and Lavernock to visit the excavations at the medieval village. The weather had been atrocious all day, but we were rewarded when the rain stopped and the evening, although damp, became fair enough for us to walk around in our wellies.

We were met by our guide who gave us a very interesting tour of the excavations. The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust have been excavating and rebuilding for four years and expect to continue for at least five more. A medieval dwelling, a barn, a byre, a kiln and bake-house and some cottages have already been discovered. The cattle byre has been rebuilt and has its roof thatched with the materials gathered by the workers who have been engaged by the Manpower Services Commission. When standing within its thick walls one felt quite sheltered and warm. We were very interested to see the vegetable garden which has been created on the site of a former medieval garden and is tended in the traditional manner. This village was inhabited between the 12th and 14th centuries and was under the lordship of the Costentin family. However, possibly as the result of the Black Death, it became practically deserted in the 14th century.

We finished our walk by looking at the partly re-built dove-cote which was on raised ground which provided us with a good view of Cosmeston Lake. It was originally a home for some thousands of birds which played an important part in a medieval menu.

After being conducted around the excavations, we visited the site office to look at the interesting finds that have been brought to light including pottery, coins and jewellery. One artefact, an iron plate, was used to cover the fire at night when the curfew bell had sounded. It was called a curfew - from the French "couvre-feu".

The inhabitants then retired to bed secure in the knowledge that their dwelling would not burn down.

The Trust hopes ultimately to excavate and reconstruct a village which will become a museum of medieval life, and will attract thousands of visitors. It is a most ambitious project and unique to the region.

### **Llandaff Cathedral:**

On 2nd July enthusiastic members met at The Green, Llandaff to enjoy a walk around the Cathedral. Our guides were Jill and Neville James, fellow members of the Society whose dedicated interest in the history of Llandaff and the Cathedral is very evident. They are not responsible for any errors or inaccuracies in this account.

Although the Cathedral's Victorian spire is visible from most directions, the building itself is in a hollow and was consequently, like St David's Cathedral, not easily seen from the sea by raiders.

Tradition has it that the founding of the first church on the site was connected with Saint Teilo about 560 A.D. Although its beginnings are obscure, it has been claimed to be the oldest episcopal see still on its original site in Great Britain.

In the 12th century, Bishop Urban, the first Norman Bishop, began the building of what may be called the present cathedral. It replaced the old "little minster" which was only 28 feet in length. The only relics of this old church are two stones in the west wall and a 10th century Celtic cross now standing in the south presbytery aisle which was discovered in 1870 at the back of a well in the garden of the Bishop's Palace.

By the middle of the 16th century the Norman structure had fallen into decay and suffered during the Reformation. During the Civil Wars part of the church was used as a stable and ale-house. In 1703 the pinnacles of the north-west tower, built by Jasper Tudor in the 15th century were brought down in a great storm. In another storm in 1723 the south-west tower collapsed. Funds were then raised for restoration work and John Wood of Bath was chosen as architect. What he built resembled an Italian temple which occupied the presbytery, choir and part of the nave of the old cathedral. The fine Norman arch built by Bishop Urban behind the high altar was hidden by plaster. There were also plans to pull down the whole west front and replace it with a domed tower but fortunately money ran out and the west front survived. At the time, the Italian temple was considered very fine, replacing what was thought to be ugly, ruinous and not worthy of preservation. A hundred years later the complete restoration of the cathedral was put in the hands of a local architect, John Prichard; the Italian temple was taken down and the presbytery, choir and part of the nave restored. The Lady Chapel with its east window destroyed by Mr Wood was restored. Externally, the south-west tower and spire 195 feet high, known as Prichard's Tower, and the addition of the octagonal roof to the Chapter House are the chief features. The restoration was completed in 1869.

Our first steps on our walk around the cathedral were directed to the Cathedral Close to look at the site of Teilo's Well. Afterwards we continued by walking around the east end to the graveyard on the north side where we spent some time discussing the antiquity of the graves. Jill and Neville James related some fascinating facts emerging from their researches into the lives of people who here lie buried. Facing us was the Welch Regiment Memorial Chapel built in 1956 and designed by George Pace. Retracing our steps we returned to the south side. A feature of the south side is the row of crowned heads carved on the wall beginning with Richard III and continuing up to Edward VIII (uncrowned), with the heads of George VI and Elizabeth II on the north side. Near the south-east door is the tomb of John Prichard and by the chapter-house the memorial to Dean Conybeare who both contributed so much to the Victorian restoration. Little did they know that the war of 1939-45 would bring devastation to their work when on the 2nd January 1941 a German land-mine fell near the south wall. The roof was destroyed and great damage done to the interior, the organ ruined and the spire of the Prichard tower made unsafe. Remarkably, the fine Norman south doorway, the Conybeare memorial and Prichard's tomb were spared. Llandaff Cathedral suffered, next to Coventry, the worst war damage of British cathedrals.

We continued to the west front to admire the early 13th century central gable flanked by the two great towers. In the arch over the Norman doorway is a statue of a Bishop, possibly St Teilo or Urban. Above are three high lancet windows, and above them one tall window with blind arcading each side. In the apex of the gable was formerly a seated statue of Our Lord. The Jasper Tower is a buttressed tower 105 feet high, crowned with elaborate pinnacles and stone parapet. The Prichard

Tower, very different in appearance is buttressed at the lower stages, and with canopied niches containing statues at the upper stages. On the south-west side is carved a small bas-relief of the Cathedral. Much criticised when first built, most people cannot now visualise the Cathedral without this tower and soaring spire.

We entered by the west door and of course the most eye-catching feature is the great parabolic concrete arch surmounted by the organ case with its famous sculpture of "Christ in Majesty" by Sir Jacob Epstein, standing at the junction of the nave and choir. Opinions on the arch and sculpture vary greatly but in time people may feel that they have become a completely integrated part of the cathedral. Around the organ case are 64 gilded Pre-Raphaelite figures which formerly stood in the niches and canopies of the pre-war choir stalls.

Under the Jasper Tower is the Saint Illtyd Chapel in which is housed the Rosetti Triptych, "The Seed of David". It was Originally in the reredos of the high altar under the presbytery arch. The Pre-Raphaelites - Swinburne the poet, Burne-Jones, William Morris and his wife were the models. The triptych has been temporarily removed for restoration. We walked down the south presbytery aisle, past the modern font (1952) by Alan Durst, and the stone carving on the wall representing the Trinity - three joined heads but with only four eyes. We saw the Celtic cross previously mentioned and the Teilo Chapel. Nearby is the shrine of Saint Teilo with a 13th century effigy of a bishop. The tomb is decorated with a metal frieze depicting scenes from the life of Saint Teilo. A descriptive notice for the benefit of visitors, was beautifully caligraphed by Neville James, so we discovered, who was too modest to tell us himself.

Unfortunately we couldn't look at the Lady Chapel properly as it was screened off and in the process of being restored. The recent flower festival helped swell the restoration fund to enable this work to be done. The windows in the chapel are by Christopher Webb.

On the north side is the Dyfrig Chapel, sometimes called the Mathew Chapel, and there we could see the old medieval stone reredos which stood originally behind the high altar. This was discovered hidden behind the stucco of the Italian temple at the time of the Victorian restoration. Traces of its original colours can just be seen. Tombs of Sir David Mathew, standard bearer to Edward IV and Sir Christopher and Lady Mathew are here. Also in this chapel are porcelain panels designed by Burne-Jones depicting the "Six Days of Creation", the model for the figures being Elizabeth Siddal. Next we went on to the Oudoceous Chapel and the tomb of Dean Vaughan who refounded the Cathedral Choir School in 1880. Here also is a painting on board representing "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" which has an interesting history. It originally formed the back of Bishop Marshall's throne in the 15th century; his tomb is on the north Side of the presbytery.

On the north side is another fine Norman door called Saint Teilo's door which leads into the Welch Regiment Memorial Chapel dedicated to Saint David. Stones for this chapel came from old cottages in Ely Road. The atmosphere here is very peaceful and comforting. On the east wall Portland stone slabs record the battle honours of the regiment.

Walking through a curved processional way linking the Chapel with the Prebendal House we saw four gargoyle heads which were rescued from the war-time ruins. Coming out of the cathedral in front of the Prebendal House we were shown two stone urns - all that survives of John Wood's Italian Temple where they used to stand on the roof.

Between April 1942 and April 1957 only the Lady Chapel and Sanctuary were in use and not until 1960 was the post-war restoration completed under the direction of the architect George Pace of York. On 6th August 1960 the restoration was celebrated in a thanksgiving service in the presence of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

We ended our tour of the Cathedral by walking up the steep flight of steps facing the West Front which brought us back to the Green. Here are the ruins of an old bell tower or campanile which at one time housed a great bell which weighed over five tons and was called "Great Peter". It is said to have been exchanged for five small bells from Exeter c.1484.

### **VISIT TO PENHOW CASTLE**

On 16 July we met at Penhow Castle situated on the A48 between Chepstow and Newport. The castle is claimed to be Wales' oldest lived in castle and to look at it now, restored and reconstructed, it is difficult to believe that it was ruinous and neglected for centuries.

It stands on a hill and was one of a ring of knights' castles around the Norman castle at Chepstow. I would like to give a brief history of the castle before describing our tour.

It was bought in 1966 by the Rev. Percy Wilmott-Jenkins who attempted to repair the derelict building, but because of ill-health could not continue the work. In 1973 his widow sold the castle to Stephen Weeks, a young film director and writer who then began the enormous task of restoration with the assistance of grants and training schemes. The castle now presents a fine record of a British house as it developed from the 12th to the 19th century.

It is most interesting to learn that Penhow Castle was the first home in Britain of the Seymour family whose more famous members were Jane Seymour, third wife of Henry VIII, and her brothers Edward and Thomas. The Welsh prince who owned the manor of Penhow in the 12th century was forced to relinquish his property to Sir Roger de St.Maur; his family originated from the village of St.Maur in France named after a monk who founded the first Benedictine monastery in France in the 6th century. In the Seymour Chamber is a reliquary containing a stone from the monk's tomb. The St.Maur stone can be inspected by any descendant of the Seymour family, the custom being started by the Duke of Somerset in 1978 when the public was first admitted.

