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Roath
Local History Society

Project Newsletter

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ROATH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

PROJECT NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS of VOLUME 6 No.1

	page
Editorial	2-5
Survey of Cardiff	2
Recent Books	3-4
Howardian High School	5
Duffryn Cottage, Llanishen	6-7
ROATH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY -- 10th Anniversary - Address by D.J.P Childs given to the Society 8 November 1988	8-19
Advert. R.Prust. reproduced from 1873/4 Directory	19
LLANEDEYRN - A HISTORY - Dennis Morgan	20-28

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An Index to Volume 5 (12 A4 pages) is available on request from the Editor 40p post free. Free copies will be sent as usual to members who have placed standing orders and to institutional members.

EDITORIAL

After an interval of more than twelve months we are pleased to be back in business with what we hope will turn out to be a continuing series of regular quarterly issues of Newsletters. The subject matter of many of the contributions will necessarily be less parochial than hitherto as signs emerge that we may have begun to scrape the bottom of the barrel for currently available historical information on the old parish of Roath. In this issue, for example, we have a snippet about the contiguous parish of Llanishen and a full length article which is a complete reproduction of a booklet written four years ago on the parish of Llanedeyrn by the historian, Dennis Morgan. We are greatly indebted to him for allowing his monograph to be re-published in our Newsletter.

Jeff Childs has kindly supplied a copy of his talk given to the Society over a year ago to commemorate our tenth anniversary. I was unfortunately unable to be present to hear Jeff deliver his lecture but on reading the report I cannot resist, with respect, making one major criticism. In his account he has omitted to record the great contribution that he himself has made to the success of the Society. It is doubtful whether it could have survived had he not so gratuitously placed at its disposal the results of his expertise and much time and effort at a time when we were trying to establish the Society on a firm foundation.

Survey of Cardiff

The Survey of Cardiff on whose committee Roath L.H.S. is represented was established in 1988 with the aim of promoting the Study of the architectural and topographical history of Cardiff.

Their first publication was A Bibliography of the History of Cardiff compiled by Brian Ll. James with an appendix by S.M.Romaya (1989). This was followed by Butetown - a Visitor's Guide and the most recent are a booklet by Geoff Dart and Sam Romaya on the History of the Mansion House in Cardiff and a Bibliography of local Directories.

The Historic Records Project (under the auspices of the Training Commission) has been wound up and the Survey team have now taken over the Project's correspondence and research files in the basement of the City Hall. As well as producing several short pamphlets the Project published an attractive 32 page pamphlet called a Cardiff Notebook (1988).

The Survey aims to publish a first main volume on Butetown and the Docks by the end of 1990 and then to proceed with consideration of Splott, Adamsdown and Pengam (i.e. the portion of the old Roath parish included in the present Cardiff Bay Development area).

It will be during this second stage that the Roath L.H.S. should be able to make its most useful contribution to the work of the Survey.

Recent Books

Ian N. Soulsby. Cardiff - A Pictorial History. Pub. Phillimore (1989). £9.95

The publication of this book was obviously timed for the Christmas market. In many families it must have solved the problem of what to buy Grandad or Grandma.

Following the genre of Stewart Williams's "Cardiff Yesterday", it is, as its title suggests, a collection of 167 illustrations preceded by half a dozen introductory pages (un-numbered) of text giving a potted history of Cardiff.

Not only is it similar in lay-out to the "Cardiff Yesterday" series (now up to Volume 21) but many of the pictures have already appeared in Stewart Williams's series. The similarity ends when it comes to the captioning of the pictures. Stewart Williams's topographical captions are invariably accurate and informative. What a pity more care was not taken by the compilers in ensuring correct matching of some of the captions to the photographs.

Plate 24, for example, is a well known picture of the High Corner House, where Edward Priest Richards had his office. It stood in Duke Street on the corner of a lane leading to the entrance of the Castle until 1877. But the caption describes a different property - the Corner House at No.1 St Mary Street, on the corner of Church Street, which was at one time the home of the Richards family. J. Hobson Matthews in 1905 said prophetically (Vol. V. p.357) : "It must not be confused with High Corner House".

Plate 144 which is in fact an aerial view of Pengam Farm c.1935 is described as a rare aerial photograph of Deri Farm, Roath, taken from a balloon at the turn of the century!

The introductory pages are in the nature of a guide-book history of Cardiff. It has become a cliche to describe the pre-industrial town as a "sleepy backwater". Soulsby not only does so but goes further in referring to Cardiff as "a slumbering if not decaying community ..." just before the Glamorganshire canal was built.

As the County town of Glamorganshire, Cardiff was in fact a busy market town with a harbour and a quay which enabled vessels of up to 200 tons to come up to the town. A considerable trade was being carried on with Bristol and other coastal ports. There is no contemporary evidence that decay was setting in even though the Street Commissioners may have neglected their duties. Nor does the fact that the population was under 2000 mean that they were somnolent!

Two bonus points must be awarded for this book

(1) for the presence of a numbered list of illustrations - a feature lacking in Stewart Williams's volumes.

(ii) for the absence of pages of group photographs of school classes, football teams etc.

I was glad to have a copy for a Christmas present and despite its one or two shortcomings it finds a place on my bookshelf.

J. Barry Davies The Freemen and Ancient Borough of Llantrisant - Llantrisant & District Local History Society. (1989).

This book is the outcome of many years' diligent research by the author. The ancient borough of Llantrisant was dissolved by the Municipal Corporation Act 1883 and six years later The Llantrisant Town Trust was formed to take over the management of some of the old borough's assets, including the common, on behalf of the freemen. The publication was timed to coincide with the centenary of the birth of the Town Trust.

Barry Davies has made intelligent use of extant sources to recount a story that covers the medieval origins of the chartered borough that became established around the church and the castle. Local government was in the hands of the freemen burgesses whose customary rights came to be enshrined in the town's charters.

The author traces the historic links between the freemen of today and the burgesses of yesteryear and in so doing evokes a kaleidoscopic picture of the social, economic and political activities of the town over the centuries.

Even for those of us who do not have the remotest connection with Llantrisant the work is of considerable interest and it is always refreshing to see the interpretation by modern scholars of the Norman conquest of Glamorgan being woven into the chapter on the early history of Llantrisant.

Nearly two-thirds of the book is taken up with a list of freemen (numbered 1 to 4233) from 1724 to the present day.

Roath Connections

As I glanced through the names my eye caught several names of men who resided in Roath at the time of their admission. I quote the dates of admission and the consecutive number from Barry Davies's list:-

17.5.1895

1103. Idris Thomas; accountant, Augusta St. Cardiff (son of D. Thomas, hawker of Cymmer. 758)

19.5.1905

1288. John Truman Davies; Diana St. Cardiff (son of J. Davies, draper of Aberavon. 981)

27.5.1910

1367. Daniel Barker Davenport; Strathnairn St.(son of Henry Davenport of Abersychan.1038)

23.5.1919

1515. Thomas Rees; Eyre St. Splott (son of T. Rees 943)

1519. Thomas Israel; Donald St. Cardiff (son of W. Israel of Nantyrarian 223)

1526. William Israel; Carlisle St. Cardiff. (son of David Israel of Llaniiltud Faerfdref 842)

21.5.20

1558. Idwal Israel; Donald St. Cardiff (son of Thomas Israel of same address 1519)

1559. Lewis William Israel; Donald St. Cardiff (son of Thomas Israel of same address 1519) .

25.5.23

1602. Edward Rees Thomas; Comet St. Cardiff. (son of W.Thomas of Llantrisant 834)

28.5.59

2302. S.G.Hyett; Southminster Rd. Cardiff.

2299. Francis Robert Boyd; Elm St, Roath

19.5.66

2529. George Edward Hayward; Elm St. Roath

Howardian High School

The school which has been the centre of our project activities for many years closes down next July. I understand that facilities for adult education will however continue to be available on the site of the "Upper School".

Consideration is being given to running a short series of evening classes there on Local History next Autumn/Winter.

Meanwhile an official history of the school and its predecessors, Howard Gardens and Lady Margaret, is due for publication before the end of the year. It will be called FLOREAT HOWARDIA and has been written by T.J.Foster, retired head of history and a later history master, Ian Myhre, himself an old Howardian and member of our Society.

Fuller details of the publication and Order Forms will be distributed to our members. The book promises to be a significant contribution to the published history of higher education in Cardiff and Roath and will be of interest to local historians as well as all past pupils.

