



E-NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2022

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EDITOR'S WELCOME



Christmas is nearly upon us, and behalf of all the committee I would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas, and a happy and peaceful 2023.

Of course, I hope to see you between now and then at our magic-filled December lecture! However you are celebrating the festive season, I hope you have a wonderful time!

Joyeux Noël à tous,



Geraint Denison-Kurg
Honorary Secretary



As you will know, the Society depends on volunteers in order to continue to run. Unfortunately, our longstanding Treasurer has decided to step down after many years of service, and a replacement has not been forthcoming. While all the officers of the Society serve a vital role, the position of Treasurer is especially important. Without this position being filled, it is hard to see how we can continue to function. As an emergency stop-gap measure, the Secretary has agreed to serve as Acting Treasurer, but this arrangement is far from ideal. The role of Treasurer, while important, is not onerous, and their level of involvement in the running of the society can be adjusted to fit around other commitments. If you think you might be able to step in and would like to discuss the role further – and save the day! – please do contact Geraint at Denison-kurg@outlook.com. The importance of filling this role to the continued viability of the society really cannot be overstated!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ROATH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Wednesday, 14th December, 2022

BRING IT ON!

✦✦ STEVE ✦✦ SANDERS ✦✦

✦✦ Magician, Punch & Judy Professor, Playwright, Magical Tutor,
Director, Advisor and Theatrical Historian ✦✦



PRESENTS

✦✦ The life and times of

✦✦ CHARLES ✦✦ OSWALD ✦✦

✦✦ WILLIAMS ✦✦

of Stacey Road, Cardiff
and his contribution to the

✦✦ *Golden Age of Magic* ✦✦

St. Edward's Music & Arts Centre
7.30pm start with access from 7.00pm

•

For link to live stream, please apply to Geraint
no later than Monday, 12th December on:
denison-kurg@outlook.com

ALL WELCOME! GUESTS £2.00 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP £10.00

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

STAMPS!

Elizabeth Morgan



STAMPS!

This year, as everyone is set to use up their stocks of old postage stamps; a great variety could be arriving with our Christmas cards, *so please*

SAVE THEM FOR CHARITY

Over the past few years, thanks to R.L.H.S. Members donating their used stamps, quite a haul accrued. I've been trying to donate these in person, but failed to find anywhere in Cardiff. Most large charities now appear to want their stamp donations posted. Even with the offer of *Freepost* envelopes, I hesitated doing this, as I had just over 2 Kgs in weight, and feared the cost of postage, would outweigh the worth of the stamps.

However, when I found the Llanelli Charity *Many Tears Animal Rescue*, they had a volunteer contact, willing and able to collect from me in Cardiff.

<https://www.manytearsrescue.org>

In future, newfangled QR codes might supersede postage stamps altogether, meanwhile *keep up the good work!*

- Cut or tear stamps from their envelopes allowing a generous 13mm (½ inch) margin.
- Either hand them to me at a R.L.H.S. Meeting, or post through my door.

Thanks so much,

Elizabeth.

Flora Corner, 1, Colchester Avenue, Pen-y-lan, Cardiff. CF23 9BN

A TILE OF TWO CITIES

Ted Richards



A recent question received via our website asked about the decorative tiles seen in some Roath porches. The enquirer commented that they had not seen the sort of decorative tiles in the porches in other cities. They asked if there is there any significant history to the presence of the tiles, and if so, is there a guide to the history of this craft?

Do let Ted Richards know if you have any thoughts at: roathhistorywebsite@gmail.com.

APPRECIATION OF BARRY ARTICLES

Margaret Butler

What a wonderful afternoon I have enjoyed re. Barry!!

My great grandfather was the first Dock Master (Richard Davies); my grandfather opened the Town Hall and Barry Accident Hospital; and my husband Ted and I, were welcomed to the re-opening of the Town Hall - I took the original key, and everyone enjoyed handling it. On my last trip to Perth (Australia), I passed the key to my grandson.

Although I was familiar with most of the history etc, there was much I did not know. Growing up, I didn't know that there was ANY other large sandy beach anywhere in UK! Having travelled MOST of the world when I was an air stewardess - early morning Barry Island is STILL one of the best beaches, as we could build sand boats and cars and wait for the incoming tide to surround us.

Happy memories!

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH AND ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BARRY

Gareth Brown

The walk commenced by proceeding westwards from Barry train station along Broad Street and Park Avenue to St Nicholas Road, on which we walked a short distance uphill and entered the grounds of St Nicholas Church, so first a few words about this saint.

ST NICHOLAS

Bishop of Myra and St Nicholas of Bari

Born: 15/3/270, Patara (now in Turkey) to Greek Christian parents

Died: 06/12/343

He was bishop of Myra, a maritime city, now Demre in modern Turkey. He is the patron saint of seamen, merchants, archers, brewers, children, students etc., and was known as St Nicholas the wonderworker. There were good deeds and miracles attributed to him, some before being a bishop. One was rescuing 3 sisters from prostitution by secretly dropping gold through their house window so there was a dowry from their father, who had lost his fortune, to get them married. Others were calming a storm, saving innocent men from death, and bringing to life 3 children pickled in brine by a butcher who intended to sell them as ham. There were few written records so even the authenticity of his more believable deeds also cannot be proven. He used to secretly leave gifts, hence became known in the Netherlands as siinterklaus- Santa Claus.