In the mid 13th century a descendant, Sir William de St.Maur had married into the powerful Marshall family, Earls of Pembroke. This was an advantageous union and the family who became known as Seymour continued to marry well. The line descended through his youngest grandson, Sir Roger whose grandson married Maud Esturmy, an heiress to Savernake Forest in Wiltshire and to Wolfhall, which in time became the home of Jane Seymour. A miniature of Jane can be seen in the Moat Room, also the Seymour family tree made in the 18th century.

In the late 14th century the branch of the family remaining at Penhow were without a male heir. Isabella Seymour married John Bowles and in 1483 their grandson Thomas was knighted by the Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III for his services in battle. Sir Thomas's grand-daughter Maria married Sir George Somerset who declined to live at the castle and sold it in 1569. This was the end of 400 years of ownership by inheritance and there were many later owners. In 1674 Thomas Lewis of St.

Pierre near Chepstow bought the castle and made improvements to it. His son was the last resident lord of the manor until Stephen Weeks in 1979. In the 18th century the castle was used by tenants as a farm and continued as such until 1966.

Before we began our tour we were met by a young lady who gave each of us a Walkman cassette and headphones with instructions on its use. This provided a commentary which guided us through the castle and gave detailed information at every stage. This resulted in a group of people walking around with rather glazed expressions as they concentrated on using twentieth century technology to accumulate knowledge of medieval times. Personally I liked this method as one could look around at one's own pace, but there is a lot to be said for a really efficient guide providing the personal touch.

We entered through the door on the south front by the bridge over the dried moat which was discovered in 1977 and excavated. The first room is the lower hall which was probably used in the 15th century - when Sir Thomas Bowles lived there - as a retainers' hall. Its great stone fireplace is flanked by two deep windows and in the corner is a strong door to a small porter's room with its window overlooking the draw-bridge. The castle valuables would be kept here guarded behind the porter's door.

We climbed a stone spiral staircase to reach the 15th century Great Hall and were startled to see a slinky black object passing us on the stairs. No, it wasn't the castle ghost - just the family cat keeping an eye on us. The Hall is imposing with a screen at one end with a minstrel gallery above it. On the screen is fixed a large wooden statue of St. Michael and around the walls is a frieze detailing the work each month of the manorial calendar. In a blue bowl on one of the window sills is a collection of large meat bones. These were discarded during meals eaten in the Hall and thrown out of the window into the moat. When archaeologists excavated the moat the bones were discovered and returned to the Hall from whence they came during the reign of Richard III.

We went into the Norman Keep Tower through a passage made from a garderobe to the Keep Room on the first floor. This room may have been used as a dining room in the 15th century and now it is furnished in a similar manner including an enormous table made of English elm. In 1977 this table was actually constructed inside the room.

Above the Keep Room is the Seymour Chamber, a reconstruction of a medieval bedchamber of the 13th century as it might have looked when Sir William de St. Maur lived there. Here is a large ooden bed with its hangings and a huge iron and brassbound chest heavily padlocked.

We climbed up some very steep stone steps and came out on the battlements of the tower. What a wonderful view we had; it was well worth the climb. Below, a stone's throw from the castle, we could see the parish church. We retraced our steps and then continued to the north side of the castle which contains two fine rooms constructed by the Lewis family after they bought the castle in 1674. The Old Parlour has marbled panelling and contemporary paintings and matching surrounds to the doorway and fireplace. The huge Dining Room also panelled has to the right of the fireplace a large safe concealed behind the panelling. The broken pediments over the doorways are similar to ones at Tredegar House. The rooms are impressive and furnished with correspondingly large furniture. Above these 17th century rooms is the Oak Bedroom with 18th century panelling and containing a large four-poster bed with red hangings.



The staircase, repaired in 1980, is oak and near it is the Housekeeper's Room, which looks very Victorian with its black - leaded cooking range, stone floor and flat irons and other contemporary paraphernalia. We moved on to the Courtyard and came to the restored kitchen which displayed items which would have been in use between the 17th and 19th centuries. It was quite primitive with open hearth, bread oven and white-washed walls.

This brought us to the end of our tour and we parted with our Walkman cassettes and brought our thoughts back to the 20th century. Our journey through the castle had shown us rooms restored to give a picture of life from the 12th to the present century, and one feels that Stephen Weeks is to be congratulated on his imaginative restoration of Penhow Castle.

After leaving the Castle we walked over to the little church of St. John the Baptist which was founded about the same time as the Castle. Before the Reformation the church was dedicated to the Abbot of St. Maur. The building was restored in 1914 at the expense the Lady Perry-Herrick, the then Lady of the Manor. We looked at many ancient tombstones in the churchyard which has an old yew tree standing on the site of the churchyard cross, the stone steps of which can still be seen. We were intrigued to see in the porch an inscription to one Elizabeth Tamplin, daughter of a rector of Penhow, who died in 1783 aged 111 years. We could hear the pealing of bells as the bell-ringers were practising. They were standing directly behind the door as we entered, underneath the tower and were kind enough to allow us into the church for a few minutes. We had time for a quick glance at the font (possibly 13th century) and the pews made from oak from the original roof-beams replaced in 1914 and made by a local wheelwright.

It is probable that many early Seymours are buried beneath the chancel. There is an elaborate tomb there which could be that of Sir Thomas Bowles who died in 1511 and who requested in his will that he be buried there.

We then had to leave and make our way home with the lovely sound of the bells pealing across the countryside.

Nancy D.Keir

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## THE DOCKLAND BEAT

by VIC SMITH - formerly P.C.3'A' Cardiff City Police Force - stationed at Cardiff Docks

*On the evening of 30 July 1987 we met at the old Custom House in East Canal Wharf Road to be taken on a tour of Butetown by our fellow-member Vic Smith. Vic has kindly allowed us to reproduce a written version of his own commentary notes.*

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Butetown or The Docks as most people call the district has fascinated me since as a young man in the late 1940's, I joined the then Cardiff City Police Force, and then spent perhaps half of my 28 years' service "walking the beat" there.

Butetown is roughly a piece of land bounded on the north by Custom House Street, on the east by Collingdon Road, on the west by Tresillian Terrace/Dumballs Road and on the south by the Bristol Channel. The main arterial road, Bute Street, runs from Custom House Street to the Pier Head and is approximately one mile long. The railway line (the old T.V.R.) ran from Queen Street station parallel with Collingdon Road to its terminus at the lower end of Bute Street near its junction with West Bute Street. The old "Bute Road Station", as it was called, is now being brought back to its former glory.

Our walk must surely start where the docklands of Cardiff had their beginnings - at the entrance to Cardiff from the sea, near the old South Gate of the town. The barges of the Glamorganshire Canal which is now filled in and on the course of which we now stand, ran in front of the Custom House as it neared the end of its 25 mile journey from Merthyr Tydfil. In the car-park here you can still make out a couple of iron mooring posts \*(1) which were used to tie up barges while the Master went into the Custom House \*(2) to clear his papers.

From the mid-nineteenth century Custom House Street was the "Covent Garden" of Cardiff. Before that it was known as "Whitmore Lane" which ran through what is now Bute Terrace to the Dock Feeder which is now culverted beneath Churchill Way. In 1849 there were seven public houses in this street: Richards Arms Inn, Wexford and Waterford Inn, the Elephant and Castle, London Porter House, Tredegar Arms Inn, Dowlais Hotel and the Bridgewater Arms (demolished to make way for the building of Churchill Way. The last Hotel to be demolished in this road was the Tredegar Arms. The only public house now is the "Golden Cross", - a listed building preserved as a fine example of a Victorian Inn with splendid interior decor.

Here at the traffic lights at the cross roads, we turn right into the top end of Bute Street and make our way southwards towards the Bristol Channel. In 1859, on our right hand side and nearly opposite the Glastonbury Arms, was the only Music Hall in Cardiff at that time, called the Coliseum. We go under the old G.W.R. Cardiff to London main line railway bridge and see the Custom House Hotel on our right and the Crown Hotel on our left. Both of these establishments have been here since at least 1890. On the corner of Wharf Street just before we come to the traffic lights stood a post office for this district which was very busy at that time with many warehouses around here. These traffic lights are sited on what was a humped-back bridge under which flowed the Feeder Canal from the Timber Float in Dumballs Road to the West Bute Dock alongside Collingdon Road.

Just past the traffic lights here on the right hand side can be seen the new Salvation Army Hostel for men which has been erected on the site of the previous one. Behind the hostel can be seen the green roof of the Greek Church. A peculiarity of Bute Street is that the whole of the left hand side of the road as far as the railway station at the end of the road is taken up with a wall, broken only by the entrance to Schooner Way which in turn leads to Collingdon Road.

The next building of note is the massive Church of St Mary the Virgin <sup>(3)</sup> on the right. On the interior wall of the churchyard can be seen a small stone head which is reputed to have come from the ruins of the old St Mary's Church. The church ran three schools in this area - one was directly opposite where the dispensary now stands, another where Queenway premises are in Bute Terrace and the third was in Hurman Street which is off Clarence Road. At the rear of the church in Peel Street is an Arab mosque.

On the corner of Maria Street and Bute Street stood the old Butetown Police Station. It was moved to Clarence Road in the lower Docks area. Alec Keir tells me that on the other corner of Maria Street 100 years ago stood a shop housing the modest studio of his step-great-grandfather, Gabriele Bellisario, an Italian photographer.

Bute Street <sup>(4)</sup> from here to West Close has been completely levelled except for a few shops farther down by the high-rise flats in Loudoun Square. This road, then, before the bulldozer moved in was the heartland of the Docks with its many shops, public houses, marine stores, boarding houses, cafes and clubs.