Finally, I hope it is not too early to remind members that the free membership year expires on 31 July next. The subscription of £8. for 1990/1 due on August 1st should be sent to the Treasurer: Vic Smith, 193 Greenway Road, Rumney, Cardiff. CF3 8PH. Cheques should be made payable to the "Roath Local History Society".



DUFFRYN COTTAGE, LLANISHEN

In the Parkend area of the neighbouring parish of Llanishen, off Llandennis Road is a cul-de-sac built in the 1960's called Duffryn Close. It derives its name from an old cottage and farm which stood on the site. I do not know the date of demolition of the thatched cottage.

The following article appeared in the Western Mail & S.Wales News on Thursday 23 March 1933. p.13. It was accompanied by a picture captioned "THE THATCHED COTTAGE at Park End, Roath Park, referred to in the story below."

PEEPS AT AN OLD WORLD COTTAGE

Past and Present Meet

A FARM IN THE CITY

Judged by its main thoroughfares and its imposing civic centre, the architectural beauty of modern Cardiff is acknowledged the world over.

But here and there, hidden away from those who judge the city by modern standards, are a few rare relics of the peaceful, pastoral village that was once Cardiff. One such link with the pre-industrial history of the Welsh Metropolis is the little thatched roofed cottage at Park End, Duffryn Farm, Roath Park.

Although it is reputed to be more than 400 years old, it tries heroically to conceal its antiquity under a newly thatched roof of gleaming straw and a coat of spotless whitewash.

FITS THE SCHEME

It provides a striking contrast with the modern villas which surround it. And yet it seems to fit in perfectly with the scheme of things.

The authentic history of the cottage, which stands on the Tredegar Estate, is sparse. Romantic legends cluster round its ancient walls.

There is little doubt that the building dates back to the early fifteenth century, and that it was once an ecclesiastical sanctuary.

In a survey dated 1764 compiled by a William Morrice (at present in the Tredegar Estate office at Newport) the cottage is located as Capel Dennis. The thickness of the outer walls (they are 2ft. 6in. thick at the base), indicates the approximate date and original use of the building.

Nearby, there is an old healing well, reputed to be efficacious for various eye troubles, and legend has it that a few centuries ago the cottage was occupied by a Welsh recluse who administered treatment to sufferers who came to the well from many parts of South Wales.

CENTRE FOR MONKS

Another story claims that the old chapel was used as a centre for a small company of monks, but there is lack of evidence to support it.

Considering its age, the cottage is in a remarkably good state of preservation. Much has been done to modernise the interior. The old wood-oven has been filled in, the big, open kitchen fireplace is now occupied by a coal range, and surmounting the chimneys, up which a man can climb with ease, are the latest chimney pots!

New houses are in course of erection immediately in front of the old-world cottage, and fears have been expressed that this landmark of Old Cardiff would soon be removed in order to make way for housing development.

A Western Mail and South Wales Echo representative was, however, assured by an official of the Tredegar Estate, that no such intention was under consideration.

The present occupier of the cottage is Mr John Rees Thomas, whose family have lived there for more than 60 years.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY TALK

Given by Jeff Childs to the Roath Local History Society
8 November 1988 at the Roath Community Hall.

Mr Chairman, this month sees the tenth anniversary of the Roath Local History Society. Its inaugural meeting was held on 30 November 1978 and is commemorated in the minutes:

Two days after an announcement in the South Wales Echo a group of a dozen or so local history enthusiasts met at Albany Road Junior School, Albany Road, Cardiff on 30 November 1978 and formed 'The Roath Local History Society'. The launching of this new venture would not have been possible without the facilities provided by Mr John Roberts, the principal of the Pen-y-lan, Roath, Splott Adult Education Centre in allowing the Society to use a room at Albany Road School in order to function as a 'self programming group'.

The following officers were appointed and form the committee of the Society until the Annual General Meeting.

- *Chairman: A.J.W.Keir, 6 Melrose Avenue, Pen-y-lan,*
- *Secretary: T. Grant, 51 Ty-draw Road, Roath Park*
- *Secretary: G.H.Penfold, 28 Blenheim Close, Highlight Park, Barry.*

It was resolved to hold a meeting at Albany Road School 7.15 p.m. each Thursday during term time. One general meeting each month will be devoted to a talk given either by a guest speaker or a member of the Society.

The object of such an arrangement is to cater for those of our members who are at present unable or unwilling to participate in the practical projects which will occupy most of the time at the weekly meetings.

It was resolved to hold a collection at each meeting.

The idea of forming a Society germinated amongst a small group in the Inland Revenue Department in Cardiff - Alec Keir, Gerry Penfold, Norma Thomas and Myra Jones - who were all founder members and are ten years later still paid up members, although for various reasons not all are able to attend our meetings. Other founder members were Mr R.F.Pring (from an old established Roath family whose ancestors were housebuilders in the area) and Mr Stan Travers who had a well-established photography business in City Road.

The 'rock' of the Society was and is Alec Keir who has retained the chairmanship of the Society since its inception. Although he cannot be with us tonight he would be the first to pay tribute to the loyalty and dedication of those pioneer members many of whom are here this evening, who have given consistent support to the Society.

The idea to establish a Society was prompted by several factors.

Firstly it reflected to some degree an innate interest on Alec Keir's part to explore the past at local level. In the weeks prior to the formation of the Society, Alec had conducted a series of informal lectures on the history of Roath under the auspices of the local education authority whose principal, John Roberts, had been very supportive of the Society and its aims.

Secondly there was a desire on the part of the founders to make a genuine contribution to the historiography of Cardiff. Roath was effectively virgin territory so far as the local historian was concerned. Indeed, notwithstanding the pioneering work of J. Hobson Matthews and William Rees, there had been for many years a comparative dearth on the general history of Cardiff as well as its localities. This, I'm glad to say is no longer the case. Some excellent works have appeared in the mid 1970's, notably by Martin Daunton and John Davies and pictorially by way of Stewart Williams's series of "Cardiff Yesterday", all of which contain a rich store of information on Roath. The new "Cardiff Bibliography" booklet published by the Survey of Cardiff will also offer the local historian for the first time a comprehensive appraisal of Cardiff's historiography.

Thirdly there was a general desire on the part of Alec Keir and others to search for roots and identity in a changing society. Cardiff at that time was on the threshold of great environmental and topographical changes which spilled over into Roath. All of you here will no doubt recall the demolition of the East Moors steelworks in 1979 while seven years earlier saw the demise of the Roath Power Station. The process of change is of course still going on and at an accelerating pace. The City Centre shopping area and Cardiff Bay redevelopments are testimony of this.

Fourthly, local history pursuit and society formation were increasingly in vogue in 1978. This was a national (U.K.) phenomenon which had been stirred into life by the new breed of what the "Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought" describes as 'problem orientated professional historians'. They included W.G.Hoskins and H.P.R.Finberg, who between them founded what became known as the Leicester School which brought a new dimension to the study of local history. Shunning antiquarianism and the monotonous collection of facts, their aim was to study a community from its origin, growth and developmental standpoints. Applying rigorous historical research techniques, but ones not beyond any of us, their aim was to inspire group formation in order to undertake project work. One of the breed of 'new' local historians settled in Cardiff in 1977 to take up the first and indeed only full-time post of local history tutor on the staff of the University of Wales. His name is Philip Riden; many of you know him. It would be true to say that his influence was the shot in the arm that local history needed in this part of the world.

The formation of the Roath Local History Society was published in a newsletter as well as in the South Wales Echo and this served to attract new members such as myself. Riden was also instrumental in getting local history recognised as a serious academic pursuit in this area. In 1979 the then University College, Cardiff's Department of Extra Mural Studies organised a two year course for a diploma in local history studies. Alec and I were members of the first diploma intake and both our dissertations were on Roath. Alec focusses on the suburban development of the parish of Roath in the third and fourth quarters of the nineteenth century while mine was a comparative study of seventeenth century Roath and Llanedeyrn principally through the medium of probate records. In 1984 University College, Cardiff became the first in Wales and only one of a few in the U.K. to offer an M.A. course in the subject, again the brain child of P.J.Riden.

As enshrined in the November 1979 constitution the object of the Roath L.H.S. was to:

Promote, encourage and maintain an active interest in local history with particular reference to the ecclesiastical parish of Roath.