Less than 200 years after his death, the Church of St Nicholas was built over his old church in Myra and his remains placed in a sarcophagus. In 1087, the Greek citizens of the area were subjugated by Muslim Sejuk Turks and the RC Church declared the Eastern Church to be in schism. A group of merchants from Bari in Apulia took advantage of the situation and stole the major bones of St



Nicholas and took them back to be enshrined in the Basilica di San Nicola in Bari. The later justification was that they were protecting the remains from the Moslems. They sold some bone fragments and a tooth to various wealthy men of other European cities so there are a number of other churches with some of his supposed remains. Also, during the first crusade remaining bone fragments were taken from Myra to Venice by Venetian sailors.

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, BARRY

As we walked, we looked up to the church of St Nicholas (pictured below), now not used as a place of worship and imagined the days before any development beyond it to the harbour and the sea with no railway and no houses or buildings apart from a few buildings on the harbour side and the Ship Inn (this view shown on the previous page).

Seafarers would use the church as a navigating aid while coming to the little port of Barry. That the parish church of the village was dedicated to St Nicholas is surely no accident- seafarers, merchants, archers. The records of the parish go back to 1620 and the first known written reference to it was in 1254. It MAY have served as a chapel to Barry Castle which was built at the end of the



11th century by a follower of Robert fitzHamon, the Norman conqueror of Glamorgan who landed at Porthkerry in 1093.

The Celtic church was well established in the area. The church of Merthyr Dyfan dates from about 600AD and that of St Cadoc in Cadoxton dates to about 800 AD. St Cadoc had established a monastery at nearby Llancarfan and amongst his many students/ disciples were St Illtyd y Farchog and St Baruc. The age of Saints and the legends of St Dyfan, St Fagan, St Illtyd and his seat of learning etc are well worth reading about as they are quite entertaining. I may write a piece about them in the future.

Barry was a small rural parish until the docks were built and until 1674 was linked as one benefice to the adjoining parish of Porthkerry. In 1622 there were only 14 houses and 3 of them were farmhouses. The living was styled a rectory in 1810. In 1839 the 2 parishes of Barry and Porthkerry were reunited and subsequently referred to as the" consolidated Parish of Porthkerry with Barry".

By the 19th century the old church was falling down and the incumbent Canon EE Allen sought its demolition with a new church built on the site. Apparently, archery butts were found in the vicinity and according to a story I have heard a vicar or rector of the church at one time was part of a smuggling ring and when questioned about this by the authorities replied in a most unchristian way. Smuggling and Piracy was rife along the south Wales coast at one time. Some Roman building material may have been used to build the old church.



A new church was consecrated on 22/06/1876. It cost £900 and seated 120.

The population of the parish in the 1881 census was only 85 so this should have been adequate. But rumours of the likely building of the docks were circulating and the subsequent increase in the local population was anticipated by some



who said the church would be too small and so it proved with a dramatic rise in population. In 1892 a church hall (pictured left) was built to serve as the Parish Hall and Sunday School. St Nicholas Hall remains across the road from the Church and is used as a community facility used for yoga, pilates etc and can be hired for functions. The Church itself is no longer a place of worship and is the

HQ of the 6th Barry Sea Scouts. It is grade 2 listed as are the walls and a cross dating from the 15th Century in the churchyard which was restored in 1894 by the family of Fred and Elizabeth Romilly with a Celtic Cross with fleur-de-lys reliefs and an inscription in their memory (pictured below). The inscription reads "To the Glory of God and in loving and dutiful memory of Frederick & Elizabeth Romilly. This ancient cross is restored by their surviving Sons and Daughters 1894." An internet search for St Nicholas Church Barry can retrieve an interesting article from the Barry and District News, dated 16/12/2021, on the origins of the cross as a preaching cross possibly a thousand years ago. Also included is a reference to the work of Howard Thomas who excavated the site

of the original medieval church and discovered Roman building material was used in its construction.

In 1897 to ease seating inadequacy in Church a mission hall was erected in Park Crescent for the people living in that area just up the hill. Before it was completed for a short while services were held in the Park Hotel before it became licensed premises.

We then continued up the hill towards All Saints Church which replaced St Nicholas's as the Parish Church, passing en route the locations of the houses of John, the first Baron Romilly, on the right-hand side of the road, and Barry House

on the left developed by his brother Frederick. The leader of a Valeways walk of the Romilly estate on the day following my walk said John's house, the Lodge, is now the site of a block of flats above the junction with Miskin Street and St Nicholas Close surrounded by a high wall is on the site of Barry House. According to the Valeways walk leader a Prime Minister used to holiday at the Lodge, but the Barry Centenary Book states that Lord John Russell stayed at Barry House. The connection here was Lord John Russell, or the first earl Russell, was a son of another Lord John Russell, who became the 6th Duke of Bedford, and who remarried and had a daughter Georgiana Elizabeth Russell. She married Charles Romilly, the 4th son of Sir Samuel Romilly, so the Russells and Romillys were related by marriage. Charles Romilly therefore had married Lord John/ Earl Russell's half-sister. Lord John/ the 1st earl Russell was a prominent Whig and Liberal politician who was Prime Minister from 1846-1852 and 1865-1866. He was the grandfather of Bertrand Russell the philosopher, mathematician, pacifist and the 3rd Earl Russell.