The inhabitants of Butetown, made up of various nationalities, rarely ventured beyond the railway bridge at the north end of Bute Street. "Tiger Bay" was an enclave within an enclave. It lay behind Bute Street around the Loudoun Square area. This was traditionally the area of the foreign seafaring community - self-contained. As you can see, it is all now re-built as a modern-style housing district and has lost its original character. Until recently on the wall on the left could be seen a large painting by a local man depicting the old area and the people and characters of Tiger Bay. The mural has been temporarily removed for protective treatment against the elements. In the foreground of the picture was Vic Parker playing his guitar. He was a very well known character in the Docks here and also in the city centre. He provided many a happy musical evening in the Custom House Hotel and the Quebec Hotel which stood behind it in Hope Lane.

Just before we come to West Close was a terrace of buildings known as Powell Place which ran from here to a public house called the George Hotel and beside this hotel was a club called "The Big Apple" which was a favourite place for the youngsters of the neighbourhood. Across the road we can see the Bute Road railway station which we have already referred to - a building which was erected in 1841.

We are now approaching the heartland of the commercial area of the Docks. In Bute Street were such fine buildings, some of which are still standing - Cory Building (1889) and the new Custom House (1898) which replaced the one we started at earlier this evening, Docks Chambers, Maritime Hall, Bank Chambers (c.1890, extended in 1903 & 1915), the massive National Westminster Bank (1924), Pascoe House (1875), built for the Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co., Rothsey Chambers, Seager Building and Seaway House.

When we turn left at the traffic lights towards the site of the nearly completed Glamorgan County Council Headquarters, we see the Post Office and the Board of Trade Building (1881). At the dock gate we have a converted church which for many years was a canteen for seamen. In front of us now is Bute Crescent and on the right-hand side is Thisbe House, the Mission of Seamen. This road used to come out at the Pier Head but is now blocked by the Maritime Museum. From here we get a view of the terra-cotta Pierhead Buildings (1896) built for the Bute Docks Co. As we retrace our steps through the dock gates on the left-hand side we can see what is left of the Norwegian Church which has been in the news so recently.

If we now go back to the traffic lights and turn left we get a view in the distance of the Bristol Channel. On reaching the bottom of the street we see a forlorn huddle of buildings, all that remains of Stuart Street. The first building is the 'Q' shed, the next is the Pilotage Offices and behind that a building which must have given many people great pleasure, the ticket office of P & A Campbell who ran pleasure paddle steamers across the Channel - the 'White Funnel Fleet'. The last building is the Windsor Hotel known as the 'Big Windsor' and noted for its superb meals.

As we continue along Stuart Street to the very end of the road, Burt Street Barracks can be seen in front of us. They haven't been used as such since World War I. If we now turn left we are in Dudley Street and this will lead us to Windsor Esplanade (c.1851). Here we have a beautiful view of the Bristol Channel, Cogan and Penarth. As we retrace our steps we notice on our right the Bute Esplanade which was built about the same time as a Windsor Esplanade. We continue up the road until we reach the green sward which was at one time the Glamorganshire Canal and the appropriately named New Sea Lock Hotel which is in Harrowby Street. At the top of this street is a building of fine architectural value and now occupied by Hadley's.

We are now in Clarence Road and as we look to our left we can see the new Clarence Road Bridge and on our left the pleasing architecture of the Avondale Hotel.

We now turn left into Hunter Street and in front of us is a 'y'-junction. At the Conservative Club, we keep left and we come once again to Burt Street Barracks entrance. If we cut through the side street and turn left we will come to the Royal Hamadryad Hospital which was originally built for seamen to replace the old warship (S.S. Hamadryad) that was moored on the bank of the nearby estuary of the River Taff.

We can now make our way back to Clarence Road via Pomeroy Street. Across the road we have Hurman Street where the Clarence Road School was situated.

Alongside that was the Clarence Road railway station. On the corner of Dumballs Road we see the new Docks Police Station - not a building of beauty perhaps, but no worse than any other contemporary building. Directly in front of us now is James Street which goes as far as the traffic lights at Bute Street. The two large buildings on our right are Royal Stuart and Douglas warehouses which both stood on the bank of the Glamorganshire Canal. Across the road is Boston Buildings. Four streets down on the south side we could have found a few years back the "North and South" public house in Louisa Street, which is mentioned in the Jim Driscoll story by Alexander Cordell. All those streets crammed with so much human drama and excitement are gone - the names come back to me as I picture them in my mind's eye - Evelyn Street, Adelaide Street, South William Street,

Louisa Street and George Street with their compact terraced houses have disappeared under the bulldozer.

So let us go back to find something that still remains by turning left at the end of the first block and enter Mounstuart Square. On the west side of the square is the old Bethany Chapel (Capel Bethel) (1858) which was converted into the Casablanca Club - and became known the length and breadth of the country also possibly on the continent. Farther along but still on the same side we have Aberdare House and where the car park is now sited stood the Imperial Building. It was built about 1913 and was covered in white tiles from ground level to the roof. As we continue around the Square, some imposing buildings can still be seen but others are in an advanced state of decay.

Dominating this whole area is the large building in the centre of the square - the Exchange Building (1884) - in its day known internationally over the world. Unfortunately it no longer functions for the purpose for which it was built. Nevertheless it is a very impressive building. A little door can be seen here where the ratings used to sign on for voyages. In the immediate post war years it was a very lively place and all nationalities under the sun could be seen here.

An alley on the opposite side of the road leads us into West Bute Street alongside the Dowlais Restaurant. Directly in front of us is another lane which leads to Bute Street and the turning right is Ship Lane and where it met Jamed Street stood a public house called The Ship Hotel.

Gone are the mighty, bustling docks which made Cardiff the city it is. Gone also are the ship chandlers, the ship purveyors Ward & Patterson, Abbotts the jeweller, the Turkish fish & chip shop, Roberts the stationers, Hopson the tobacconist, Leyshons restaurant, Volpert & Zussen's seamens' outfitters and Calinicos warehouse.

Gone too are the public houses which were so full of colour. There were too many to name them all but a few that come to mind are the Adelphi and the Bridge in Bute Street, on the banks of the Glamorgan Canal, the Bute Castle in George Street, the Cardigan Arms in Maria Street, the Cornish Mount in Patrick Street, the Empress Eugenie in Evelyn Street, the Freemasons in Bute Street, the Frampton in South William Street, the George in Bute Street, the Glamorgan in North Church Street, the Hope & Anchor in Adelaide Street, the Loudoun in Bute Street, the Marchioness of Bute in Sophia Street, the North & South in Louisa Street, the Pier in Bute Street, the Pilot in George Street, the Quebec in Crichton Street, the Rothsey Castle in Bute Street, the Torbay in Margaret Street, the Westgate in Angelina Street and the Windsor Arms in Stuart Street.

Many of the streets have vanished - George, Louisa, South William, Adelaide, Dudley, Margaret, Wharf, South Church, North Church, West Church, Gladstone, Frances, Patrick Street and Crichton Place.

But the biggest loss to my mind was the uprooting of most of the people who made up that wonderful community called Butetown.

### Editorial Footnotes

\*(1) Some of the early mooring posts on the canal bank are said to have been made from cannon barrel rejects from the 18th century "Cannon Wharf" on the site of present Westgate Street in the days before the River Taff was diverted (1849-53).

\*(2) The old Custom House apparently dates from 1798 but was rebuilt in 1845 and later extended. In the attic of this building at the turn of the century J. Hobson Matthews, the Corporation archivist, discovered the Customs Records of the Port of Cardiff going back to the 17th century. The building has recently been re-built to conform very closely in character and appearance to the former structure. It has not been used as a Custom House since 1898 when following a petition in 1891 by the Cardiff Corporation a new Custom House was built in Bute Street nearer the Docks.

\*(3) ST.MARY'S CHURCH, BUTE STREET. One of the last churches to be designed in the Romanesque style before the Neo-Gothic style became almost universally fashionable, it was built in 1843 to replace the medieval parish church (after which St Mary Street is named) which was largely destroyed in 1610 by a great flood. The new church was built with the aid of a Parliamentary grant under the Church Building Act of 1818 and aided by public subscriptions which were raised with the help of the proceeds of the sale of a specially commissioned poem written by William Wordsworth.

\*(4) Early History: BUTE STREET was constructed in the 1830's and was followed by a feverish upsurge of building operations by the Bute estate in conjunction with the opening of the Bute West Dock in 1839. The road was Macadamised in 1851. Because drainage and sanitation turned out to be sub-standard, the Bute Trustees were forced into incurring considerable expenditure on public health improvements in the 1850's. It was intended as Cardiff's main thoroughfare - "the processional way to the sea".

Adjoining it on the west a gridiron of streets was laid out centred on Mountstuart Square and Loudoun Square - names derived from the ancestral homes of the Marquess and Marchioness of Bute. The second Marquess's vision of a high class residential area did not materialise. That the street had achieved world-wide notoriety by mid-century is evidenced by the following extract from the Merthyr Guardian of 8 January 1853 which described Butetown area as:

*increasingly vile and abominable...keepers of public houses and brothels are gradually obtaining possession of the whole street... Cardiff is gaining a world-wide reputation as one of the most immoral of seaports.*

And this was before the building of the prestigious Loudoun Square had been completed!

## **TAFF VALE RAILWAY - ROATH BRANCH**

In 1888 The Taff Vale Railway Company opened a new branch freight line about five miles long sweeping in a J shaped curve from Llandaff to the Roath Dock via Roath.

During the consultative stages of the Parliamentary Bill, the Cardiff Corporation Borough Engineer prepared the following report dated 31 December 1884. It is reproduced here from the minutes of the Council held in the Cardiff Central Library.