Our long term aim was, and is, to publish the standard history of Roath from pre-Norman times to the twentieth century. Conceptually, Roath means different things to different people. The ecclesiastical parish was taken as our unit of study - our community, even though it also had a rich manorial history. The area of the old parish was over 3000 acres; its northern boundary was Fairoak Road and part of Cyncoed Road; its eastern boundary was the River Rhymney; its southern boundary was the Bristol Channel, or what historically and somewhat romantically was called the Severn Sea. Its western boundary was Crwys Road, City Road and then a straight line from Glossop Road, Meteor Street, through Adamsdown (but not the whole of the Square) to the sea. As well as the district we now call Roath it covered Pen-y-lan, part of Cathays, Adamsdown, Pengam. Tremorfa and, importantly, Splott.

When it was founded, the Roath L.H.S. was the only such Society in Cardiff. Unlike almost any other society then in existence in South East Wales (e.g. Penarth, Dinas Powys, the Cardiff Naturalists' Society), the emphasis was on group projects. Members were encouraged to undertake such work, do their own research and handle original source material. No previous experience was expected and with certain kinds of material, e.g. sixteenth and seventeenth century documents written in court hand, guidance in interpretation and transcription, utilising the skills of palaeography, was given. It is still the case that we are the only Cardiff society and one of the very few in the three Glamorgans who undertake project work and who meet on a weekly basis.

At the outset, however, and here I go back to the original minutes:

One general meeting each month will be devoted to a talk or lecture given either by a guest speaker or a member of the Society.

From the start I think most people wanted to be active through project work and not passive, underlining the dictum that 'history is best learned by doing and not just by listening to it'. Indeed some of the teachers in the locality, notably Howardian High School, Albany Road and Stacey Road Junior Schools have with our co-operation used some of our source material productively, stimulating pupils' interest in the process.

When it came to projects, the Society concentrated on key source material, notably the tithe map and apportionment, probate records, parish registers and bishop's transcripts and census enumerators' books. The 1840 tithe plan for the parish of Roath is a unique document showing the agricultural state of the parish 20 years before suburban growth and infilling took place.

From the apportionment, members of the project group plotted:

- (a) land ownership
- (b) land occupation
- (c) land usage

From (a) it was seen that the Morgans of Tredegar Park were the largest landowners in the parish closely followed by the Butes. Other large land owners were Crofts Williams of Roath Court, Richards of Plasnewydd and W.M.Wood.

From (c) it emerged that the pattern of land usage was mixed although there was a predominance of meadow/pasture as opposed to arable particularly south of the Newport Road highway and on Splott lands and the East Moors.

Another source used extensively in the early years were probate records. The Society has acquired copies of every extant will and letters of administration for Roath testators proved at the Consistory Court of Llandaff. The earliest is 1636 and the latest 1858, when probate jurisdiction was taken from church hands. The Society also has in its possession copies of a few earlier wills proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, these being purchased from the Public Record Office at Chancery Lane.

Another key source analysed in the early stages were the bishop's transcripts of parish records of baptisms, marriages and burials in the parish church (St.Margaret's).

The Society acquired copies of all the Roath B.T's from 1725 to the 1850's. The copies of the Tithe Map and accompanying schedule as well as the B.T's and probate records were all acquired from the National Library of Wales out of funds generously donated by officers of the Society. It would be cost-prohibitive to acquire the copies today, especially the probate records, as photocopying charges have risen steeply over the years.

These three - the tithe map and apportionment, probate records and bishop's transcripts formed the basic sources used by the group from 1979 to 1982. From 1981 however a source that has increasingly been studied is the census enumerators' returns. The Society has complete copies of the 1841, 1851, 1861 and 1871 censuses and is currently working on 1881 as part of a nation-wide transcribing and indexing project. The census enumerators' books (C.E.B's) are probably our most utilised source - one that has been studied with a view to showing household size and structure, family size and structure, age/sex structure, street development, occupational analysis, birth-place analysis and migration as well as culturally visible minorities such as the Irish. Two big exercises that have been completed are our nominal card index for the 1861 census and a computer print out of a surname index as a finding aid to the 1871 index. Copies of the latter have been deposited with the Cardiff Central Library and the Glamorgan Record Office together with copies of an index of streets and houses in the Roath 1871 census. The librarian in charge of the local studies department and Mrs Patricia Moore in charge of the Archive Service have expressed their appreciation,

Other documents used include estate records (particularly the Tredegar Park and Bute estate), tax records (notably land tax assessments, hearth tax assessments and lay subsidy assessments).

Among printed sources studied have been ministers' accounts, inquisitions post mortem, surveys and rentals - all relating to the medieval manors of Roath Keynsham, Dogfield and Tewkesbury as reproduced in Volume 1 of John Hobson Matthews "Cardiff Records".

It has been the policy of the Society to hold lectures given by guest speakers. The first speaker to launch the series was the well-known local historian Dennis Morgan (who has also spoken again in a recent round of talks). On 18 January 1979 he gave an illustrated talk at Albany Road School entitled "Introduction and Background to the History of Roath". Although the Society failed to achieve its target of one speaker a month a range of speakers did address the Society in those days:

26 April 1979. J. Barry Davies. "Some Gentry Families of Roath"

24 May 1979. Matthew Griffiths. "Local Wills and Inventories"

11 October 1979. Alec Keir. "The History of Roath from Printed Sources"

22 November 1979. Diane Brooke. "Family History and the Local Historian"

1 May 1980. J. Barry Davies. "The Parish of Rumney and its Relationship to Roath"

19 February 1981. G.H. Penfold. "Roath Parish Registers"

19 March 1981. Brian Ll. James. "The Development of the Mackintosh Estate"

Brian James's talk was, in effect, the last given by a guest speaker until a recent round of successful talks was revived in late 1987. Unlike the recent series some of the first talks were not well supported. The A.G.M. of 2 October 1980 records the fact.

Talks were still given, though 'by other means'. As part of Philip Riden's policy of propagating the local history gospel, Alec and I ran a series of lectures under the auspices of the Department of Extra Mural Studies on the history of Roath from its pre-Norman Origins to the late nineteenth century based on our respective dissertations. The first series took the form of monthly lectures (October 1981 - March 1982) and were held in Howardian High School. In 1982 and 1983 the venue changed to Albany Road School although this time on a weekly basis for 10 weeks. In each year the talks attracted an audience in excess of 30. Many of today's active members were recruited via these talks. In 1984 we had to return to Howardian High School because of the closure of Albany Road School for classes on Thursday evenings but we were back to Albany Road for 1985 and this was the last year a formal series of talks was held because it drew a maximum of only 13 people.

The third aim of the Society's activities was its annual programme of field trips or excursions. Normally these would commence in mid-May and end the last week of July. The programme varies from year to year although perennial favourites have been retained (e.g the "Splott trot"). The

Thursday evening field trips went ahead irrespective of the weather or the numbers turning up. It used to be axiomatic that we would end up in a local hostelry for refreshment, although sadly this practice seems to be on the wane! We also tried to be not strictly parochial and in the majority of cases our field visits were outside Roath, indeed outside the Cardiff city limits.

Places visited

Roath:

- Splott walk including Adamsdown
- Mackintosh Institute and Estate
- Pen-y-lan
- St.Margaret's Church and Waterloo Gardens
- St .German's Church
- St. Saviour's Church

Outside Roath:

Llanedeyrn, Llanishen, Whitchurch and the Twmpath, Melingriffith and the Glamorganshire Canal, Butetown and Cardiff Docks, Cardiff - Queen Street, St John's Church, Grangetown, Llandaff, Llandaff Cathedral, Rumney, Rumney Pottery, St Brides Wentloog, Marshfield, Cefn Mabli and Michaelston-y-Vedw, Castell Morgraig, Rudry, The Van near Caerphilly, Tredegar Park, Newport, Dinas Powys, Penarth, Barry & Barry Island, Cosmeston, Cowbridge, Wick & Monknash, Penhow Castle, Aberdare - the town & St John's Church, The Rhondda.

Projected field visits for 1989:

Llantwit Major

Barry Docks

Rudry and Ruperra Castle

Fonmon Castle

Cardiff - High Street & St Mary Street

The Society has also been active in the publishing field. Monthly Project Newsletters were started in October 1983 but the frequency of publication was found to be too much of a strain on the editor and it was agreed by the members that we should adopt the more modest aim of producing a quarterly newsletter. This year we have reached Volume 5 of the series.

Statutory notices have been served on the editor requiring three copies of all past and future Newsletters to be sent to the Copyright Agent for the official English copyright libraries and one copy to be sent direct to the National Library of Wales. Bound copies of our Newsletters are held in the Local Studies Library of the South Glamorgan Cardiff Central Library and copies are supplied to Pen-y-lan and Roath Branch libraries, Glamorgan Record Office and Cardiff University College library.