We then took a diversion to the left down Old Village Road. Number 10 (pictured right) is a grade 2 listed house built about 1860 and listed 18/9/1962. It was one of four built for workers on the



Romilly Estate and an attempt to copy the style of the adjacent Jordans cottage, an older cottage demolished about 1971. I believe it originally had a thatched roof and the porch roof was thatched. Old Village Road is the site of the old village of Barry and the village green was on the opposite, southern side of the road. When houses were built on that side of the road, the Romillys donated land around the corner to replace the green as we saw later on the walk. Excavations when the workers cottages were built showed the foundations of older houses possibly with material dating back many hundreds of years. Some people however believe that the original village of Barry was further up the hill at Cwm Barry.



Going back to St Nicholas Road, we passed the building which was the first shop in the village in Barry (pictured left). It was built in a mock-Tudor style and has been an off licence and a toy shop in the recent past before its present use. The first shopkeeper there, a lady, was buried in St Nicholas churchyard and we were shown her grave the day after this walk. In the pouring

rain the rising ground leading up to the southern side of All Saints Church was pointed out.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Plans for a new church by the well-known Cardiff architect E. M. Bruce Vaughan, who designed many churches in South Wales, were made in 1902. The plans showed a small spire atop the tower, but this never came to fruition. The first minuted report of the plans were in the report of the Easter vestry meeting in 1903.

The history of Bruce Vaughan and his most famous projects is worth reading. Bruce Vaughan eventually was appointed as the architect for the new church. In 1903, the Rev. H. H. Stewart and the church building committee considered designs and 2 possible sites for the church. One was near Barry Castle and the other at the corner of St Nicholas Road and Park Road, and this latter was the site chosen. It was at the time occupied by the Admiralty, who had leased it from the Romilly Estate for a coastguard station, but the building of the docks and town made the site unsuitable so in 1906 the admiralty assigned the lease to Rev. Stewart for £450. The life of the Rev. H. H. Stewart is also an interesting read.



Because of the slope of the ground at the south side of the Church, and a good road at the north side, it was decided that the entry to the Church would be on the north side not the south as is usual for churches. The cost was high, therefore the Church was built in 2 stages. The cost to build the first stage was estimated as £3707 5s 8d and involved demolition, foundations and erecting the nave, N. aisle and the porch. The building contractor was Mr H. S. Rendell, a local man. The foundation stone was laid by Samuel Henry Romilly on 06/02/1907. There was a short service at St Nicholas church and then the Lord Bishop of Llandaff, clergy, choir, Church officers and parishioners walked to the new site for the stone laying. The procession then went to St Nicholas church hall for tea and an address by the Lord Bishop. A month later it was decided that work should also include building the south aisle. The design of this was altered to take a stained-glass window donated by the countess of Dunmore in the wall. The countess was a friend of Rector Stewart and his wife, Lady Beatrice Stewart.

Consecration of the first part of the church took place on 29/04/1908 by the Lord Bishop. The cost of this first part was £7,450. The archway to the future chancel, vestries and tower was boarded up with timber covered by a blue curtain.

By 1914, the church building committee were able to proceed with the second stage of construction and work started in April. At the Easter vestry meeting on 16 April 1914, Rector Stewart announced his intention of relinquishing his incumbency of Porthkerry with Barry in favour of his young colleague the Rev. T. W. Welch. The corner stone was laid by Lady Beatrice Stewart on the 3rd June 1914 and by the time war was declared on 04/08/1914 the walls of the second part were about 6 ft tall. Some members of the building committee wanted work to stop but Rev. Welch was determined to complete the building so work continued. The completed church was consecrated and the organ and lectern dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Llandaff on Sat 24 April 1915. The church cost £10,870 and had seating accommodation for 573 worshippers.



I believe the font pictured above is the plain circular 13th century Font of Sutton stone removed from St Nicholas Church after it was de-consecrated in 1955 but the base looks a little different to the one in the illustration in the booklet I have. The Memorial tablet also from St Nicholas is to the Rev Evan Howell the first Rector of Barry after it had been made a separate parish in 1674 Photo 5 Items from St Baruc's Church Barry Island which held its last service at Epiphany

2019 Photo 6 The foundation stone on the outside of the north-west corner of the porch. The Barry weather has eroded most of the inscription that stated that the stone was laid on Wed 6th February 1907 by Mr Samuel Henry Romilly.

The blue lias limestone used in the building came from the local Nant Talwg and Castle Farm quarries and the Bath-stone for the nave arcading came from Corsham Down in Wiltshire. Much of the timber came via the docks from Russia and Canada. The tower is 74 ft tall and reached by 135 steps, the clock and peel of 10 bells was installed in 1946 as a War Memorial and Thanksgiving for peace. The bells, which were cast at Croydon, hang dead, the clappers being operated by an electro-pneumatic mechanism.