### **The Report**

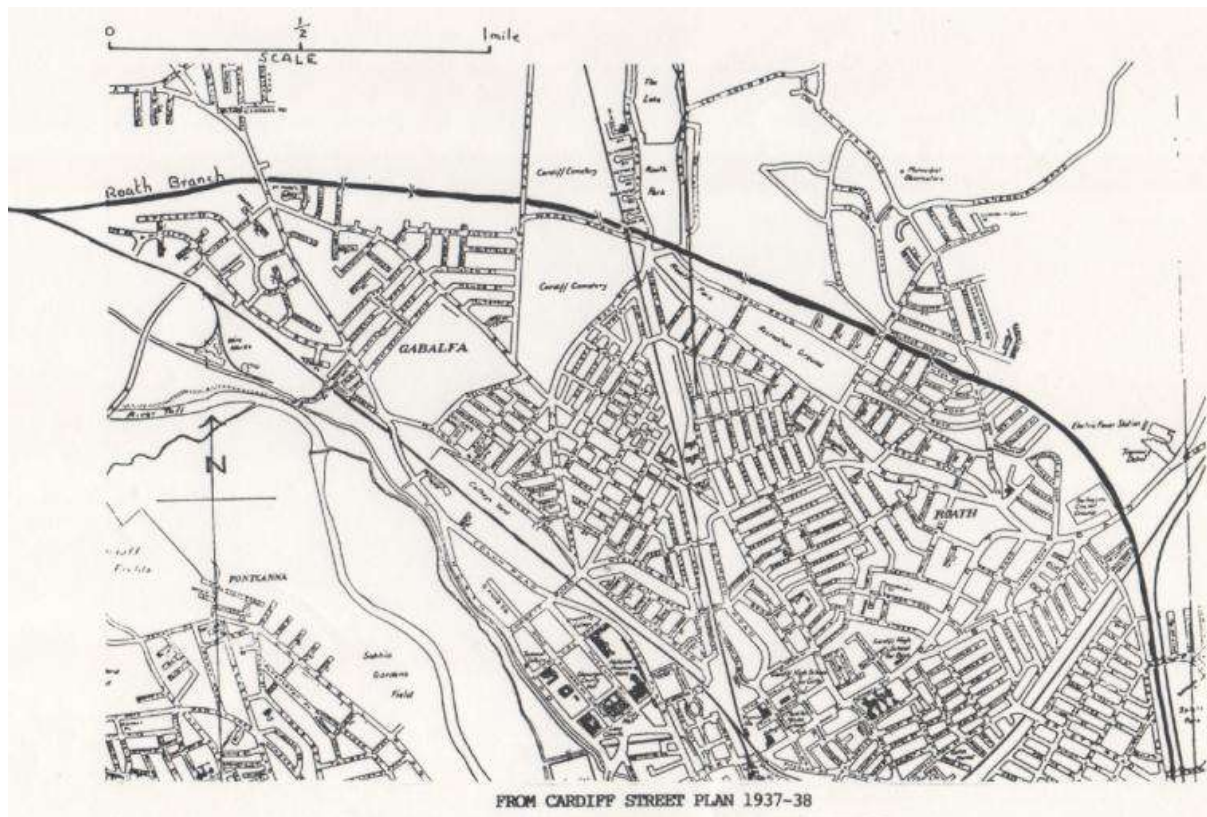
"This railway commences by a junction with the T.V.R. in Whitchurch at a point under the bridge of a road crossing the Railway from the College Ironworks to Gwauntreoda Common and proceeds in an easterly direction crossing the Merthyr Road at a point 37 yards north of the Heath Turnpike Gate. Continuing in the same direction it crosses Allen's Bank Road at a point 38 yards north of the Wedal Brook and passes between the Upper and Lower Wedal Farms under the Rhymney Railway and over Fair Oak Road at a point about 30 yards east of the Roath Brook where it first enters the Borough and skirting the side of Penylan Hill crosses under Penylan Road at a point about 34 yards south-west of the entrance gates to the Convent; at about 300 yards north of the Roath Mill it curves towards the south over the Newport Road at a point mid way between the end of Spring Gardens Road and Rose Mount over the Great Western Railway and passes the Splott Farm House about 170 yards to the east and continues across the East Moors round the southern boundary of the Tharsis Copper Works yard and terminates at a point about 100 yards measured in a south-westerly direction from the south-west corner of the yard of the Tharsis Copper Works by a junction with Railway No.1 authorised by the Bute Docks Act 1882.

At the point where the Railway crosses under the Penylan Road it is proposed to raise the said road to the extent of 2ft.3in. and improve the gradient starting near the Roath Brook, filling up the hollow part of the roadway and making it one uniform gradient of 1 in 20 instead of 1 in 15 as at present. If carried out this will be a decided improvement, but the Promoters of the Bill should be required to form the portion of the roadway so altered to the full width of 40 feet with the footpaths 7 feet wide on either side and also to construct the bridge to the full width of 40 feet....

The intended line of the Railway or limits of deviation cross in several places the public footpaths from Fair Oak to Pont-y-Llechau and from Roath Mill to Penylan and in such places where the footpaths are crossed, the Promoters should be required to construct suitable footbridges for the convenience and safety of the traffic, to your Satisfaction and should not be allowed to close or stop up any of the aforesaid footpaths.

Where the intended Railway crosses the Roath Brook, the Promoters to construct a bridge of sectional area of not less than 120 feet, to permit of free passage of storm waters and prevent flooding to the land and roads lying above such a bridge."





### Editorial Commentary

On the eve of the last war the course of the railway took it through what was already becoming a rapidly expanding suburban area as can be seen from the reproduction of a portion of a street map of 1938.

It may be of interest to the urban historian, if not to the railway historian, to compare a description of the course of the railway just before it was dismantled with the Borough Engineer's report of 1884.

From an examination of maps of the 1960's we can follow the old main T.V.R. line from Merthyr Tydfil and Pontypridd through the gap between the Garth and the Little Garth passing through the stations of Taffs Well, Radyr and Llandaff. Just after passing under College Road, Llandaff North it reached a point one kilometre from Llandaff station where it branched off the main line to the left through some sidings.

Here the Roath Branch started. Appledore Road was on the right and Celtic Road was on the left. It then passed under the portion of North Road which is now (1987) part of the complex road junction at the intersection of Manor Way, Western Avenue, Eastern Avenue and Whitchurch Road. On the right, St.Marks Avenue, Longspears Avenue and Flaxland Avenue, short streets off Whitchurch Road, all lead up as far as the railway line. The foot-bridge over the line at the end of Flaxland Avenue was later adapted for use as access to the University of Wales Dental Hospital. It then continued more or less along the line of the present Eastern Avenue (A48M) under Allensbank Road, running parallel with Wedal Road. Here it crossed under the Rhymney Railway near Fair Oak, over Lake Road East,

ran behind Ty Draw Road and under the stone bridge of the former Ty Draw Farm. Because the line cut into the gradient of Pen-y-lan Hill, the train driver could hardly have seen Linden Avenue, Ty Draw Place and Penylan Place all leading to the railway line on the right, nor the Convent of the Good Shepherd in Ty Gwyn Road (later the site of Heathfield House R.C.School) on the left of the track just before he drove under Penylan Road.

The course of the track under the bridge has today (1987) been retained as an unsatisfactory and seldom used pedestrian underpass.

Immediately after passing under Pen-y-lan Road the line went through a deeper cutting on the left of which stretched Melrose Avenue - built on T.V.R. land in the 1930's. Here trains passed under the arch of the bridge which at one time carried an ancient track from Penylan to Roath Mill.

This footbridge which connected Melrose Avenue with Ladysmith Road was demolished in November 1985 to provide additional space for new housing. The cutting between Penylan Road and Ladysmith Road was infilled with soil excavated from the Cathays Cemetery at the time of the construction of the Eastern Avenue. "The Tudors" now stand on the Site of this infill.

After passing under Waterloo Road (Here one bridge was superseded by another close by when the course of the road was changed) the line passed the Colchester Industrial Estate (1950's) on the left. Houses are now (November 1987) in course of erection on the site of the railway along this stretch. The line then crossed the Roath Brook and passed on the left the old Rope Walk. Immediately after skirting the eastern side of the Harlequins Sports Ground, it passed over a bridge that took the line over Newport Road, then ran behind Beresford Lane, Spring Gardens Lane and Spring Gardens Terrace, cutting across the old main G.W.R. line at the rear of the now demolished Leo's Supermarket. It ran parallel with Moorland Road towards Lower Splott, parallel with Swansea Street, across the Moors and on to the Roath Dock.

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The Roath Branch of the T.V.R. was closed on 4 May 1968.

## **GLAMORGAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

We have a reciprocal arrangement with the Glamorgan Family History Society under which exchange our Newsletter for their Journal. The August number (No.13) of their Journal includes an alphabetical index compiled by Howard Llewellyn to Glamorgan testators whose wills were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury between 1601 and 1700.

Another contribution of interest to local historians is : "A Glimpse of St Lythans over a Hundred Years Ago" by Gwyn Prescott, which is a short review of an anonymously handwritten slim notebook dated 1886 held in the Glamorgan Record Office (G.R.O. Ref. P/41/CW/4).

The history portion of the notebook turns out to be a transcript of an account in a volume of Arch. Camb. in 1862. Of greater interest is the list of names of all the families living in the St Lythans in October 1886 giving their religious persuasions. Mr. Prescott tells us that it appears from this list that nearly half were Nonconformists and just under one third were Anglicans. The remainder did not attend divine worship anywhere.

Journal Nos. 1 to 13, spread over the past four years, have been edited by Howard Llewellyn who has now resigned because of pressure of work and because he feels it is time for someone to bring some fresh ideas to the publication. I have sympathy with him on that score!

The Secretary of the Glam. F.H.S. is Maureen Bullows, The Orchard, Penmark, Barry, S.Glam.

## ALBANY ROAD SCHOOL CENTENARY

The headmaster, staff and pupils of Albany Road School are to be congratulated for working so hard in preparing the celebrations for the centenary of their school. The formal opening ceremony was held at the school on Friday 6th November and from 9th to 12th November the school was thrown open to the public during normal school hours.