So much for the Society in retrospect. As for the present we are in the process of examining two new sources.

(1) the 1881 census enumerators' returns(ii) the Ordnance Survey Maps of Roath - 1st., 2nd., and 3rd. editions of the 25" to 1 mile scale, 1878 - 1921,

Samples from both sources are with me tonight. By using them in tandem our aim of completing a multivariate study of Roath will hopefully be realised.

What of the future ? Quo Vadis ? Here I feel like reiterating what "Variety", the showbusiness magazine wrote of the film company M.G.M. when it celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1974.

While we may ponder the future of M.G.M. none can deny that it has had one hell of a past.

Whilst the Roath L.H.S. may not have had "one hell of a past", it has had an interesting past; it has also had some interesting if not idiosyncratic characters.

In looking to the future there is still a number of potential projects to be undertaken such as the following:

a) Quarter Sessions Records (judicial and administrative) - poor law, vagrancy, gaols, asylums, houses of correction, fairs, markets, the upkeep of roads and bridges, the licensing of non-conformist meeting houses, alehouses and the levying of rates. The Society need to thoroughly examine the quarter session records held in the Glamorgan Record Office to see what exists for Roath.

This will be a time consuming job as the records are plentiful.

b) Estate Records.

There is a need

(i) for more research into the Tredegar and Bute muniments held at the National Library of Wales.
(ii) to make more progress with the Mackintosh estate records, some of which have been deposited with the Glamorgan Record Office but many of which are believed to be in the possession of Williams and Prichard, solicitors, Park Place.
(iii) to investigate whether the Crofts Williams and Wood estate records still survive. -

c) Valuation Returns under Finance Act (1909-10) 1910. Lloyd George's "Domesday" of Land Ownership).

These Inland Revenue returns are held in the Glamorgan Record Office Cardiff and those for Cardiff are contained in eight large bound volumes. One volume for Cardiff East has been cursorily examined and it is clear that these records are worthy of closer scrutiny so that extracts can be made to increase our knowledge of early 20th century urban geography.

- d) Trade Directories. The Cardiff Central Library hold a comprehensive collection for Cardiff and South Wales. They are a most useful source especially when used in conjunction with census returns and maps.
- e) Transport History. - Trams, trolley-buses, railways and Cardiff Airport. Sources are Cardiff Corporation records, local newspapers and , for railways, the House of Lords Record Office.
- f) Crime. Quarter Sessions records are the obvious source. Magistrates Courts records are not available to the public for the past 30 years and reports in newspapers would have to be used to fill the gap.
- g) Industries. Research needs to be done on such industrial undertakings in Roath as the Dowlais Iron Co., Roath Brewery, Spillers Flour Mills, Tharsis Copper Works, Roath Pottery and Brick Works and Roath Power Station.
- h) War damage. Home Office, local authority and newspaper records of air raids, casualties and damage caused by enemy action during the 1939-45 War.
- i) Education. School Board records (log books, attendance register etc.), many of which survive in the Glamorgan Record Office. Church School records, reports of H.M.I.
- 3) Sales Catalogues of estates and individual properties. Some in Cardiff Central Library, some in Glam. Record Office and others at the N.L.W.
- k) Pubs and Inns of Roath. Sources: Newspapers, Directories, Brewster Sessions and Quarter Sessions records. Ephemera such as tokens, beer mats, bottle labels (C.C.L. & Nat. Museum of Wales).
- l) Street Development - particularly Splott.
- m) Housing. History of individual houses or farms (deeds, estate records, census returns, directories, ratebooks, poll books, electoral rolls).
- n) Cinemas and theatres. (Directories, newspapers etc.)
- o) (i) Visual Sources
 - (ii) Landscape History - reconstituting the medieval and pre-industrial landscapes.
- p) Oral History.
- q) Air photographs. (Welsh Office & private collections)
- r) Medieval sources at the Public Record Office.

Such an ambitious set of projects brings problems in its train:

A. For future project work

(1) Difficulty of access to records. The Glamorgan Record Office is open four days a week and then during office hours only. Unless like myself one is in easy reach of the G.R.O. to use it during the lunch hour, many of our members who work full time are precluded from attending. The C.C.L. is more accessible, with more flexible opening hours (until 8 p.m. most evenings). The N.L.W. because of its location in Aberystwyth presents further problems but these are not insuperable and if needs be, some research material can be photocopied and sent by post.

(2) Preclusion from access to certain records. This applies to certain records in private hands (e.g. some Mackintosh Estate papers), documents in record offices or libraries deposited with a condition that they are not to be made publicly available, or documents to which the archivist will not allow access because of their fragile state.

(3) Bulk of certain records, Newspapers are a key source for late 19th and 20th century Roath but are unwieldy to handle and use. If available in their original form they emerge from the stacks as large bound volumes some of which are in a fragile condition. If produced on microfilm they are wearing to read for long periods. It is notoriously easy to become side-tracked or distracted in reading newspapers and almost as easy to miss relevant items. Unless they have been indexed they do present problems for the student. Any total study of Roath however needs to use them. The C.C.L. has an extensive collection of South Wales newspapers of which the following will have items of relevance to Roath:

- Cardiff Times 1857 - 1928
- Cardiff Weekly Mail 1870 - 1920 +
- Cardiff News 1872 - 1920 +
- Cardiff Free Press 1876 - 1884
- Roath Journal (Splotland) 1878 - 1884
- Evening Express 1887 - 1930

B. Difficulties Associated with Group Project Work

There are several advantages to project work:

- (i) each member of the group has a significant contribution to make.
- (ii) the group is ideal for handling large-scale material such as census returns.
- (iii) a group affords greater scope for practical investigation.
- (iv) resources can be pooled, problems can be solved, responsibilities delegated and tasks allocated.

That said:

- (i) there will be regular need to motivate the group. Generally our Society has not needed motivation although there have been occasions when tedium has set in - e.g. the nominal index for the 1871 census seemed to go on forever. That is why it is important to diversify tasks.
- (ii) the supply of source material is finite. We have hit one hiatus and hopefully we can learn from that experience that we need to replenish our stocks.
- (iii) the possibility exists of the group extending its remit beyond Roath. To some extent this is already being done with the tithe map project under the direction of Judith Hunt. Such a development is no bad thing although whether in time the Roath Society will effectively become the Cardiff Local History Society is an open question. There are advantages and disadvantages in moving in this direction. The resource implications, for example, would be terrific.

C. Other Problems

(i) Membership

Generally this is not a problem. Currently we have 30 or so fully paid up members and have some £500 in the bank. The majority of our members are, if I may respectfully call them such, passive. As far as project work is concerned we have always been lucky to maintain a hard core of 10-12 members.

(ii) Publicity

We have tried to increase membership via publicity. This has generally been unsuccessful notwithstanding the fact that we advertised in all the local libraries and the central library and have used the press and local radio. The exhibitions the Society has mounted in the Roath Branch Library, Newport Road and the Pen-y-lan Branch Library have been well received but only a few members have been recruited via these avenues. Generally we found particularly in the early years that most Roath inhabitants were not interested and the majority of our early membership were in fact non-Roath people. We even attracted two Austrians one evening but we didn't see them after that. The idea has been mooted that we approach the local schools to gain publicity about the Society. Howardian High School receives a copy of our Newsletters for its library and the history master there, Ian Myhre, was an active member of our Society until he became involved in the campaign to save his school. Albany Road School staff and pupils used some of our material in their exhibition to commemorate their centenary in November 1987. There are many schools within Roath and the adjoining parishes of Llanishen and Llanedeyrn including St. David's College, Ty Gwyn Road; Corpus Christi High School, Cyncoed Road; Cardiff High School, Ty Celyn; Roath Park junior, Marlborough Road junior; S.Glam Institute of Higher Education; All Saints Church in Wales, Ael-y-Bryn, Llanedeyrn; Llanedeyrn Primary School and Llanedeyrn High School; St Teilo's Church in Wales High School, Llanedeyrn Road - and many other schools in Adamsdown, Tremorfa and Splott.

(iii) Venue.