Until September 1972, Porthkerry and Rhoose were linked with Barry as one parish, but from that date they were linked with Penmark. In 1974 Barry Island ceased to be a Conventional District linked to Sully and became part of the parish of Barry with the appointment of a priest in charge. At the beginning of 1967 the deanery of Barry was amalgamated with rural deanery of Penarth. In recent years the various parishes in Barry have been combined as a rectorial benefice now known as the Barry Ministry Area.

We noted the badly eroded foundation stone of Samuel Henry Romilly at the porch and took shelter from the stormy blast in the Church where we were warmly welcomed by the church-warden. Various artefacts were pointed out and your chairman noted a wonderful account of the history of the church on display boards which have been put at the back (western end) of the church since he was last a regular worshipper.

All sources as per the article in the previous issue.

ALMOST A ROATH BOY Gareth Brown

Archibald Hood
Born Kilmarnock June 1823
Died Cardiff 27/10/1902



This man deserves the accolade of being called the father of Barry as much if not more than David Davies in my opinion. He was one of a number of figures involved with the development of Barry who was or almost became a Roath boy, living the wrong side of Glossop Road on Newport Road. I must admit I had not heard of him before I began my research into the development of Barry docks and town for the walk in the summer programme of Roath LHS 2022. I had not the curiosity to wonder why Hood Road where the fashionable Academy coffee bar in the Pump-house and the Goodsheds shops and eateries are situated was so named. The more I read about him the more impressed I was about the man. David Davies gets all the glory and credit for the creation of Barry whilst Hood is largely unknown or ignored very unjustly I believe.

It is difficult to find out much about his birth, family in Scotland etc on the genealogy site I use and the census information doesn't include the original documentation just transcriptions. He was brought up alone by his father as his mother died when he was young. I have not been able to ascertain when she died. He had little education and was employed at the age of 13 at the colliery where his father was a foreman. I believe Archibald worked over ground working 12 hrs a day in charge of a surface engine. When his father became the manager of the colliery when Archibald was 17, Archibald was able to take classes in order to qualify as a mining engineer. He was soon masterminding the development of collieries and iron works in Ayrshire.

In 1856 he expanded his business, leasing Whitehill colliery in Rosewell, Midlothian, which was south of Edinburgh and was then owned by Archibald Primrose 4th Earl of Rosebay. Rosewell is adjacent to the village of Roslin in which is situated Rosslyn chapel which features heavily in the da Vinci Code by Dan Brown with its associations with the Knights templar, the holy grail and freemasonry that apparently have no basis in fact.

Hood successfully expanded and improved the Rosewell Colliery as it was also known and soon managed several pits in the area including Carrington and Polton to which he extended railway lines including the Polton and Penicuik Railway. He also managed pits at Eldin, Gorton and Skelymuir. He acquired some of these pits I believe. He developed brick and tile works using his coal in the manufacturing process, and also gas works and oil works. There appear to have been a number of accidents at the brickworks 1884-85 and a fatality in 1864

Hood developed the village of Rosewell for his workers with well built houses with gardens which could be used as smallholdings. He encouraged the establishment of a Co-operative Retail Society so that his workers would not have to owe money 'on tick' to unscrupulous shop-owners and provided sports facilities such as bowling greens; bowls being a sport he enjoyed. He apparently owned and built all the village apart from the schools and churches. He employed the "Gothenburg" system whereby any profits from the sale of alcohol went into the creation of parks, libraries and other community facilities.

He began a new shaft at the colliery in 1878 and built railways for the mines ,branching off the Peebles Railway. In 1890 Hood amalgamated his company with the mining interests of the Marquess of Lothian who had pits at Newtongrange to form the Lothian Coal company. Hood remained as chairman of the company till his death. Whitehill colliery closed in 1961.

Hood lived at Rosedale in the south of the village now a category C listed building. It was later used by the Lothian Company to house its managers ,notably Archibald's son James. Archibald Hood also acquired Whitehill House a category A listed large Tudor-Jacobean revival house to the south east of the village. This was used as a Red Cross hospital in World War 1 and until the late 1990s as St Joseph's Hospital for children with learning disabilities . It was run by the nuns of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. It is now privately owned and has a 20 hole golf course and some exclusive houses in its grounds. There still is a house named Rosedale in the south of the village.

It seems Hood first came to South Wales in 1860 purportedly to spy out the land for fellow Scots wishing to get involved in the rapidly developing S Wales coalfield. He obviously liked what he saw and decided he would like a piece of the action for himself. He joined the Ely Valley Coal Company as a Director. That year the Ely Valley Coal Company's Tylcha Fach Level colliery started operating in Tonyrefail working the coal seam known in this area as the Ty Du seam producing bituminous household coal.

He bought Gilfach House in nearby Gilfach Goch and this is where he lived in his initial years in the Rhondda area. In 1862 he changed the name of the Ely Valley Coal Company to the Glamorgan Coal Company and took ownership of it. Gilfach Goch already had coal mines but Hood opened Gilfach Goch colliery in 1863. It worked the Rhondda No 3 seam for house coal and its byproduct of coke which was produced in its coke ovens and fireclay used in the production of bricks. A terrace of houses nearby was known as Scotch Row.