Throughout the whole period of the celebrations the teachers and children, who had co-operated enthusiastically to make the event a great success, had entered into the spirit of the occasion by dressing up in late Victorian costume. An exhibition of professional standard occupied the two floors of the school. Victoriana on display on the ground floor included dolls, original costumes, a mangle and many interesting collectors' items. A delightful mock-up of Victorian shop-windows in Albany Road occupied part of the corridor. School log books, admission registers and an old punishment book were among the school records on view in the main hall together with letters and transcribed reminiscences from former pupils, the oldest of whom is a 100 years old lady. Upstairs, a fine collection of photographs, newspaper cuttings and displays illustrating some important public events over the past century were artistically arranged and well captioned. Members of our Society will be pleased to know that considerable use had been made of relevant material published in back numbers of our Newsletters as the basis for projects by the pupils in connection with the centenary. Use had been made of the 1840 Tithe Map and Apportionment and the Medical Officer's Report on Roath of 1872. Some of the photographs from our own portfolio were given a place of prominence.

## EXTRACTS FROM ALBANY BOARD SCHOOLS' LOG

***The School was formally opened on Wednesday, 2nd November, 1887, by  
Sir Morgan Morgan, Mayor.***

On 7th November the children were admitted and by the end of the first week there were 138 girls and 154 boys on roll. Miss Hannah Williams stated that the girls in Standard 1, in particular, were extremely backward and most did not know their letters. Mr. Willmott noted that the boys did not know their letters and high absenteeism was very common during the first week.

### FROM MISS HANNAH WILLIAMS LOG - 1888—1889

**February, 1888** - Sixty children on admission did not know their letters. After 10 months the school was congratulated on its work and discipline which were described as excellent - "The only point calling for remark is that some of the reading might be more natural." It is interesting to note that a visitor to the **school** in August, 1888, was Madam Claire Novello Davies, who was the mother of Ivor Novello.

**1889** — Summary of H.M. Inspector's Report: Girls' School — "The girls were under excellent discipline and the musical drill is very praiseworthy."

## **FROM MR. WILLMOTT'S LOG 1887—1912**

**November 21, 1887** - First minor employed on a month's trial as numbers had now risen to 238. "A great improvement noticed in the discipline in all classes, but the greatest problem will be to deal with truants." Between 30 and 40 boys seem to be confirmed truants - several severely punished for truanting.

**W/E February 3, 1888** - Chas. I. Whitwell, H.M.I. visited the school and was astonished to find the number of boys who knew nothing. 63 boys were named and then formed what was termed "an alphabet class."

**15th August, 1888** - Absenteeism high owing to a Band of Hope Demonstration in town.

**March, 1889** — H.M.I. visited school — 415 boys in attendance, found boys kneeling on the floor writing — suggested a further supply of desks would be necessary.

**October 8, 1889** — No registers marked owing to a "strike" on the part of the boys at this end of the town. The Crwys Road boys started, and a large number of the boys of this school followed them. Head immediately sent for the police and so saved the premises from damage, although some of the schools had windows broken.

**January 1891** - Heating apparatus was not lit owing to the failure of the contractor to send wood. School was very cold and the boys had to be exercised constantly to keep themselves warm.

**August 1891** - Abolition of fees in all Board Schools in Cardiff; attendance subsequently the highest since the school had opened.

**September 21, 1891** - Nearly 200 boys absent owing to the arrival in the town of "Buffalo Bill" and his "Wild West Show."

**December, 1892** — Measles and diphtheria very prevalent in the neighbourhood - boys from infected houses kept away from school. Dr. Walford, Medical Officer of Health for Cardiff, visited the school and thoroughly inspected the premises. He seemed to think that there must be some decaying animal matter under the floors of the Girls' and Infants' School. Large numbers of boys kept home by parents because of rumours circulating that the school was in a bad sanitary condition.

**June 20, 1894** - The new Roath Park opened by the Earl of Dumfries — school holiday given in the afternoon.

**July, 1897** - Extreme overcrowding recorded. Desks had to be put together without gangways and teachers could not get around the class. Heat very oppressive - large number of boys had to leave school through faintness. Only one water tap available for 636 boys.

**May, 1898** — Prolonged miners' strike beginning to have an effect — applications for dinner tickets had become more frequent. A great deal of poverty reported amongst the "better class working man."

**May, 1900** - Holiday given to commemorate the Relief of Mafeking and also the Queen's birthday.

**January 25, 1901** - Boys dismissed to allow them the opportunity of hearing the Mayor proclaim the succession of King Edward VII to the throne following the death of Queen Victoria.

**May 24, 1905** - Extract from copy of Government report after visit of H.M.I. — "A modern system of flushing the urinals should be adopted and the interior of these offices should be properly screened from view."

**October 23, 1905** - The King proclaimed Cardiff a city and its Mayor was created a Lord Mayor.

**October 22-26, 1906** - Schools closed the whole of the week to celebrate the opening of the New Town Hall and Law Courts.

**April 22-26, 1907** - Several boys have been punished this week for unruly behaviour and reckless rushing about in the playground, and also for annoying people in the neighbourhood of the school by kicking and knocking at the doors on their way to and from school.

**May 10, 1907** - Memo from Director of Education:— "In future scholars are not allowed to go to the coal houses for coal for the school fires".

**October 14, 1907** - First female member of staff registered - Miss Minnie Grace Cedervall, as an Ex Pupil Teacher Assistant from Grangetown Girls' School.

**November 13, 1907** - Mr. Hobson, H.M. Sub-inspector of Schools visited the school and examined the registers. He found two errors in marking. Both teachers responsible explained to the H.M.I. how the errors had been made. It is evident however, that the mistakes could not have occurred had the number marked on the register been properly checked with the number in the class. A meeting of staff was held at 4.15 to discuss the marking of registers.

**March, 1910** - Major Baden Powell inspected Boy Scouts - attendance affected.

**March, 1912** - Council decided to give breakfasts as well as dinners to necessitous children owing to the coal strike. Great deal of distress in area as a large number of parents out of work because of coal strike.

**Albany Road School was commandeered for use as a Military Hospital during the First World War.**

#### **FROM MR. WILLMOTT'S LOG 1914-1919**

**August 4, 1914** - World War!

**August 24, 1914** - School re-opened but had been taken over by the War Office as a Military Hospital - children sent to Roath Park and Marlborough. Because of the war and circumstances children at Marlborough attend from 10.55 am to 1pm and 3.25pm to 5.30pm. Boy Scouts recruited as messengers.

**September 7, 1914** - A large number of boys between 13 and 14 have been allowed to leave school for work owing to the War Crisis.

**October 16, 1914** - Several complaints made by the residents near Marlborough Road School with respect to stone throwing and other annoyances by the boys as they come to and from school. Headteacher warned the boys that very stringent measures would be taken with any lad reported for the offence.

**February 4, 1916** - Circular from Director querying large consumption of gas used for previous quarter and asking for Head's remarks on this.

**March 10, 1916** - Manager of Cardiff Empire Cinema was arranging a performance of the film "Britain Prepared" for schoolchildren' on Saturday morning. The charge for admission would be 3d per child. Children should assemble at their schools and proceed to the Empire in the charge of their teacher. The arrangement would have the warm approval of the Education Committee.

**June 2, 1916** - A circular from Director of Education notifying that "The Lord's Prayer must be said at the opening and close of each session."

**July 21, 1916** - A new scheme of War Savings in connection with the National War Savings Association was started in the school.

**September 22, 1916** - School hours for afternoon sessions shall be from 1.30 to 5.0pm from October 1, 1916, to March 31, 1917, to save gas and to avoid the great expense of providing dark blinds in a number of Elementary schools.

**October 6, 1916** - A boy was sent to the truant school at Dinas Powis as well as several other cases before the magistrates.

**January 19, 1917** - Each boy from Standard IV upwards to be presented by Lady Mackworth with a book entitled "A Nation's Heroes." The book gave a description of the Statuary in' the City Hall presented to the City by Lord Rhondda.

**March 9, 1917** - Headmaster was requested to canvass all members of staff as to those who were willing to undertake Voluntary National Service.

**March 30, 1917** - Circular received dealing with the absence of children from school for obtaining a supply of potatoes and asking that the children should be informed that in future no child of school age would be supplied during school hours.

**September 6, 1915** - School began operating a single shift system thereby starting at 1.30pm.

**September 10, 1915** - Circular from Director of Education warning children about the dangers of putting stones on the tramway lines.

**October 1, 1915** - Circular from Director notifying all teachers wishing to join H.M. Forces would be required to fill in a Form of Particulars before any steps are taken to join.

**October 18, 1915** - Circular from Director asking for volunteers from members of staff to do clerical and other work at the Registration Office during spare time. Every member of staff volunteered.

**November 5, 1915** - Available to schools "The National Songs of the Allies and Neutral Nations."

**December 13-17, 1915** — Head's quote. "The attendance is exceedingly bad, in fact, I do not remember ever having such a poor attendance."

**April 30, 1917** - Mr. C. F. Davies, certificated teacher, rejoined the staff after military service.

**October 8, 1917** — During the past fortnight the whole of the Headmaster's time has been taken up in preparing returns for the Education Committee and the Juvenile Labour Bureau. The attending has gone from bad to worse and has been chiefly caused by the absence of boys who are detained by their employers or who are too tired to come to school after working for several hours. The parents seem to be able to do just as they like with regard to attendance.

**March 4, 1918** - Children were given a holiday to commemorate visit of the Prince of Wales to the City.

**October 21, 1918** — Schools closed for a fortnight by order of Medical Authorities owing to a serious epidemic of Spanish Influenza.

**November 11-15, 1918** - Schools closed to commemorate the signing of the Armistice.

**December 14, 1918** (Saturday) — General Election.

**June 26, 1919** - Holiday given for a visit by the Prince of Wales to the Royal Show which took place in the City.

**July 14-18, 1919** - As part of the Peace Celebrations the children were taken to the Penylan Cinema and were given a tea.

**November 24, 1919** — Albany Road School re-opened after 5½ years during which time the buildings were used as a Military Hospital.

**December 18, 1919** - Mr. E. C. Willmott retired after 32 years service as Headmaster. The boys presented him with a clock and a case of pipes in commemoration of his service.

