

NICHOLSON'S  
CAMBRIAN  
TRAVELLER'S GUIDE,  
IN EVERY DIRECTION;

CONTAINING  
REMARKS MADE DURING MANY EXCURSIONS

IN THE  
**Principality of Wales,**

AUGMENTED BY  
EXTRACTS FROM THE BEST WRITERS.

THIRD EDITION,  
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*Clym-yr-egross*, 1 m. Cross the Duläs, where, on the l., is *Gelli Galed*, *Crinant*. Recross the Duläs, 1 m. Cross the Tawe river, 2 m. (On the r. *Ynyscedwyn*.) Continue with the Swansea Canal on the l., and close to the Tawe river on the r. Pass a furnace to *Ystradgynlais*, 1 m., the *Vale of Gynlais* ap *Glewissig*, Prince of Gwent, and father of Saint Cattwg, who married Gwladis, one of the daughters of Brychan. The Church is low, dark, and small; it consists of a nave and chancel only, flagged and seated, but not ceiled. Across the middle of the aisle is a small gallery, erected in 1734. A plain white monument in the chancel bears the names of Richard, Christopher, and John Portrey. Near the communion rails, on a black stone, is recorded Morgan Awbrey, of Ynyscedwin, Esq., interred the 19th June, 1648, aged 29, with some verses bad enough "to raise a dead man from his grave, or fire with red resentment the wan cheek." The first four lines may serve as a specimen:—

" This marble may look sad and well it may,  
Being fixed thus for to display  
A doleful fate which did befall  
The people here in general."

This spot is remarkable for the longevity of its inhabitants. From a list of paupers dependent on the parish during one quarter, out of the whole number, consisting of 28 persons, ten exceeded 80 years; four, 70 years; four, 60 years; and five, 50 years.

A brook, called Graidd, falls into the Tawe at Ystradgynlais; and midway between the Tawe and Twrch rivers, is *Ynyscedwyn Awbrey*, on the banks of the Swansea Canal, once the patrimony or acquisition of Gryffydd Gwyr, or Griffith of Gower: it afterwards became the inheritance of the Rev. Fleming Gough, rector of Ystradgynlais. Three or four m. n., upon the Llech River, is *Capel Coelbren*, which seems to have been anciently a private oratory, erected by one of the Herbert's of Cil-y-bebil. The present fabric was rebuilt in 1799, at the expense of Mr. Walter Price, of Glynllech. There is here an ancient inscription to the memory of *John Herbert*, who died January 7. 1601. A Sarn Helen runs along a high ridge, separating the parish of Ystradgynlais from Ystradfellte and Cadostone. Upon the hills adjoining Llywel and Carmarthenshire, several *carneddau*, and the remains of two or three small British encampments occur on the s.e. Proceeding up the vale, this range of mountains is opposed by another upon the s. side of the Tawe, in some places resembling a mural fortification. In this natural wall, near the head of the valley of Ystradgynlais, or *Glan-twynau*, as it is frequently called, is a hermitage. In this cell, *Gunleus*, Prince of Glewissig, is said to have died in the arms of his son Cattwg. It is about 6 ft. high, flat-roofed, and three or four yards square. On the n. of the Tawe, a little below the fall of the Tawney, is *Daren-yr-ogof*, "the Rock of the Cave;" from this issues a very strong stream, but not equal in quantity to the spring at *Oymore*, in Glamorganshire. Follow the Tawe, 2 m., downwards, then cross s. to the Llech, or Llechog, (the stony) a small river between the mansion of Glynllech and *Capel Coelbren*. "Here a scene occurs," says Mr. Jones, "which mocks description; it is the waterfall near *Hên Rhod*, in comparison of which, the falls of the Hepstè and Pyrdin are mill-spouts. This little mountain stream is seen only to advantage when swelled by rain. For some space from the source it flows over a bed of naked rocks, till it crosses a road from Ystradfellte to Glynllech, and the Vale of Ystradgynlais. After passing w., it is suddenly lost, and the traveller is left to observe a woody glen sweeping to-

wards the Tawe; but following the course of the river, he will be astonished. The stream is first almost dashed into foam for a few yards over a rock which interrupts its descent, after which it assumes a more compact form, and falls perpendicularly in one unbroken sheet of water, upwards of 90 ft.; it then runs concealed by banks and trees, in a semicircular direction to the Tawe." From Ystradgynlais to the point where the road crosses the Tawe, the distance is 7 m. (2 m. further diverge on the l. to *Rhyd-y-brïew*, 7 m.) Three m. beyond is a road to the l. to *Defymoc*, 4 m. One m. to the l. where this road diverges is *Llannid*, dedicated to St. Illtyd, who settled in Britain with Brân Fendigaid, about the year 70. Three m. further cross the *Senni* river, cross the *Camlais*, 1 m. (On the l. 1 m., is Capel Illtyd; a little beyond the road to PONT-NEDD-FYCHAN, diverges on the r.) BRECON, 7 m.