In March 1863 after gaining mineral rights, Hood sank a pit at Llwynypia which was still then a largely rural area in the Rhondda Fawr. It's name can be translated as the bush of the magpies and the site of Hood's pit was at the foot of a steep hill covered with

trees. The shaft reached the No2 seam in 1864 and the No3 in 1865. Hood purchased Trealaw colliery renaming it Llwynypia no3 and over the next decade or so sunk further shafts at the Llwynypia complex which became the centre of his operations in the Rhondda with 6 pits and 3500 workmen. The Glamorgan Coal Company thus had the pits at Llwynypia, Penrhiwfer near Tonyrefail and the Gilfach Goch colliery. He also was involved in further developing coal mines in the Upper Rhondda. High quality coke was derived from the coal at Llwynypia which of itself in the early days was only small coal of itself of little value. By the time of his death there were 160 coke ovens there and Hood also built a brickworks there as was his practice, raising the value of the coal his men dug.

He did much to expand the market for Welsh steam coal in particular by an agreement with the Admiralty to supply coal to the ships of the Royal Navy. I believe Hood's Merthyr was the name given to the coal that went to the Navy. Why Merthyr was in the name I do not know. Possibly Merthyr was the only name from the Valleys known about in London at the time! Hood used new technology in his mines such as electricity and the use of compressed air and was a leading light in the development of mining engineering in Europe. He made a number of contributions to the science of mining including a paper on the Explosive Character of Coal Dust.

A large number of Scottish workers followed him to Llwynypia and the houses he built for his workers as in Scotland had a garden and some at least were known as the Scotch Houses. Many of the terraces in Llwynypia and its surrounding area had Scottish place names or were named after Scottish or other people who had played an important part in Hood's life. Some also had a rear lane access. Hood ensured that an education system existed for the workers' children, built a miner's institute which housed a library. He also provided a swimming baths and a number of bowling greens. He moved permanently to South Wales in 1867 and built what has been described as a mansion called Sherwood on Newport Road in 1876 in Cardiff next door to the site of St James' Church. A number of streets in the Rhondda also have the name Sherwood. It derives from the name of the house his family resided in when he

worked at Stonelaw Colliery at Rutherglen from where he progressed to the Glasgow School of Mines for his mining engineering qualifications.

He retained ownership of his house Rosedale in Rosewell and still played an active part in the management of his interests in Scotland. As we have seen in 1890 he arranged the amalgamation of his Whitehill colliery with the Newbattle pits at Newtongrange owned by Schomberg Kerr, 9th Marquis of Lothian to create the Lothian Coal Company. In that year began the sinking of the shaft for the showpiece Lady Victoria colliery at Newtongrange which was in the deepest part of the coalfield. The village of Newtongrange was greatly extended to service the pit which now forms the Scottish Mining Museum. Around that time Hood's son James (1859-1941) became the General Manager of the Lothian Coal Company, moving back to Scotland and took up residence at Rosedale. In the same year of 1890 Hood became the Deputy Chairman of the Barry Docks and Railway Company.

The shortcomings of the docks at Cardiff owned by Bute and the closely allied Taff Vale Railway's inadequate sidings and main lines were causing great frustration to coal mine owners and shipowners even after the relatively small Roath Basin was mooted and then completed in 1874. From the 1870s onwards Hood along with another Rhondda coal owner J Osbourne Riches were involved in every scheme to provide alternative docks and their servicing rail network to Bute's and the TVR either within Cardiff or elsewhere in the area. Hood was a major proponent of the Barry docks and railway scheme from its beginnings, possibly the major proponent, being on board before the talismanic David Davies joined the party. He succeeded Davies as the Deputy Chairman of the Barry Dock and Railway Company after Davies' death in 1890.

For further details of the development of Barry and its docks see my "piece" on the development of Barry and its docks.

Archibald Hood played a major role in the civic life of the Rhondda and Cardiff as well as in the industrial and economic development of the area.

He was or had been by the time of his death the managing director of the Glamorgan Coal Company, Chairman of the Lothian Coal

Company, Deputy Chairman of the Barry Docks and Railway Company, Chairman of the Vale of Glamorgan Railway Company, Chairman of the Sliding Scale Joint Committee, Chairman of the South Wales Coal Owners Association, a Justice of the Peace for Cardiff and Glamorgan ie a magistrate, a member of the Commission on Mining Royalties, a past president of the Mining Association of Great Britain, a past president of the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Barry Pilotage Board and so on. The week before his death he was placed as the sole representative of the coal owners of Great Britain on the commission looking into the use of electricity in mines.

Archibald Hood had 4 sons and a daughter. His wife had died in 1891 and one of his sons Dr Hood of Bridgend had died in 1897.

Archibald Hood had been known to have valvular heart disease and died of what would seem to be in layman's terms a heart attack in the early hours of Monday 27 October 1902. The previous Thursday he had travelled to London returning on Friday evening when he complained of what he thought was indigestion. He was no better on the Saturday morning so against his wishes the family called Dr William Campbell his doctor to visit him and he prescribed for him. Hood then went to work at the offices of the Glamorgan Coal Company. On the Sunday he spent the day with his daughter and son in law Mr and Mrs WR Shirley at their home, The Woodlands at Leckwith. On returning home he had pain in the chest over the heart area but this cleared and he had a good sleep. However the pain returned shortly before 3 am and his son WW Hood- William who was staying with him overnight called for Dr Campbell. Archibald Hood died at 330 am on 27/10/1902 aged 79 at his home Sherwood on Newport Road.. The cause of death was recorded as "angina pectoris" ie ischaemic heart disease

He was survived by his sons Robert then living in Chile, WW(William) of Llwynypia and James of Midlothian and his daughter Mrs WR Shirley.