#### **FROM MISS ELEANOR JONES' LOG, 1921-1925**

**May 25, 1921** - The Rotary Club made arrangements with the Education Committee to take five girls from the school between the ages of 10 and 16, having lost their fathers during the Great War to Caerphilly and entertain them to tea.

**May 23, 1922** - Timetable could not be followed owing to the noise caused by the re-laying of the electric car line. The noise was so great that at times it was almost impossible to make oneself heard.

**August 25, 1925** - Electric light installed.



# WORLD WAR II

## Extracts from Log of Albany Boys' School, 1939—1945

**September 4, 1939** - War having been proclaimed between Britain and Germany on Sunday, September 3. The scholars, who had assembled in the school yard were dismissed.

**September 11, 1939** - School re-opened this morning, all boys parading with their gas masks.

**July 1, 1940** - Air-raids during the night were the cause of a big decrease in attendance this morning.

**March 4, 1941** - Last night a very intensive raid was made over the eastern part of the city. It lasted for upwards of five hours. The attendance was very badly affected being only 54.72% this morning.

**March 17, 1941** - Today Forms 1, 2 and 3 from Marlborough Road Boys' School which has been destroyed by bombing, attended at this school with their teachers.

**January 6, 1941** - The attendance was very low in consequence of the evacuation of many families from their homes which were utterly or partially demolished by bombs and landmines during the nights of the 2nd and 3rd of January. It was the most destructive and widespread raid we have experienced up to date.

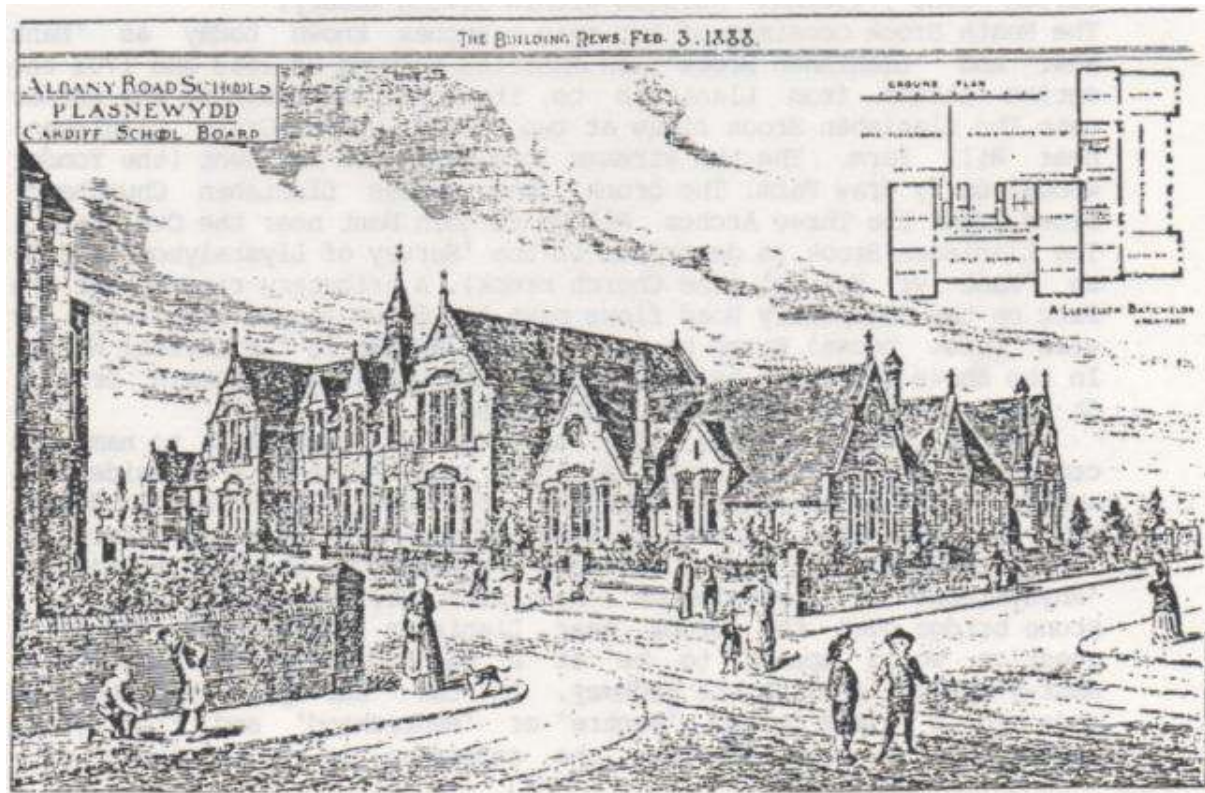
**May 31, 1940** - Evacuation of children whose parents desired same took place today, the party from this school numbering from the three departments 165 were taken to the Glyncorrwg area and were billeted in Cymmer, Glyncorrwg, Abergwynfi and Abercregan.

**May 8, 1945** - this day known as "VE" day was announced by the Prime Minister, Mr Winston Churchill. to be the end of hostilities in Europe after five years 8 months of war - the war with Japan is continued.

**August 18, 1945** - This day known as "VJ" day was announced by the Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Atlee to be the end of the war with Japan. Peace has come after nearly six years of the most terrible war in the history of mankind. Most of the countries of the world have been involved. A new weapon of war, the "atomic bomb" has been used. It is such a terrible method of destruction that it should banish war for ever.

- *I am extremely grateful to Mr D.J.Lloyd, the Head Teacher of Albany Road Primary School for permission to reproduce from the Centenary Souvenir Programme the above extracts from the school log books which, he tells me, are still kept in his custody on the school premises.*

*Editor*



Albany Road Schools

## ROATH BROOK

by Councillor Edgar L. Chappell

Taken from the "Cardiff & Suburban News" 18 June 1932

A study of the local river systems around Cardiff is full of interest not only from a geographical standpoint, but also from the point of view of place nomenclature. In this article it is proposed to deal with some of the ancient names associated with the stream name now commonly known as Roath Brook and its several tributaries. This stream name is probably of modern origin, and is certainly less interesting than the names it displaced. The oldest name of the main stream which I have seen is 'Kenelech'. This occurs in a document of about the year 1200 AD, recording the gift of land by King John to the Abbey of St Augustine, Bristol.

The name 'Kenelech' is probably a compound of the particle 'Ken' (a well known river prefix as in Cynon, Kennet etc.) and an old English or Danish word 'Leche' meaning stream. The English word 'lake' is of similar origin, and in the district of south Pembrokeshire, the word 'lake' is still sometimes used to denote a stream. A survival of this ancient name still remains in the name of the bridge over the brook at the foot of Penylan Hill. On the 6" O.S. map the bridge is described as 'Pont y Llechau' (the stone bridge). In manorial records of the 17th and 18th centuries, the name is spelt in various ways, e.g. Llyki, Lliki, Llecki and Lleici. Lleici is the Welsh equivalent of Lucy and some writers have concluded that the brook and the bridge were named after one Lucy, who is stated by them to have been an early Celtic saint. There is no doubt that the first interpretation is more likely to be correct than those which associate the stream with 'stones' and with 'Lucy'. An old tenement near the bridge mentioned called 'Pont y llechau' existed within living memory.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Roath Brook consists of two main branches known today as 'Nant Mawr' and 'Llanishen Brook'. In manorial surveys of 1653 and 1702 the entire stream from Llanishen to its mouth was known by the former name.<sup>(2)</sup> The Llanishen Brook rises at two points under Graig Llanishen near Hill Farm. The two streams join near Coed Tir Hwnt (the Yonder woods) on Ty draw Farm. The brook then passes Llanishen Church and flows under the Three Arches Bridge to join Nant near the Oval Park.

The Llanishen Brook is described in the 'Survey of Llystalybont' (1653) as 'Nant yr Eglwys' (the Church brook). A tributary rising near the Parc on the Caerphilly Road flows past Llwynyrwn (round bush) and Ty glas (blue house) Farms to join Nant yr Eglwys in the Crystal Woods. In the above survey it is named 'Nant y Mynydd' (the mountain brook). It traversed a portion of the Great Heath.<sup>(3)</sup>

Where streams cross old roads it is customary to name the crossings, and in the Cardiff district one notices a considerable number of names commencing with the word 'rhyd' (Welsh for 'ford'). In both the Llystalybont Survey of 1653 and the Roath Keynsham Survey of 1702, reference is made to such a crossing on the Ty-glas Road as 'Rhydyminae' or 'Rhydymingoch'. As a district, reference is made to a Stone bridge over the brook near Llanishen Church. The ford in question would appear to be at a point near Ty-glas Farm where Nant-y-Mynydd crosses the highway. In the surveys reference is made to a place called 'Pentre' or 'Pentrehand' and from the description I conclude that the reference is to a cluster of tenements near the Caerphilly-Ty-glas cross roads.<sup>(4)</sup> The name 'pentre'

means village. The correct name of the ford mentioned may be 'min goch' (meaning 'the red brink'). It is possible that there was a stone bridge over the brook for foot passengers and that this was of a reddish colour. Such a stone may today be seen Crossing Nant y Nofydd near the Twmpath at Rhiwbina (Rhyd y Nofydd).

Where Nant yr Eglwys crossed the highway at a point near the modern Three Arches Bridge, there was a ford known as 'Rhyd Lydan' (the broad ford), and it was from this crossing that the old farmhouse standing at the junction of Heathwood and Fidas Roads took its name. It should be noted however that the Heathwood Road was non-existent prior to the Heath Enclosure in 1810. The lane connecting Llanishen with the Heath was in 1653 known as 'Heol-y-coed' (Woodland Road).

Nant Mawr, the easterly main tributary of the Roath Brook rises on Graig Lisvane near Pantyglas (green hollow) Farm. In its upper reaches it is known as 'Nant Tranch yr Hebog' and the valley through which it flows near Cefn On Halt as 'Cwm Tranch yr Hebog'. These picturesque names for the brook and the dingle apparently bear some relation to a hawk's death ('tranc'), but I am unable to explain how these names arose. Nant Tranch yr Hebog is joined by some minor streams near the railway halt, and from that point the brook is known as Nant Mawr. Where the brook crosses the highway near the ancient lord's mill at the Llanishen-Lisvane boundary (near the residence of Mr North Lewis) was a ford described in the survey of 1653 as 'Rhyd y Ffagle' (the ford of the crutches).