The Society has been nomadic as far as venues are concerned. This has fluctuated between Albany Road and Howardian. However the proposed closing of Howardian High School makes our stay at that school appear limited. Hopefully the positive side of such a myopic decision (to close Howardian) may be that a custom built adult education centre may be built on the same site or Albany Road School may be re-opened for classes on Thursday evenings. This is a more central location although it does not have car parking facilities as good as Howardian. Other venues used over the years for meetings have been:

- Mackintosh Institute
- Oddfellows Club, Newport Road.
- Roath Church House
- Old Carlylian Club, Splott Road
- Roath Library, Newport Road
- Roath Community Centre

The main reason for using premises other than the schools was that the date of the A.G.M. was usually deliberately fixed to coincide with the enrolment evening for local education authority evening classes when a classroom would not be available.

In conclusion let me emphasise that I would not wish to give an unduly pessimistic picture of the future by outlining problems and difficulties. But being aware of them will at least allow us to plan ahead with confidence.

On a positive note I would like to end by giving you advance notice of a publication made under the auspices of the Survey of Cardiff team which will cover much of our ecclesiastical parish. The aim of the Survey is an in depth topographical record covering the 19th and 20th century of that part of Cardiff falling within the geographical boundary of the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation. The instigator is the ubiquitous Philip Riden. Using the resources of the Manpower Services Scheme (now Employment Training), trainees are being recruited to collate data and assimilate records on this part of Cardiff as well as receiving good employment training. The end result will be two studies - one of Butetown and St Mary's parish 'below the bridge' and the other on Roath below the Newport Road (i.e. Splott, Adamsdown and Pengam). It is also proposed that as well as the Cardiff Bibliography mentioned earlier a map bibliography (based on research by Howard Llewellyn) will be published by the Survey office in due course.

D.J.P. Childs
November 1988

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From Butcher's Directory of Cardiff 1873/4

LLANEDEYRN - ITS BEGGININGS

Some parishes are remembered because of the great names associated with them. At Bladon, near Blenheim Palace, thousands of people each year visit the grave of Sir Winston Churchill.

Other parishes are recalled for the great events that took place there. At St. Fagans, on May 8, 1648, was fought one of the decisive battles of the Civil War. As the Parliamentary forces routed the Royalists, the carnage was so great that the River Ely for a time became known as the Red River, and people in the district starved that summer, for there was no-one to gather in the crops.

There are other villages, which are notably picturesque. Recently, in the New Forest, I saw many that can be so described and, nearer home, there are many beautiful villages in the Vale of Glamorgan.

At first sight, it is fair to say that our own parish and the village of Llanedeyrn falls into none of these categories. No great men have lived there and no outstanding events seem to have taken place there. It is still possible to drive through the village without noticing any outstanding feature.

Yet, if you are prepared to walk, there is a great deal to be seen. Add to this a look at the parish documents, delve into other papers of the past, add a little imagination, and your parish can begin to come to life.

I expect you all know that the parish gets its name from St. Edeyrn. Like so many of the early Celtic saints, he is a shadowy figure. We don't know what he looked like. The stained glass window and statue in Llanedeyrn church, although pleasant to gaze upon, are works of the imagination. But Edeyrn, like many other Welsh saints, seems to have been a great traveller and I wonder how many people know that there is a St. Edeyrn's church in Brittany, at Plogenec? There, too, is a picture of Edeyrn which is also imaginative, but appears to me to resemble him more than the other works I have seen.

Nor do we know much about Edeyrn's background. Rumour has it that he was the son of a British prince of the fifth century, born in that dark period when the Romans had withdrawn their protection from our island, and the life of man was 'nasty, brutish and short'.

We can only guess how Edeyrn was a Christian, when most men in this country were still heathens, why he became a missionary, and what motivated him to found a Christian community at Llanedeyrn.

But use the imagination, and we can see Edeyrn and his followers making their way along the Roman road until they came to this spot by the River Rhymney, densely wooded except for the marshland near the river. Here, they felt, God had called them to build a church and pursue their missionary work.

Communities of this sort were founded all over Wales in the fifth and sixth centuries. Perhaps, like David in West Wales, Edeyrn faced hostility from a local tribal chief and had to persuade him to grant this land. Whatever the circumstances, we are told that he founded a community of 300 here.

This figure is probably exaggerated, but we can picture these simple, holy men living an austere life of work and prayer, braving danger in the forest, as they went around the countryside carrying out their mission work.

To begin with, services would be held by the preaching cross. Then, to house this, and to give shelter to the congregation, a church would be built, probably made of wood. No trace of this early church now remains, although the present church was built upon its foundations.

So Edeyrn, having founded his church, disappears into the mists of time. For the next six or seven hundred years we know nothing, as first the Danes passed nearby and then the Normans came to settle. But with the coming of the Normans to South Wales, we are at last able to piece together some of the history of our parish.

LLANEDEYRN DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

The history of our parish begins to become clearer after the Norman Conquest, for now there are written records to help us understand the past. But these are not always as comprehensive as we would like, and so we still have to use our imagination to a considerable extent.

Although Wales, as a whole, was not conquered until the late thirteenth century, the South was speedily overrun by Norman warlords, acting on behalf of the Conqueror and his successors. Until Tudor times, these Marcher lords ruled South and East Wales, almost like princes. The memories of these Lords of Glamorgan, and thus Lords of Cardiff, linger on in such familiar names as Fitzhamon Embankment, Clare Road, Despenser Gardens, Neville Street and Tudor Road.

In turn these lords gave estates to their knights and followers in return for their support and services. I have been unable to trace the earliest landowners for this district, but from the thirteenth century down to our own times, one family of landowners dominates the area - the Kemey's Family of Cefn Mably, descended from Stephen de Kemey, who held land in Monmouthshire from 1234. The family connection with Cefn Mably dates from about 1450, and until 1920, this family owned most of the land in Llanedeyrn and the surrounding parishes.

What was the hamlet of Llanedeyrn like in the Middle Ages? Well, our knowledge is limited. The road through the village was probably the main road from St. Mellons and the East into Cardiff. The hamlet was almost certainly occupied by groups of serfs, who were not free, but bound to their lord of the Manor. They had to make payments in kind to him and had to work his land on certain days each week and at certain special times of the year, such as harvest-time. In an era when money did not play such a vital part in people's lives, this was how poor people paid for protection and the rent of their land. We might call it exploitation, but one of our greatest historians has called this feudal system a necessary stage in progressing from barbarism to civilisation.

The district was probably divided into three large fields. In one was grown wheat, in another oats, while the third was left fallow and was used for grazing. In an era of primitive agriculture, the crops were rotated each year to prevent exhaustion of the soil. Each peasant family had

narrow strips in each field for their own use. They may also have had a few animals, which they grazed on the land, although in autumn most animals had to be slaughtered as there was no way to feed them in the winter.

The life of the serf was hard. He lived in primitive huts of wattle and birch. His working day was dawn to dusk. He rarely strayed, indeed was probably not allowed to stray, far from his village. His life at the best of times was only at subsistence level and, if the harvest failed, he starved. He had little time for enjoyment. Perhaps the occasional fair would bring him some entertainment. On Easter Monday in the sixteenth century, there was certainly a fair, held until recent times, known as Ffair Penylan, which took place at the wishing well which still exists at the junction of Bronwydd Avenue and Penylan Road. It is possible that this fair dates back to an earlier period.

But generally, the life of the peasant, like everyone else, revolved around the Church and from the Middle Ages onwards, Llanedeyrn begins to have a definite history of its own. During this period, the church began to resemble its present shape. In the nave, the Norman windows and stoneworks are still to be seen. The tower was probably built in the early fifteenth century as a watch tower, at the time when Owain Glyndwr was ravaging the neighbourhood. It was in 1404 he burnt Cardiff Castle to the ground. Steps behind the pulpit led to a Rood loft. The Rood was the figure of Christ on the cross, with Mary and John on either side of Him. Candles would be lit along the Rood beam and, when these were lit, the Rood became the focal point of the church and reminded worshippers, as soon as they entered the church, of the Christ, Whom they had come to worship. Documents now emerge that help us to trace the history of our church. In 1163 Llanedeyrn, like many other churches in the Cardiff area, was the property of Tewkesbury Abbey. It was in 1236, according to the annals of the Abbey, that the church of Llanedeyrn was granted to the Lord Elias, Bishop of Llandaff.

In the same document we come across a reference to the ancient chapel of Llanforda, the tithes of which are reserved 'to the use of the Prior of Kerdif' to help in supporting the poor people of Cardiff. This chapel fell into disuse by the sixteenth century, and became the cottage known as Ty'r-capel, 'the chapel house', which stood until recently in Coed-y-Gores.