The turnpike-road to LLANELLY and KIDWELLY from Neath is to *Llancaemlet*, 2½ m. Cross the Tawe, which bends on the l. to the sea. A road to the l., 4½ m., to Swansea. Cross the Swansea Canal, *Llangyfelach Church*, 3½ m., dedicated to Cyfelach. An additional church was recently erected by John Dillwyn Llewelyn, Esq., of Penllergare. This edifice contains 500 sittings, and cost upwards of 2000*l.* *Corse Inon*, 3 m. 1 ft. *Pontarddulais*, 4 m. Cross the *Llwhwr*, enter Carmarthenshire, where a road to LLANDEILO-PAWR, 14 m., occurs on the r. To CARMARTHEN, 17½ m. LLANELLY, 6 m. KIDWELLY, 9 m.

Sir R. Hoare says that a long extent of the Roman causeway (*Sarn Helen*) is visible, leading from the station of Nidus, or Neath, to that of the Gaer, near Brecon. It deviates from the main road at Ynys-y-Geryn, and takes the direction of Cefn-hir-fynydd.

While at Neath, Mr. Wyndham made an excursion to the Gnoll, and to the fall of the Cleddeu at Melincwrt. [See SWANSEA.] From Neath he traversed the dreary mountain of Bettws, then joined the road from Swansea, and descended into Carmarthenshire.

Mr. Webb recommends tourists to pass from Neath to MERTHYR-TYDVIL, as an interesting and pleasant road, and thence to PONT-NEATH FYCHAN, not forgetting the waterfall on the River Mellte, by the way.

To PONT-NEATH-FYCHAN, the gentle course of the river, with its hanging woods, and that felicity of soil, atmosphere, and herbage, peculiar to the vales in this exposure, produce a scene of pleasure, with some portion of sublimity, to which it would be difficult for any description to do justice. The *colliery*, at some distance on the r. is well worth visiting on account of the canal to Neath. At *Ynys-y-Geryn*, bar-iron is wrought into tin plates from bars of pig-iron at a forge below. At *Melincwrt*, there is a magnificent cataract of the Clydach, from an elevation of 80 ft. With the exception of the Mynach Falls, this is the largest in S. Wales, and, considered as an enclosed scene, is unrivalled in its accompaniments. The road from Melincwrt to *Gnoll Castle*, the seat of the late Sir Herbert Mackworth, and now of H. Grant, Esq., is conducted along terraces, where dense woods intervene between the passenger and the Neath below.

The principal *Angling Stations* in the vicinity of Neath, are *Glyn Corwg*, excellent; *Blaen Honddŷ*, 1½ m. on the w. bank of the Nedd, in the midst of beautiful scenery; *Crinant*, 7 m. on the Dulås; *Pont-Nedd-Fychan*, 10 m.

To Briton Ferry, 2½ miles. Malkin; Barber.  
Swansea, 8 miles. Skirine; Evans; Donovan.

To Brecon, a circuitous route of 48 miles; the direct road is about 30 miles.  
To Llandeilo Fawr, 22 miles. Wyndham.

quartzose matter of the granite and other oldest rocks, while the detritus of the mountain limestone, with its characteristic fossils, do not appear in the subsequent formations until we come to the red marl beds overlying the carboniferous series.

"In the last Report of the Swansea Institution is contained a succinct account of Mr. Troughton's patent process for arresting the issue of mephitic vapours in the smelting of copper; some notice of Mr. L. LL. Dillwyn's researches in fossil phytology; an account of two newly discovered bone caverns in Gower; an allusion to a unique collection of mineral substances formed in the flues and furnaces of the copper-works; a description, with three engravings, of an elaborate machine for measuring the direction and force of the wind; a notice of the application of photography to the self-registration of meteorological instruments, and remarks on the action of the tide gauge.

"Within the last three years, Mr. George Crane, of the *Ynicedwyn Iron Works*, has discovered that, by using heated air, he can melt iron ores with anthracite coal. In order to form some idea of its value and national importance, it need only be stated that it has added to the available resources of this kingdom, for the purposes of its iron trade, a district 60 to 70 m. long, by 6 to 8 miles broad, abounding with the anthracite or carbon coal, lime, and ironstone; it has already trebled the value of this extensive mineral property. The third annual report of the Swansea Philosophical Literary Institution, for the year 1837, in allusion to Mr. Crane's discovery, states:—'The benefits likely to arise from this valuable discovery will be most extensively felt, but it will no where be found of more immense importance than in our own neighbourhood; for it will be the means of opening to commercial enterprise a portion of our extensive coal fields, which, though abounding in the metal pronounced the most useful to man, has hitherto been excluded from the influence of that ingenuity by which he moulds it to his will.'