Further along its course we come to other ancient fords, which are not now clearly defined as the course of the brook and the tracks crossing them were diverted when the reservoirs were constructed. The names of the fords are however perpetuated by their application to two farms in their vicinity. The first 'Rhyd y Bilwg' (the ford of the bill-nook) also referred to in the above mentioned Surveys of 1653 and 1702 as 'Rhyd y Billwke' and 'Rhyd y Byllwch', has been anglicised as 'Hackerford'. In 1702, the tenement near this ford was apparently known as 'Vaindre' (possibly the stone house). The second ford was 'Rhyd y Blewyn' (the hair-like ford). The Cardiff City Council have quite recently applied this name to the ancient highway in the vicinity leading from Hilary into Llanedern Parish. At the point where the brook crosses the highway near Rhydypenau Farm was another ford known as 'Rhyd - Penau' (possibly, the ford of the chiefs).

The interpretation of the old farm name 'Fidas' in the same locality presents some difficulty. I have seen it spelt in a variety of ways in various records, e.g. Vid Las (1653), Vydias, Vyd Las, Vydiais. Dr Patterson thinks the name may in ancient days have been applied to the stream, but I've not seen any record in support of this supposition. The ending 'glas' or 'glais', however is a common Celtic word for a stream and we have it in another stream in the vicinity, the 'Dowlais'. I incline to the view, but not very strongly, that the particle 'Fid' may be a corruption of 'Rhyd' (ford) so that the name may be 'Rhydias' (meaning stream ford). The name Fidas is shown by the records of the Llandaff Highway Board to have been applied to the highway of that name as far back as 1860.

In modern times the united brook south of Llanishen as far at any rate as Fair Oak has been known as Nant Mawr, but the portion from that point until its discharge into the Rhymney has been denominated the Roath Brook for at least 50 years. The chief feeder south of Llanishen is one from the west. It rises near Tonyrywen Farm on the Caerphilly Road and flows into the main stream near Fair Oak (formerly known as 'Derwen Deg'). This tributary is known as the 'Wedal', a name which is compounded of a common Celtic stream name (compare Wey, Wye etc.) with a familiar old Danish or English word meaning valley. 'Wedal' may therefore be a corruption of 'Way-Dale' (a stream

valley). The two farms bearing the name Wedal in the 17th century are now included in the cemetery enclosure. The application of this name to the new road bisecting the cemetery is very appropriate as the stream flows alongside the road. At or near the point where the Wedal joins Nant Mawr there existed both in 1653 and in 1702 a bridge which was known as 'Pont Ieuan Quint'. This bridge was one of the important boundary marks between the ancient manors of Roath Keynsham and Llystalybont.

#### **EDITORIAL FOOTNOTES:**

(1) See WILLIAM REES - "Cardiff - A History of the City" 2nd Ed.1969. Cardiff Corporation. p.15 footnote, the greater portion of which is quoted in entry in "A to Z of Place-names" on "Nant Fawr" in Roath L.H.S, Project Newsletter Vol. 2. pp.108 - 109.

William Rees's footnote also states:

The Upper Lecky Bridge - Upper Pont Lecky - crossed the brook at Penylan Road and the Lower Pont (alias Popitt) stood on the site near Roath Church.

The Cefn Coed crossing, between the Fair Oak and the Cymdda Bach, was known as Pont Ifan Quint. This was replaced by the modern iron bridge in 1889.

(2) It was called "Nant Mawr" (great brook) in the local (ungrammatical) vernacular. As 'Nant' is a feminine it should strictly be "Nant "Fawr".

(3) I wonder if this would be better rendered as "The Great Heath stream". Although mynydd = mountain, Mynydd Bychan (literally the little heath) was the Welsh name for The Great Heath through which the stream flowed.

(4) I think we can discount "Pentrehand" See Roath L.H.S.Project Newsletter Vol.I.p.96 and footnote 13 p.98. re "Gwain-y-pentra".

(5) See Vol.4.p.11 (Notes on Nant Fawr by Gethin Davey) for impact of Rhymney Railway Co., especially the Cefn On Tunnel on course of the brook.

## THE ROATH LIBRARY

### Introduction

With the opening soon of the New Library in Cardiff a new chapter will open in the history of Cardiff's public library service. The Manpower Services Commission Historic Records Project has recently published a free pamphlet which gives a potted history of the Central Library.

It would, I thought, be opportune to reproduce in this issue a report held in the Central Library of an address by John Ballinger on the occasion of the opening of the building housing the Roath Library at Four Elms, Newport Road, Cardiff on Thursday October 10th 1901. At the formal opening ceremony, the Mayor, Councillor Thomas Andrews J.P. drew the first book from the lending library and was presented with a memorial key.

Meanwhile a few brief notes on the Central Library as an archival repository (an aspect not dealt with in the above-mentioned pamphlet) may be appropriate.

One of the most valuable assets to come into the hands of the newly formed unit of local government in 1974, the South Glamorgan County Council, was the City of Cardiff's public library system - in its day one of the largest in the country. Its voluminous and valuable records, housed in the Central Library comprised over 2,500 manuscripts. Among its treasures is the priceless Book of Aneurin - the earliest known literary manuscript in Welsh. Deeds and documents deposited at the Central Library numbered over 30,000. A separate research room accommodating 30 readers was opened in 1923 to meet the needs of the increasing number of post-graduate research students.

During the last few years, the slow task has been taking place of sorting and transferring documents, many of which have already been calendared by the Historical MSS Commission, to the Glamorgan Record Office.

Until the Glamorgan Record Office was established just before the outbreak of the last war, the Central Library was the only repository in Wales bearing any resemblance to an English County Record Office. But it had managed to acquire much more than local records; it had accumulated collections relating to the whole of Wales, Starting in 1896 with the most substantial portion of Sir Thomas Phillips' Welsh manuscripts (some 700 of them). The Central Library staked a strong claim to become the National Library of Wales but after a prolonged and bitter wrangle Aberystwyth won the day. By way of consolation, Cardiff was awarded the National Museum of Wales.

Prof. R.Ian Jack of Sydney University, Australia in his "Medieval Wales".( Pub: Sources of History Ltd. London. 1972) p.109 states:

.....potentiality of Cardiff Central Library has not been realised. The comparison between the grandiosity of the Aberystwyth Library and the rather decayed Victorian charm and inadequate accommodation at Cardiff is only too striking, but Cardiff's collections deserve to be much better known outside Wales.

In 1931 the Cardiff Central Library was recognised by the Master of the Rolls as an official depository for manorial documents and since then some important local collections of such documents were acquired for permanent preservation. In addition, the Library has a stock of well over 20,000 prints, maps, drawings, portraits and photographs as well as incunabula from Continental, English and Welsh presses.

With the growth of population and the continuing extension of built up areas into new suburbs, the first branch libraries were opened at Cathays and Roath in 1889, at Canton, Grangetown and the Docks in 1891, and in Splotlands in 1894. The Roath Park branch (now re-named Pen-y-lan branch) was opened in 1956.

Much of the initial efficient organisation of the City's early library service was undoubtedly due to the dynamism of John Ballinger who was librarian from 1884 until 1908 when he was appointed Chief Librarian at the newly formed National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Here is his report on the Roath Library:

#### **THE PLANNING AND EQUIPMENT OF THE ROATH (CARDIFF) BRANCH LIBRARY**

The branch library in which we are now assembled has been erected in pursuance of a scheme drawn up by the Free Libraries Committee and approved by the Corporation for the provision of six properly equipped branch libraries and reading rooms to supply the wants of outlying districts of the borough. Branch reading-rooms have been in Operation in each of the six districts for some years, but, with one exception, in temporary buildings of a most inadequate character. By the Cardiff Corporation Act of 1898 the Corporation was empowered to levy a rate of 13d. in the £ for library purposes. This amount has been levied since the passing of the Act, and active steps were at once taken to put the branches into better buildings, and to open branch lending libraries. With the completion of this building and another at Grangetown commenced at the same time, five out of the six districts will have been provided with satisfactory buildings. This building, however, and the one at Grangetown, represent an advance upon anything yet attempted in Cardiff in the way of branch libraries. The site is a most excellent one in every way, giving light on all sides, occupying a prominent position in the main thoroughfare, and easily accessible from all parts of the district it is to serve, and also allowing for future extension of the library or reading room, or both when required.

There are two main entrances to the building. The one to be used is that facing Newport Road. If the other were used the wind would blow straight into the reading-room, and with a north-westerly gale that would be uncomfortable.

The height of the main room is twenty-five feet to the spring of the roof.

The building has been planned with a view to efficient control at a minimum of expense, hence it has one floor only. The main reading-room, the departments for women and boys, and also the lending library are all practically in one room, with a floor space of 2,925 square feet. It will be noticed that the floor of the lending library is raised nine inches above the floor of the reading-room. This gives the library attendants better control of the room. Six standard bookcases placed on this raised floor will provide for the storage of 7,000 volumes. This space, surrounded by a counter, forms the

lending library. The bays, for women and boys, are to the right and left, with a lavatory for women close to their department. The librarian's room, assistants' mess-room and a store-room being immediately to the rear of the lending library, where a separate entrance for the staff is provided. The heating will be by low-pressure hot water. The heating chamber is in the basement.