As yet we know nothing of the people who lived in the parish. I have been unable to trace the names of the parish priest at this time, although documents probably exist. The parish priest administered the services in Latin, which neither he nor his flock understood. As yet there was no Bible in the vernacular tongue.

By the end of the Middle Ages, the serfs had become free men, working as labourers. But their attitude to life had not changed. They still farmed in the traditional way. Life was simple and uncomplicated. Faith was absolute and the doctrines of the Church and the Pope accepted without question by these simple peasants. Upon this society the Reformation, with its consequent upheaval, was now to descend.

LLANEDEYRN AT THE TIME OF THE TUDORS AND STUARTS

The Reformation and Henry VIII's break with the Church of Rome brought significant social and religious changes to the life of the nation.

The great estates that had belonged to the monastic houses were sold to raise revenue for the Crown. Landowners with an eye to business were able to acquire great fortunes. The lands of Keynsham Abbey in Cyncoed and Llanrumney were sold to the Morgan Family of Tredeger, a local branch of this family having its country seat at Coed-y-Gores. The Kemys family of Cefn Mably added to its considerable estates in the parishes of this district. For instance, it bought the lands of Llanishen Church, formerly owned by Tewkesbury Abbey, for £120. As this included hundreds of acres of Llanishen and Lisvane, it was not a bad bargain. So far as I can tell, most of the land in Llanedeyrn retained its independence as Tewkesbury Abbey had bequested it to the Bishop and Chapter of Llandaff as early as 1236.

The Bishop of Llandaff's Report of 1558 names David Lewis as vicar of Llanedeyrn, and notes that his residence is at St. Mellons vicarage. So began an association between the two parishes which has lasted until our own century. Sometimes the vicar was resident at St. Mellons and sometimes at the Glebe Cottage. This picturesque cottage, which was once thatched, is opposite the church but not visible from the road. Nevertheless, its interior with sturdy beams and an original wall of straw and wattle, dates back to the fifteenth century.

These centuries were a period of great religious turmoil as Christians persecuted one another in the name of God, and refused to accept that there might be more than one path to the truth. Llanedeyrn did not escape its share of schismatic quarrels, though mercifully no-one in the area seems to have paid the extreme penalty of martyrdom for his beliefs.

In 1636 William Morgan James of Llanedeyrn was indicted as a Popish recusant. We do not know what happened to him, but probably he was fined. Only in times of national fear and hysteria did the full weight of the law fall on those who refused to tread the path of orthodoxy.

Nevertheless, the bitterness of these years is shown at the time of the Commonwealth and the Restoration when vicars and ministers were ejected from their livings because they did not meet with the approval of the rulers at the time. Thus, in 1650, Commonwealth commissioners ejected John Williams from his living at Llanedeyrn. Then years later, when the King came home, no doubt the Commonwealth incumbent was similarly ejected.

The idea of toleration in religious beliefs was very slow in its germination. The Reformation released all kinds of discussion on religion and worship and, in the long run, probably helped all Christians to understand one another and their beliefs better. But in these centuries, anyone with unorthodox ideas was regarded as a dangerous crank. In the Seventeenth Century, the Quakers were particularly harshly treated. Yet they seem to have been exceptionally strong in Llanedeyrn where, in 1669, 40 met every other Sabbath Day under the leadership of Thomas Quarrell and John Powell. By the end of the century, it had become clear that persecution could not stop people worshipping

the way they chose, and the Toleration Act of 1689 recognised this fact, and ended the era of Christian persecuting Christian.

These centuries brought changes to the church building itself. The sermon became increasingly important as men sought to express their point of view and an act of 1549 ordered that a pulpit be installed in every church. The Puritans were particularly fond of lengthy sermons and in 1649 hour glasses were installed to try and limit the length of sermons. Many preachers continued to be uninhibited by this innovation.

The Puritans also objected to what they called, 'idolatrous images' and, regrettably, many beautiful objects were destroyed in these years. In Llanedeyrn only the steps near the pulpit remind us that there was once a Rood loft across the Chancel Arch and, no doubt, a lovely screen underneath it.

Possibly there were riches which contained statues of saints, or other holy relics dear to the people of the Middle Ages. If so, these too were destroyed. The Puritans were, in the main, devout dedicated men, but they have a lot to answer for in the deliberate vandalism they wrought on many of our most beautiful churches.

During these centuries we find the structure of society emerging that, on the whole, existed until the First World War. Most of the people were labourers on the land and, until the Eighteenth Century when the parish register began, they are nameless. By the Sixteenth Century, all men had gained their freedom and feudalism was a thing of the past. Life for these people, however, still depended, as it had always done, on the quality of the harvest. If it was good, life was just tolerable but, if it failed, then they were dependent upon charity and, after 1598, the parish relief provided by the Poor Law.

Sunday was normally their only day off and, after Church, there would be sports and games. This state of affairs lasted until the Civil War. Then the dour Puritans ended all such frivolity and although some of their harsher laws, such as the banning of the celebration of Christmas, were abolished after the Restoration, their essential concept of the Sabbath as a day apart, has remained until our own times.

The second strata of society were the tenant farmers who rented their lands from the local landowner.

In the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries documents begin to tell us a little about such people. One of the leading families in Llanedeyrn during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries was the Robothams, who have a grave in the churchyard and a plaque dedicated to one of them in the church.

In March 1686, Sir Charles Kemys leased to Oliver Robotham and his son, Joshua, the lands around Llanedeyrn church as far as the River Rhymney, and from Croes-y-chadon to New Forge. in return the Robothams paid Sir Charles an annual rent of £1.18s.4d., "a couple of fat capons, one day's work every corn harvest, and an heriot of the best beast'. Payments of this sort seem to be a throwback

to the Middle Ages and feudalism, but people like the Robothams were men of substance, the sort of people a landowner needed to help him utilise his lands to the full.

In 1598 David Williams of Llanedeyrn, who seems to have been a fairly prosperous yeoman farmer, made a will, in which he left one of his daughters £10, his grandson 10 acres of land in Llanedeyrn and to another daughter 20 marks and six yearlings. He must have been fairly well off by the standards of the time. He also left 12d for his tithes, 'negligently forgotten', and 2s. for the repair of Llandaff Bridge, an interesting reminder of the haphazard way that highways were maintained in those days.

Finally, the natural leader of any district was the landowning family which, in the case of Llanedeyrn, was the Kemys family. Their wealth was reflected in the superb house that they built at Cefn Mably in the Sixteenth Century, which is now a convalescent hospital. They were also the political leaders of the area. Continually, the name of Kemys appears as M.P. for Monmouthshire and Sheriff of Glamorgan of Monmouthshire.

Therefore, it was natural that, when the Civil War broke out between King and Parliament in 1642, Sir Nicholas Kemys and his son Charles should play a leading role as supporters of the King. Very likely, they raised an army from among their tenants, including those of Llanedeyrn, as was the custom in those times. A contemporary document tells us that Sir Nicholas Kemys raised a thousand men in his own country to help defend Chepstow Castle in 1648. There Sir Nicholas fought for his King to the last and was eventually butchered to death by the Parliament forces, still refusing to yield. He is buried in St. John's Church.

His son, Charles, was more fortunate. In early 1646, he combined with other Royalists to besiege Cardiff. As Parliamentary forces came to relieve the garrison, a fierce conflict took place on the Heath, and a running battle developed in the direction of Cefn Mably, before the Royalists, among them Charles, withdrew to safety at Raglan. A Parliamentary dispatch at the time called it 'a very bloody fight - 2000 killed and taken'. Like his father, Charles also defended one of the 'King's castles - that at Pembroke. When it fell in 1648, he was fined £3500 and sent into exile for two years.

He died before the Restoration of Charles II, but with the return of the King, his family prospered anew and became the natural leaders of their district once more. For most of the people, whatever side they had fought for, old wounds soon healed, and the countryside resumed the tranquil fife that it had known before the 'Great Rebellion'.

LLANEDYRN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The eighteenth century saw the beginning of our modern society with the dawning of the Industrial Revolution, and the growth of the urban communities in parts of the Black Country, Yorkshire and Lancashire. But not until the nineteenth century were most parts of the country affected by vast industrial conurbations. Cardiff, for instance, in 1801 still had a population of only 1870 and, in the Rhondda, sheep still grazed peacefully and one could walk for miles without seeing a living soul.

Yet, in the countryside, changes had been taking place for the last 150 years or so and, by the mid-eighteenth century, Llanedeyrn probably looked very much as it did until a few years ago. The open fields of the Middle Ages were broken up into separate farms and fields by hedgerows, and the countryside came to resemble its modern form.