"Mr. Crane has three furnaces in blast, all blown with heated air, and is about to erect two more. To clearly show the superior strength of iron made with anthracite coal alone, a pig was broken by one of his men for inspection. The man took the first he could lay hold of, and placing it flat on the ground, struck it 53 blows with a sledge-hammer, about 20lbs. to 22 lbs. weight, but was not able to break it. The strongest pigs of iron made in the ordinary way, may be broken by from three to six blows. This iron of Mr. Crane's is so rich and soft, as well as strong, that it flattened, or rather plated, under the action of the hammer, and shelled off in pieces about the size of a shilling. Before the pig could be broken, it had to be cut with a chisel.

"Mr. Crane has two furnaces at work, in which he uses three fourths of bituminous and one fourth of anthracite coal; and it is really astonishing to see the anthracite coal coming out of these furnaces quite uninjured, even after having been exposed for five days to the intense heat required for the smelting of iron.

"Mr. Crane has yet only one small cupola furnace, in which he uses anthracite exclusively; for firing the other two he uses, as before remarked, three fourths of bituminous and one fourth of anthracite coal; and by consuming anthracite in this comparatively small proportion, he effects a saving of 12s. to 13s. per ton in the cost of making iron, and very materially improves its quality. His furnaces also yield a better produce, in proportions of 35 to 50 per cent. His small cupola furnace, No. 2., from which, when using cold air and coke, he could obtain only 20 to 22 tons of cast iron per

week, by being fired with anthracite coal alone, and blown with hot air, has produced, on an average of many months, 35 tons per week, and the larger furnaces, in which he uses the proportions before stated, have increased; the No. 1. from 34 to 35 tons up to 45 to 49 tons, and the No. 3 from 50 to 55, up to 65 to 80 tons per week. All his furnaces are very small, and his blowing machinery not so good as it ought to be; hence his very limited produce.

"The quality of this iron is very highly spoken of. Mr. Crane has received assurances from several parties who had used it for various purposes, that, 'for bars it had given great satisfaction; for foundry work it was admirable;' that 'in re-melting it was found very fluid, and, at the same time, very strong,'—a union of qualities most desirable, but rarely to be met with.

"With respect to the economy of this new process, Mr. Crane has, on the average of several months, produced the ton of cast iron with the before unheard-of small quantity of 27 cwt. of coal, and he entertains the greatest confidence that he will be able to reduce the quantity still further,—say to 22 cwt. His main bed of anthracite coal is 18 ft. thick.

"The maturing of this most important plan has cost much time, money, and anxiety, and it is to be hoped he will be most amply repaid for his valuable services.

"This new feature in the iron trade soon attracted the attention of capitalists, both here and in London; and the counties of Pembroke, Carmarthen, and the w. part of Glamorgan, give fair promise soon, at least, to rival Monmouthshire, and the e. part of Glamorgan, in the manufacture of iron. I will first enumerate the works already in operation in the Swansea and Neath districts, and then inform you of the extent to which new establishments are being erected, and others contemplated.

"The *Maestey Iron Works* are worked by Messrs. Robert Smith and Co., with bituminous coal and hot hair; they have two furnaces at work, producing from 180 to 200 tons per week of cast iron. A part of this they make into malleable iron, but I am not aware of the exact quantity;—perhaps about 60 to 70 tons per week.

"The *Ystal-y-fera* works, near Swansea, are also being erected by a Liverpool company, at the head of which stands Sir Thomas Brancker. This company is building four furnaces, and they intend four more. Their fuel is all of anthracite kind.

"The *Guendraeth* is a new work about to be established by a London company near Swansea. Fourteen new iron works, of from two to eight furnaces each, are erecting, and about to be erected, in the anthracite district, the existence of which will be solely attributable to Mr. Crane's invaluable discovery.

"The aggregate number of furnaces in blast in S. Wales is 122; out of blast 7; building 31; and contemplated 91; and allowing for twelve works likely to be erected soon, only five furnaces each, or 60 in all; we thus find that probably within the next five years the number of furnaces in S. Wales will be doubled, and number 244. Allowing an average produce of 80 tons per week for each furnace, we have the astounding quantity of 1,015,040, or, in round numbers, 1,000,000 tons of cast-iron produced in this district alone—a quantity equal to that produced last year (1838) in the whole of Great Britain." (*Cambrian*.)

A large tract of country n. of Swansea abounds with coal, copper, and iron works, the operations of which are much facilitated by a canal passing among them. The dismal gloom of the manufactories hanging over