The present provision is as follows:-

Book storage	7,000 volumes
(Future extension	5,000 volumes)
Newspapers	50 readers
Magazines, etc.	60 readers
Women's department	12 readers
Boys' department	12 readers
Total	134 readers

The floors throughout are of wood blocks and the building is lighted with incandescent electric lamps, suspended from the roof over the centre tables and reading stands, and between the alcoves in the lending library. The reading stands around the wall will be lighted by lamps fixed to the wall above the stands. The greatest care has been taken to ensure that readers shall not throw shadows on the papers and magazines they are reading, nor upon those being read by others. A glance will convince you that the daylight is ample in every part. A fire hydrant, connected with the water main and supplied with hose, nozzle, and saddle for storing the hose, is placed immediately inside the main reading- room. The reading-room has been arranged as far as possible upon the principle that all the people standing to read shall be round the walls, while those who sit shall occupy the centre of the room. It was found necessary, however, to provide more reading-stands than could be put on the walls, and these have been arranged crosswise at the end nearest the door, which will give greater privacy to the tables.

If you will look at the plan you will find that in no case is a reading-stand so placed that readers can lounge against a wall or other support. We object to sleeping in our rooms, and offer as few inducements as possible to somnolence. I am quite aware that in a well-warmed room a reader does sometimes get drowsy, and perhaps nods without intending it. That is a different matter from converting a reading-room into a sleeping apartment, as a few people would like to do.

It has occasionally been remarked to me that we ought to pity the poor fellows who want to use the reading-room as a shelter where they may sleep or eat their meals - and not be too harsh with them. I trust we are not harsh, but it is not our business to provide for destitute people. We are commissioned to provide the public with facilities for reading, the other things are outside our powers, and we have nothing to do but to prevent the buildings being used for purposes other than those for which they are provided.

The best defence of our policy, if defence is needed will be found in the Central Reading-room. All classes use that room to the number of about 5,000 daily. Yet most of you know that a few grumblers are to be found in every potato patch, but I can assure you that a complaint rarely reaches me about the Central Reading-room, and if there was any real ground of complaint, you may be quite sure the librarian would soon hear of it!



The newspaper stands will be fitted with Lambert's newspaper clips, the special revolving holders for illustrated papers being also used. A list of the periodicals arranged in one of Mr Lambert's frames will be hung in the vestibule. An upright stand, with glass fronts, is provided for special supplements to illustrated journals, similar in construction to one in the general reading-room at the Central Library, which enables pictures to be shown to advantage without risk of injury or defacement (see sketch).

The tables are made of a standard size (7ft. x 3ft.) adopted for all our libraries, so that we are interchangeable. I am sorry to say that the tables for this branch were made without my seeing the design, and that an objectionable tie-rail has been put for readers to scrape their feet upon, and bark the shins of their legs. If the committee does not decide to remove the rails at once they will be worn through in the course of two or three years. If instead of going to another town for a design for tables, our own Central Library had been visited, better results would have been obtained. I should like to state also that I am not responsible for the position of the heating appliances in this room, and that I was not consulted before they were put in. I know something of what is going to happen here when this heating apparatus is at work. If those responsible for what has been done had given the librarian an opportunity of seeing their plans, some money would have been saved. Probably when the attendants and the readers have been nearly choked with dust, the radiators against the pillars will be removed. There will still remain, however, the dust set in motion by the heated pipes sunk below the floor level where they cannot be kept clean.

But to return to the arrangement of the room. All the newspapers will be arranged in alphabetical order on the stands. An enamelled plate with the name of the paper clearly printed - black on white we find is best - will be fixed above each paper.

In much the same way the magazines and other periodicals will be arranged in alphabetical order on the tables, the name plates being fixed to a moulded strip fastened along the centre of the table. All periodicals on the tables will be provided with reading-cases, and these cases will be fixed with braided cord to an eyelet beneath the table. The cord will be long enough to allow a reader to read the periodical comfortably, but it cannot be removed from the position assigned to it.

This method of giving every newspaper and periodical a fixed place, with its title prominently displayed, whether engaged or not, has been put to a severe test in the Central Reading-room where it has been in use for nearly six years, and also at the Splotlands Branch where it has been used still longer.

I have never heard a single reasonable complaint against it and it certainly enables readers to at once find out whether what they want is in use or not. It also keeps the reading-room tidy, and enables the attendants to exchange the periodicals without waste of time.

Of course it does not suit the taste of certain people who want to settle down in snug corners, and after collecting the best of the periodicals proceed to read them one at a time, sitting on the others in the meantime to the exclusion of other readers. The same method of fixing the periodicals will be applied in the women's department. In the days prior to the adoption of this method, we used to have constant trouble with the women's room at the Central Library. There used to be a scramble every morning for the "Queen", "Gentlewoman", and other fashionable papers. If a more than usually selfish reader chanced to get the room to herself for a few minutes, these papers vanished.

Sometimes a reader would find me and complain that the "Gentlewoman" was not in the room. I had then to go to the room, and after studying the readers for a minute or two invent some excuse for making the most innocent-looking lady present move from her chair. There, concealed by her dress while she remained seated, would be disclosed the missing journal. The lady, however, sometimes refused to move from her chair, adopting an injured tone, but in time I was equal to most of the "fences" provided, and when the new women's reading-room at the Central Library was opened all the periodicals were fixed. As a peace-offering for the numerous interferences which I had been compelled to make in former days, I added to the new women's reading-room a looking-glass, carefully arranged so that vulgar males cannot see it, or guess that it is there.

An open bookcase with a selection of books which readers may read in the room will be provided, and special facilities will also be given for reference to the local directory, and to the railway time tables.

Besides the name plate another enamelled plate will be fixed against those newspapers which are filed in the Central Library, giving the dates covered by the files.

So far a drinking-fountain has not been offered for this branch, but one will no doubt be presented when the want is made known.

No provision has been made here for a resident caretaker. The contents of a branch library are not of a character to require special protection, and the site can be used to greater advantage where a residence is not required.

The reading-room will be open every week-day from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., thirteen hours daily, except on public holidays, when all libraries are closed, and all reading-rooms except the Central Reading-room. The lending library here will be open five days weekly from 12 noon until 9 p.m. Other branch lending libraries, serving a smaller population than this will, are open from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. on five days.

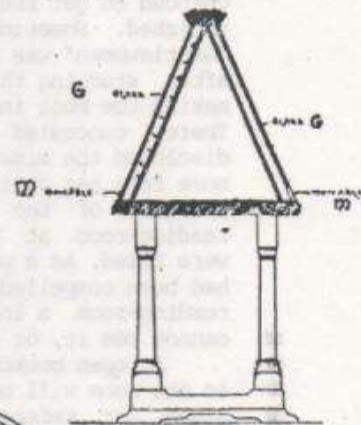
This continuous opening of the lending library for the afternoon and evening has been tried at Splotlands and answers admirably. It is better than the old method of a few hours in the morning and a few more in the evening, which was confusing. People forgot when the library was closed or when it was open. We have to work these branches as economically as possible - so for the present we cannot afford the Staff necessary to open the lending libraries all day and every day. That, however, will come in time.

A word as to the cost. The contract for the building and furniture, architects' and surveyors' charges, clerk of works and other items will absorb about £3,000. The site was purchased by the Corporation for the purpose of street improvements, which have been carried out. The surplus land was allocated for library purposes by the Corporation without charging the cost to the library rate. The Corporation of Cardiff has for many years past adopted a policy of liberality in the matter of libraries.

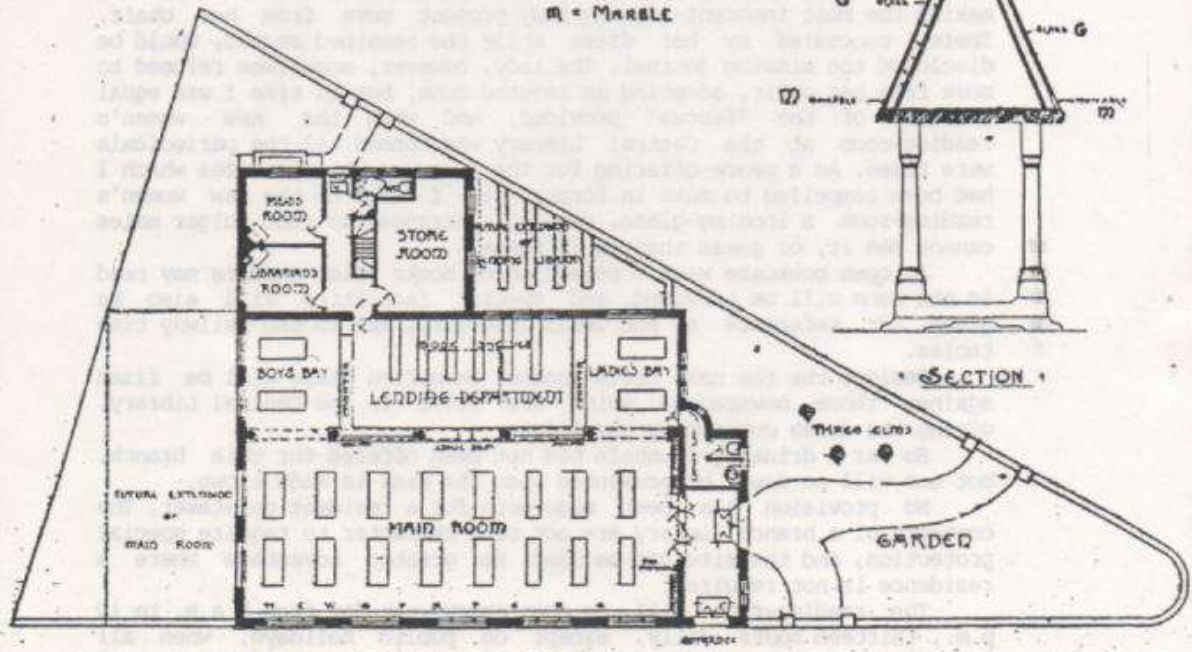
By way of illustration, I may state that in everything except book-storage the accommodation in this branch exceeds that of the Central Library of ten years ago.

PICTURE STAND

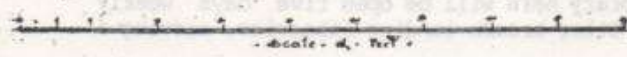
G = GLASS  
M = MARBLE



SECTION



GROUND PLAN



J. J. LEATHER & WILSON  
ARCHITECTS - GARDEN