The article in the Rhondda Leader of 1 November 1902 contains the following:-" At Llwynypia the news of Mr Hood's death carried a profound sensation. He was at the colliery as recently as last Thursday [after which it seems he travelled to London] and presided

over the Gilchrist Lecture at Jerusalem, Llwynypia on Thursday, October the 16th. By his death Mid Rhondda has lost a generous friend who was ever ready to lend his hearty support to any good cause. On Thursday, the day of the funeral, work was suspended at the collieries as a mark of respect."

A brief search through the records held on the genealogy site I subscribe to reveals an interesting family history, albeit incomplete and sketchy,

I can find no record of Archibald's birth so consequently I do not know his parents' names. His first appearance is in the 1851 census for Ayrshire. He is 27 and the head of household at 25 Low Row, Low Row in the parish of Auchinleck. He is described as manager at Sugar Iron Works, born in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire. He is sharing the house with 2 younger Scotsmen, a 23 yr old from Airdrie, Lanarkshire who is a Cashier at Sugar Iron Works and a 20 yr old from Glasgow, Lanarkshire who is a Book Keeper at Sugar Iron Works. There is also a 42 yr old woman from Appin, Argyllshire who is their domestic servant. As I cannot see a copy of the original census form I cannot see if there has been a mistake in transcription. I suspect that Lugar has been misspelled as Sugar. There were iron works at Lugar which is a small village within Auchinleck parish. I can find no record of giant sugar pans made to help in refining sugar from sugar cane in these works as occurred elsewhere in Scotland for export to the West Indies.

The 1861 census shows him to be living at the time of the census at Rosedale Cottage in the parish and registration district of Lasswade in which Rosewell was situated. He is 37 and a Colliery Manager and Coal Master. With him are his sons, Robert R Hood aged 4 born in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, William W aged 3 and James A Hood 1 both born in Lasswade. There are also 2 domestic servants, both young women, one aged 20 from Auchinleck, Ayrshire and the other 16 whose birthplace is unknown. Archibald's wife is not present. I can find no record of his marriage in the likely time period.

In the 1871 census Archibald aged 47 is again at Rosedale and a Coalmaster. His wife has the unusual forename of Cochrina and her surname is recorded as Walker which I assume was her maiden name. I do not know if it was the practice in Scotland to record

wives on censuses with their maiden names or if this was an error. Robert R is present aged 14, along with William W age 13, James A 11, Archibald 9 born in Lasswade as was Eliza A aged 7. The 2 older sons had no entry under profession or employment. The 3 younger children were all recorded as scholars. There were 2 servants, a 17yr old girl from Tain, Ross and Cromarty and a 16 yr old girl from Paisley, Renfrewshire.

In the 1881 census of Glamorgan Archibald Hood senior is living at Sherwood House, Newport Road, Cardiff in the civil parish and ecclesiastical parish of St John's, the Municipal Borough, Parliamentary Borough and Urban Sanitary District of Cardiff and the municipal ward of East Cardiff. He is described as a 57 yr old Colliery owner born in Scotland. Also in residence was his wife Cochrina Hood aged 55 born in Scotland and 2 young female domestic servants, one aged 21 born in Cardiff, the other 15 born in Llantwit Major.

The preceding entries in the census show that next door was St James' Church, then Tredegarville school for boys and girls , the school house occupied by a schoolmaster as head of household born in Deptford ,Kent and his wife, then next to that 1 Glossop Terrace.

At the time of the 1891 census Archibald aged 67 was back at Rosedale ,Head of household and a colliery owner. His son James A was living there as was a married couple as domestic servants, a 48 yr old man who was the butler born in Edinburgh and his wife 36 the housekeeper born in Dalmellington, Ayrshire. Cochrina Hood may have died soon before this as her death is recorded in the first quarter of 1891 in Cardiff. She was 65.

The 1901 census finds Archibald back in Cardiff at 42 Newport Road. This census has entries listed from town eastwards so that no 42 is the last residence on the form and the next entry is St James Church. The growth of Cardiff is reflected in that the municipal ward is now Adamsdown rather than East. Archibald is 77, the Head of household, a widower, a colliery owner/ mine man and an employer born in Scotland who spoke English. His son William W is there. He is 43 and single and is also a colliery owner/ mine man and employer from Scotland. Intriguingly he is recorded as

speaking English and a foreign language in the column meant to show whether people spoke Welsh or English only or both. There were 2 single female domestic servants aged 36 both born in Cardiff. The first spoke English and a foreign language and the second only English.

The question that comes to my mind is was William now a permanent resident at Sherwood or was he visiting as is the impression given in the account of Archibald's death where it seems that William stayed overnight with his father when he was suffering from chest pain and died?

Tracing the life histories of Archibald's children is not always straight forward and of course there may be others of whom I am unaware that were born and died between census returns. A thorough search would involve going to see birth and death records in person in archives likely all in Scotland or ordering copies on line for likely candidates , a hit and miss and expensive pursuit . As Ted Richards has said in a blog article recently a search on line can often give all the information that can be found via genealogy research and much more of course. I think it is suffice to say in this article that Archibald's first three sons followed their father into mining whether in the management of coal mines, ownership or mining engineering.