At Cefn Mably, the home farm supplied the needs of the family seat of the Kemys-Tyntes, as the family was now known with the male line dying out and subsequent inter-marriage with the Tyntes of Halswell, Somerset. Probably, the home farm gave the lead to tenant farmers in practices which made farming more productive and more profitable, such as the introduction of new root and fodder crops, which meant that animals could be fed in winter, and not slaughtered as they had been in the past.

Cefn Mably continued to be the focus of social life in the area. Hunting was a very popular sport of the period, and when Sir Charles Kemys leased land to Oliver Robotham in 1686, he was careful to maintain his rights to hunt over that land. I am told that the hunt for this area always began at the Forge, near St. Julians Farm. No doubt, there were often entertaining balls at Cefn Mably to which favoured and prosperous tenants would be invited.

It may well have been that there was a ball to celebrate the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745. If so, this was an unhappy occasion for another notable family in the area. David Morgan, a son of Thomas Morgan of Coed-y-gores, was one of the prince's counsellors. He paid the price of failure and, after being tried for treason at Southwark, was beheaded on Kennington Common for his part in the rebellion.

He was not the only one in this area who wore the green and toasted 'the King across the water'. In March 1746, a local labourer, David Jones, was presented at Cardiff Assizes on the charge that he "did matically and seditiously, with a loud voice, speak and publish, in the hearing of several liege subjects of the King, these treasonable and seditious words, Make room for King James's man, meaning he was a servant to James, who is cunningly called the Pretender to the Crown of our sovereign King George II. He did also at other times at Llanederyn cry out the treasonable words 'God save King James', with intent to seduce the liege subjects of the King". One can admire his courage if not his good sense, in his adherence to a lost cause.

It is in the eighteenth century that the parish records become available and tell us who lived in Llanedeyrn though, in most cases, they do not tell us much else. Most of the families of the time do not seem to have very deep roots in the area and, after one or two generations, disappear from the records.

But there are exceptions, like the Robothams, whom I have already mentioned. Another is the Christopher family which lived at Llanedeyrn for most of the eighteenth century. Richard Christopher, who is described as a yeoman, left a will dated 1727 in which, apart from leaving to his son, David, a house and five acres of land, 'one yoke of my lesser oxen and a red cow', he also touchingly asked, to be buried in the parish church, amongst his friends and relations'.

Another, probably more prosperous family, were the Meredith. In 1728 Miles Meredith left to his son, William, a house in Crockerton (now Queen St.), and freeholds in Llanishen end Llanedeyrn.

But most of the people mentioned in the registers are labourers. Many of them were probably farm servants who lived in with the farmer. As the century went on, living declined as the cost of feeding labourers went up and the close presence of the labourers, with the stable smell still about them, was a hindrance to the more elegant style of life many farmers and their wives were beginning to prefer.

Other workers on the land were day labourers, paid 8d to a shilling a day, with more at haymaking and harvest time. But in bad weather they were not paid and the breadwinner's earnings had to be supplemented by his wife and children working in the fields. With meagre earnings, a day from dawn to dusk at work, and primitive living conditions, life was hard. But there were compensations like the visits of pedlars, local fairs and races, and travelling shows, all within walking distance at St. Mellons or Roath.

In Somerset there was a custom that labourers should receive a quart of cider a day, which may account for the complaints of the farmers in that area that their workers became lazier as the day went on. There does not seem to have been any such tradition in Llanedeyrn, but there was the village pub.

The Unicorn is hundreds of years old, and for much of the time was occupied by the Davies family, who sold it in 1966 to Ansell's. For many years the family brewed its own ale, and in the Cardiff Records published in 1896, the inn is described thus: "A comfortable old thatched house, with an inn-kitchen of the picturesque sort, open chimney, oak settles, and fitches of bacon under the beams; and a native Welsh-speaking landlady".

So it had been 200 years or more - a farmhouse end taproom but the social centre of the villages. The Unicorn has changed, and it is not only the thatched roof that has gone. But go in there, look at the beams, use your imagination, and perhaps you can picture those rustics of the past, who found in this place as brief respite from their monotonous daily lives.

There are little snippets of information in the parish registers, which tell us something about the people of the time.

The Burial Registers give an indication of the high infant mortality rate at the time. In 1801, six children, all under 10, died in six weeks. Perhaps there was an epidemic raging in the district against which medical science was helpless.

Yet, judging by the number of people who lived to a ripe old age, Llanedeyrn seems to have been a more healthy area than most. One person, George Griffiths, is recorded in 1773 as dying at the age of 106. Catharine Rees died in March 1739, aged 94. She might have remembered the execution of Charles I. She would certainly have remembered his son's homecoming. She lived through eight reigns as well as the Protectorate of Cromwell. These ages are a phenomenal life span for that period.

The Baptism Register indicates a considerable number of illicit relationships at this time; "John, base child of Anne"; Sarah, supposed daughter of David and Sarah the maid".

Moral disapproval is not reserved only for the adulterer. When Thomas Rogers was buried in October 1734, the vicar cannot refrain from noting that he was a 'notorious dissenter'. Tolerance was still no easily granted by one Christian to another.

It is also interesting to note that this was a time when one tended to marry "the girl next door!" Invariably, the Marriage Register indicates that both parties came from Llanedeyrn. Occasionally one of them might come from the next parish, but very rarely from further afield than that.

There are many many references to paupers, a reminder that life could be hard on the old and the unemployed. A burial of an unknown man in 1705 notes that he was, 'a struggling poor man out of ye forge!'

In those days anyone found destitute or begging for alms was sent back to his own parish. The parish then had to keep him, the money being raised by the Poor Law Rate on property, the basis of our modern rating system.

In 1731, the Cardiff Corporation minutes record that 5s was paid to "Morgan Reece an John Anthony, two constables, for assisting and proving an order of delivering John Thomas and Ann Joseph to the churchwardens of Llanedeyrn". Anne, at least, seems to have found better times, for three years later the Marriage Register records that she married Philip Henry of Lanvihangel y Vedv. She was buried in Llanedeyrn in 1752.

Other entries indicate that tragedy could strike at these people's lives, as it does now. In 1734 Edmund Sherrins was killed by a falling tree.

An indication of just how dangerous some of the cottages of this period could be, is revealed by entry in the Burial Register on April 12, 1720, when Edward David was "burnt to death in his bed by a house taking fire, the manner of which is not to be discovered". We do not know what house this was, for until 1813, usually only names and dates appear in the registers.

LLANEDEYRN AT THE TIME OF QUEEN VICTORIA

The nineteenth century marked the evolution of Britain from a rural to an urban society. The census of 1851 revealed that, for the first time, more people lived in the town than in the countryside. This emerging of great cities and towns where there had once been open fields resulted in a greatly increasing population. The first ever census in 1801 revealed that the population of Britain was five millions. A hundred years later it was 46 millions.

Llanedeyrn kept its rural setting throughout this period, while its population remained fairly constant around the 300 mark. But inevitably the rapidly growing urban expanse nearby in Cardiff was to have an effect upon the village. The 1841 census shows that practically everyone in Llanedeyrn worked on the land. Apart from farmers, farm labourers and servants, there are only three people engaged in other occupations - a publican, a mason and a carpenter. Thirty years later, in 1871, we find people in Llanedeyrn who are road contractors, railway labourers and engine drivers.

So we have an indication in Llanedeyrn of the changing pattern of the countryside, where many people living there work in the town. But Llanedeyrn was still basically a country village. It was not like the villages of Cathays and Canton, which were so close to Cardiff that they were engulfed by its outward advance, and ceased to be rural communities.

A contemporary account of how the agricultural worker lived in South Wales in 1850 gives us a good idea of what life was like for the farm labourers of Llanedeyrn at this time, and the 1851 census tells us that half of the people working in the village at this time were farm workers.

The farmworker lived in a small cottage to which was usually attached a good garden, every inch of which was cultivated. He probably kept a pig, or even a cow and, although his wage was only about 12s a week, he might earn special bonuses at harvest-time. His employer might supply him with butter and cheese at low prices. Working hours were from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and daylight hours in winter. The average farm labourer in this part of the world seems to have eaten better than many in other parts of the country. His main meal was usually bacon and vegetables, but he would probably have a morning and evening meal of broth and bread and cheese.

His chief characteristic was a pride in his work, and his wife took similar pride in keeping their cottage neat and tidy. For very few of their needs did they have to leave the village. For in Llanedeyrn in 1851 there was a cobbler, a blacksmith, a thatcher, a mason and even a dressmaker.