His eldest son Robert Raeburn Hood was a 24 yr old unmarried colliery manager living at Gilfach "C"och in 1881 . The next time I came across him was in the Rhondda Leader's comments on his father's death in 1902 when he was stated to be in Chile. He died in Santiago ,Chile 4/12/1915 and was interred there

The next son William Walker Hood stayed nearer to home being a 23 yr old mining engineer living at Glyn Cornel House,Llwynypia in 1881 and at Sherwood in 1901 and in 1902 at time of his father's death. In 1891 he was a colliery proprietor and in 1901 a colliery owner/ mineman . In 1911 he was 53 , still single and living at Tredean near Chepstow. He was a coal owner and mining engineer and head of household with 4 servants. He died at Faringdon, Berkshire aged 65 on 23 /3/1923 after falling from a train. He was still active in the coal mining world and had succeeded his father in many roles.

The 3rd son James Archibald Hood moved back to live at Rosedale, Rosewell to manage the family mining interests in Midlothian, managing then becoming chairman of the Lothian Coal Company. He had had an education including attending the mining school at Mons, Belgium and the university of Edinburgh. He had an active role in other industries and a daughter married into the nobility,

The 4th son Archibald Hood broke the trend. He qualified as a doctor in Edinburgh and became a GP in Bridgend. He married the daughter of the Rector of the church in which they married. The Rector later became Archdeacon at Llandaff Cathedral. Archibald was 29 when he married and sadly died at the age of 36 when living in Laleston. He was buried in the churchyard of St Mary's Nolton where he was married. I believe he just had the two children a daughter and a son. His wife Constance remarried but I cannot find evidence that she had further children. Her second husband was buried in the parish of Coity with Nolton Bridgend and the service was conducted by Frederic Hood his stepson. Constance died in 1958 and was buried at Nolton and the Bishop of Llandaff conducted the service. Archibald and Constance's daughter Constance Cochrina I believe married in the same church in 1924 and died in Pontypool in 1980. Their son Archibald Frederic known it seems as Frederic or Freddy gained a first class degree in Divinity at Oxford University in 1916 and became a priest. He was active in High Church Anglo Catholicism in the Church of England and was Principal of Pusey House in Oxford from 1934 to 1951. From 1961 till his retirement in 1970 he was Canon and Chancellor and Chapter Treasurer of St Paul's Cathedral ,London. After he died in London in 1975 his cremated ashes were brought back to the family church in Bridgend and were interred by the Bishop of Llandaff and the Rector.

Archibald and Cochrina's daughter Eliza Agnes Walker Hood married in 1886 aged about 24 in Penarth to a solicitor Walter Rayner Shirley. They later moved to " The Woodlands" in Leckwith. I have discovered 4 children of theirs in baptism records but one child disappears without an entry that I can find in the death registers. One child would appear to have been born in Bermuda! An Eliza A W Shirley died aged 85 in the district of East Glamorgan in the 4th Quarter of 1949

I think that is more than enough genealogy for this article. For those of you who do not find family history tedious and find it fascinating like me , I include a link to the research I have done so far into the lives of Archibald Hood's children

Coming back to Archibald Hood. He is buried in Cathays cemetery near to and to the left of the main entrance gates. The monument on the grave takes the shape of a tall obelisk. I stated in my introduction that I had not heard of Archibald Hood before doing this "research". I may have seen the grave and monument on a tour of the cemetery by the Friends of Cathays Cemetery in the past or looked at it when searching for a family grave so it is fairer to say I had no recollection of ever hearing the name or knowing anything about him.

The base of the monument appears to be granite with a general pink effect and on top of it are three steps of grey effect granite decreasing in size surmounted by the obelisk itself made of the same grey rock. There are inscriptions on the lower part of all four faces of the obelisk. These have been inlaid or gilded with gold leaf I presume but this is fading and the bright daylight makes reading the inscriptions a little difficult , even more so on looking at my photographs. Actually the inscription for Archibald himself seems most devoid of gold but is the easiest to read.

The monument was originally erected after Archibald's wife Cochrina died and the inscription on the east face reads "Erected by Archibald Hood colliery owner Midlothian and Glamorgan in memory of his beloved wife Cochrina Walker born at Cumnock ,Ayrshire 24th June 1825.Died Sherwood Cardiff 27th March 1891

There are two points to note here. 1 Cumnock is very near Auchinleck where Archibald worked early in his adult life as an iron works manager. Did they meet then? Kilmarnock is also in Ayrshire but a little further away to the north. 2 Again Cochrina is named as Cochrina Walker without the surname Hood with which all others on the monument were named. Was this a Scottish custom? I cannot believe in Victorian times that they were not married! Frustratingly i have not been able to find a record of their marriage or Cochrina's birth or where " Cochrina"was in the 1841 census. In the 1851 census there was a Cochran Walker aged 24 at "North

East of Dumfries Road "in the parish of Old Cumnock . Her birthplace was Cumnock, Ayrshire and she is described as a daughter. The head of household is William Walker aged 53 born in Glasgow, Lanarkshire and very interestingly his occupation is Coal Master. It is very tempting to say that this is Cochrina and her family. William's wife Elizabeth 44 and another daughter Elizabeth 20 both born in Cumnock are also present. In 1841 the family of William Walker 40 Coalmaster born in Scotland and his wife Elizabeth 35, Cochran 15, Agnes 13 and Elizabeth 11 all born in Ayrshire are living at Village , Old Cumnock. It is likely but not definite that this was Cochrina and her family. Perhaps she was proud of her surname, that of a coal master and that is why she had it on the 1871 census,

On the north face of the obelisk is inscribed "Also of the said Archibald Hood born at Kilmarnock Ayrshire 4th June 1823. Died at Sherwood Cardiff 27th October 1902."

On the west side is " Also of Archibald Hood MB their youngest son born at Rosewell, Midlothian.

4th March 1861. Died at Laleston nr Bridgend 25th June 1897 interred at Nolton Church

Bridgend" and below it " also of Robert Raeburn Hood their eldest son born at Glasgow 20th June 1856. Died at Santiago Chile 4th December 1915 and is interred there.

On the southern side it reads" Also of William Walker Hood of Tredean, Chepstow Monmouthshire and of Invergeldie Perthshire second son of the said Archibald Hood born at Rosewell Midlothian 6th September 1857 died 23rd March 1923

Archibald Hood appears to have been the sort of person I admire and regard as a hero, an all round good guy ! He came from relatively humble beginnings, had little school education if any but by hard work and application and native intelligence became qualified as a mining engineer. In this field he excelled and was progressive and an innovator. As a mine owner he cared about the physical, emotional and social well being of his workers and their families, providing good housing and leisure and educational facilities. He was also true to his Scottish roots but contributed greatly to the civic life of Cardiff and the Rhondda notwithstanding that this would have been to his commercial advantage in many cases.

I may be accused of looking back 120 years and further through rose tinted glasses but the following facts I think give a true judgement of the quality of the man. Due to the high esteem in which he was held, his workers decided to fund a memorial in his honour. The miners contributed to the fund for a statue to be built, raising over £600 for its construction . This was not an inconsiderable sum of money at the start of the 20th century. He was not alone in his benevolence and provision of good standard houses for his employees. Titus Salt in the Bradford area ,The Cadburys at Bourneville, Birmingham and others were also enlightened but considering the often strained relationships between coal owners and other industrial leaders with their workers, it is surely most telling that in this period not too far before the Tonypandy riots, Hood's men were moved to such generosity of spirit and substance to their boss who was apparently a conservative in politics. (the Glamorgan Coal Company became part of the Cambrian combine and I think it was by the time of the Tonypandy riots in 1910)

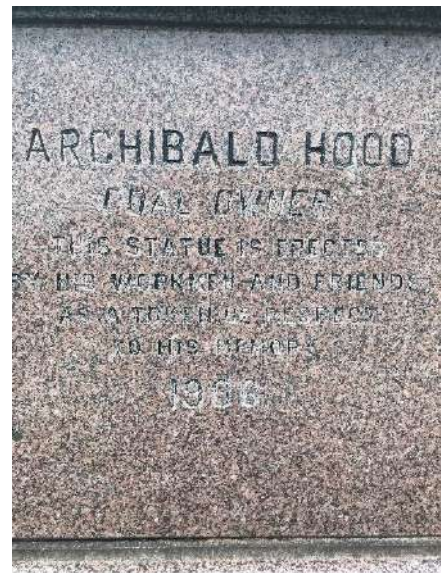
The statue is a 7ft 6 in tall cast bronze figure of Sir Archibald Hood leaning on a stick and pointing to the left towards the site of his central mineworks complex, brickworks and Scotch Terraces. It was erected in the grounds of Llwynypia Library/ Institute. It has a circular base on which is inscribed 'cast W Merrett London 1905 SS'. Its grey and pink marble plinth has an inscription in the front reading 'Archibald Hood Coal Owner. This statue was erected by his workmen and friends as token of respect to his memory 1906' . There is an inscription at the back in Welsh. It was unveiled by William Abraham 'Mabon' the first MP for the Rhondda. It was the first public statue in the Rhondda and is listed by Cadw . The bronze statue has been repainted in recent times so that he now has a grey morning suit with black tail buttons and primrose yellow trousers and is standing on a base now painted red.

I have commented that apart from the name of Hood Road I am unaware of any other acknowledgement of the role of Archibald Hood in the development of Barry in the town. There was however a steamship , gross register tonnage 164 named Archibald Hood built by Cox & co in Falmouth in 1898. It "belonged to Barry" and was owned by the Barry Railway Company as the Barry Docks and Railway Company was renamed. I believe it was a tug. Try as I might

I have been unable to ascertain when Archibald Hood became Sir Archibald !

The photos were taken by me on 2 September 2022. Sometimes it is better to use Shank's pony and some shoe leather by visiting a grave to glean information in the old fashioned way rather than rely on online resources. Actual dates of births and deaths were on the monument whereas only the quarter of a year when they occurred was readily available online

Gareth has undertaken further genealogical research on the family. If anyone would like this further piece, please let either him or Geraint know!



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