Twenty years later life was becoming harder for those working on the land as railroads were constructed in America to carry the grain of the prairies to this country in fast steamships at a far cheaper price than our farmers could afford. Before the end of the century meat also was cheaper to import with the advent of refrigeration.

The result was unemployment for people in the countryside. Some moved to the town while others, especially the aged, were forced to apply for parish relief.

For some this meant the workhouse. Llanedeyrn was attached to the Cardiff Poor Law Union and the workhouse, now known as St. David's Hospital, was built in 1838. William Richards and Mary Taylor of Llanedeyrn were two who spent a year in the workhouse 1868-69. Their Sunday lunch consisted of 8 ozs. of bread and a pint of broth. Meat was served twice a week although anyone engaged in heavy work, such as that in the laundry, could be given 2 ozs. of cheese a day. Husbands and wives were separated and were only allowed three-quarters of an hour each day to visit each other.

Small wonder that old people did all they could to avoid the humiliating experience of the workhouse. So we find that the great majority of elderly people in Llanederyn, who had to apply for help from the parish, tried to manage with outdoor relief. This was a payment of about 3s. 6d. a week. During the 1870's there were about twelve elderly people receiving this relief, which I suppose was a forerunner of the Retirement Pension, except that it was not given as a right. Nor was it much to live on, even in those days of low prices. But the Poor Law records give us many examples of extra payments in time of need. In 1876, James Fisher was given 9s. 6d. to buy a pair of boots and in 1875 Samuel Griffiths, aged 93, was given 13s. for shirts.

in 1888, Llanedeyrn church was renovated at a cost of £626. On the exterior of the church, there is an obvious reminder of this facelift in the chimney stack on the south side of the nave. But the more obvious example of the renovation is the inside of the church, especially in the nave, which is now a typical example of Victorian architecture.

What the Victorian era does show is a growing interest in education, in which the Church played a leading part. In the 1841 census, we find numerous examples of the exploitation of child labour: William James, aged 11, a farm servant at Julians farm; William Evans, aged 10, a male servant at Llwyn-y-Grant; William Jones, aged 8, a farm servant at Pantglas.

By 1871, such children were being classed as scholars, although at this time they probably had to travel to Roath or St. Mellons for their education. Significantly, it was also in that year, we have the last entry on a marriage register where the parties could not sign their names. Then, in 1874, Charles John Kemys Tynte granted a quarter of an acre at Penygoes to the church to provide "a school for the education of children and adults, or children only of the labouring, manufacturing and other poorer classes in the parish of Llanedeyrn. The premises may, if it is thought desirable, be used for Penny reading and other such purposes which will help in the instruction of the parishioners".

By 1879 the school was built to hold 60 children. Its first headmistress was Miss Lillie Addie, who worked and taught there until 1910, and was a very much loved figure in the area, as the plaque dedicated to her in Llanedeyrn church testifies.

How interesting it is to read the school log book which began in 1896 and tells us so much about those days. Quite often the school had to be closed when weather conditions were bad, as many of the children had to tramp for miles from the outlying farms and could not get there.

School holidays were shorter in those days. In 1897, the summer holiday began on July 23, but the children were back in School on August 16. However, there seems to have been several impromptu

holidays. On October 20, 1896 the school was closed so that the children could see the ploughing match. The Horse Show at St. Mellons was another occasion for a holiday. It must have been a great day in June, 1897 when the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated with a tea at the school followed by a holiday.

The school inevitably became the social centre of the village. Whist drives and dances were held there, and an entry in 1919 notes that the school closed early to prepare for the homecoming of the Llanedeyrn soldiers.

To return to those years at the turn of the century, the school curriculum was formal by modern standards, but visitors are glowing in their praise of what the school achieves.

A Diocesan Report of 1903 says, "The children in this little school have been very fully and carefully taught and passed as usual in all respects a highly satisfactory and creditable examination. The knowledge of the Catechism and Prayer Book subjects in particular was very pleasing. The written work was accurately and neatly done. The hymns were well known and sung and the tone and discipline are excellent. The school is classed 'Excellent' ".

Harvest time must have been a particularly joyful celebration as these country children would bring baskets of fruit and vegetables and other country produce to the church on the morning of the Harvest Festival. Such a colourful scene it must have been in the church and how meaningful to those children, so close to the soil and the wonders of nature.

It was not surprising that so many people were saddened when the school was closed in 1964. It was a reflection of a closely knit community, and an example of the close ties that can, and should, exist between a school and the Church.

LLANEDEYRN DURING OUR TIMES

Our present century has been one of rapid change and innovation and Llanedeyrn, like everywhere else, has seen its share of change, especially in these last few years.

Like many country districts, one feels it was never the same after the First World War. During that war, as a tablet in Llanedeyrn Church tells us, Rowland Thomas of Tyn-y-Bertian farm was killed at Emmaus in the Battle of Jerusalem in 1917. Again, in April 1917, the school closed early one day for the military funeral of William Thomas, old boy of this school. How poignant it is to see both of these young men appear in entries of the School log book, at the turn of the century, in happier days when they were pupils there.

The War Memorial, inside the Church and outside, testifies that the village shared to the full in that great bloodletting of 1914-1918. In many cases father and sons went off to war together and two families lost more than one loved member of the family: Arthur and William Bennett: Arthur and Ivor George. Others who were never to return to their village were Ivor Mortimer, Idris Rees, Ivor Willey and David Lewis.

After the Second World War, the names of John Ainsley, Cecil Brown, Alban Thomas, Arthur Watts and John Webb were added to the Memorial, as the high hopes of 1918 that the Great War was a war to end wars, proved a premature dream.

But as early as 1918, the old rural countryside was a thing of the past. Farming still went on, but for people growing up in Llanedeyrn, there were possibilities, other than farming, for a career or trade. Even for farm labourers the traditional skills have become replaced by others. The blacksmith and the thatcher are village craftsmen rarely seen nowadays. At the present time, I am told there are three thatchers in this part of South Wales and they're booked up for two years ahead. As farming has become more mechanised and more scientific the amount of manpower required has diminished. So, since 1918, the number of people in Llanedeyrn, working on the land, has decreased year by year, in accordance with this universal trend.

Another effect of the Great War was the break-up of the great landed estates, many of them, like the Kemys-Tynte estate, going back centuries. Now high taxation and death duties, and the cost of administration, forced landowners to sell at least a part of their property. Thus, in 1921, the Kemys-Tynte estate, including Cefn Mably and their property in the parishes surrounding it, was sold by auction. So the farms and cottages in Llanedeyrn which, almost without exception, were part of that estate, were sold with the tenants having the first option to buy them.

About the same time, the parish began its change from an agricultural to a residential area. Farms like Cefn Coed, Llwyn-y-Grant, and Gwern Rhuddi, all of which appeared on the 1871 census for Llanedeyrn, now disappeared and the district of Cyncoed began to emerge, named after Adam Kyngot, whose name appears on a local fourteenth century charter.

The building of the church as All Saints in 1923 was a recognition of the importance of this new residential district. From this time on, the old parish church of Llanedeyrn ceases to be the spiritual focal point of the area. By the 1930's, All Saints was being used far more than Llanedeyrn for all the services of the Church, as the parish registers indicate.

The needs of the expanding city began to swallow up more and more land. By the Second World War, Cyncoed Road was virtually complete and so were many roads leading from it. Green fields were still there at the foot of the garden and, although the houses at the top of Llanedeyrn Road were built, the old village of Llanedeyrn still looked a long way off, and I suppose few people at the time envisaged a day when the countryside from Cyncoed Road to Llanedeyrn Village would be covered with houses.

But in the post-war years this has happened, as great housing estates were built to meet people's needs for homes, and these have steadily advanced towards the old village. During the last decade Llanedeyrn has changed more than at any time in its history. When the decision was taken to build a major estate for 12,000 people in 1961, many villagers naturally resented the encroachment of the town.

Now the estate is well advanced, and soon the village will almost merge with it. The Post House dominates the sky-line. The constant whine of traffic on Eastern Avenue has made the peace of the countryside a thing of the past.

In the past, villages have been surrounded by all the trappings of urbanisation and yet have managed to keep an identity of their own. One hopes that this may happen in Llanedeyrn. Perhaps, to end with, I might express the thought that the increased population, new and old, may swell the congregation at the old parish church, and that the House of God Edeyrn founded so many years ago will once more become the spiritual focus of the parish.

Dennis Morgan