

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
COUNTY OF BRECKNOCK.

CONTAINING THE CHOROGRAPHY, GENERAL HISTORY, RELIGION, LAWS, CUSTOMS, MANNERS, LANGUAGE, SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE, ANTIQUITIES, SEPULCHRAL MONUMENTS AND INSCRIPTIONS, NATURAL CURIOSITIES, VARIATIONS OF THE SOIL, STRATIFICATION, MINERALOGY, LIST OF RARE AND OTHER PLANTS & BIRDS, PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY, NAMES AND BIOGRAPHIES OF SHERIFFS AND MAYORS OF BRECKNOCK, ALSO THE GENEALOGIES AND ARMS OF THE PRINCIPAL FAMILIES TOGETHER WITH THE HISTORY OF EVERY PARISH, AND THE NAMES OF THE PATRONS AND INCUMBENTS OF ALL LIVINGS.

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By THEOPHILUS JONES,

Deputy Registrar of the Archdeaconry of Brecon.

Enlarged by the notes collected

By SIR JOSEPH RUSSELL BAILEY, BART., FIRST BARON GLANUSK  
(Lord Lieutenant of Brecknockshire).

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ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS, PORTRAITS, AND MAPS.

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## YSTRADGYNLAIS

**Y**STRAD GWNLlys or Gwnlen, the vale of Gunleus ap Glewissig, prince of Gwent, and father of Saint Cattw, was probably the marriage portion he received with his wife, Gwladis, one of the daughters of Brychan. This is a very extensive parish, though its length east and west far exceeds the breadth; on the west it adjoins Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire, having Cadoxton, near Neath, on the south, running parallel with it for several miles; on the north are Llywel and Devynock.

The Church, situated at nearly the western extremity of the parish, is dedicated, according to Ecton, to Saint Mary, but we have no doubt the patron saint was Gwnlen or Gunleus, from whom the parish took its name; it is in latitude 51 52, longitude 4 9, is low, dark, and too small for the parish, and consists of a nave and chancel only, not ceiled, but tolerably flagged and regularly seated. The porch entrance, at the west end, seems to have been built since the church, and has a school room with a fireplace over it, but this is also too low: near it is a turret, or rather small shed containing one bell.

## THE GOUGHS OF YNISKEDWIN.

Across the middle of the aisle is a small gallery, which an inscription informs us was erected in 1734, while Mr. Portrey and Mr. Howel Powel were churchwardens: On the north wall in the chancel, on a plain white marble monument, "To rescue from oblivion the names of Richard, Christopher, and John Portrey, by Catherine, daughter of Morgan Awbrey of Yniskedwin, Esq., and especially of their sister Catherine, who married William Gough, of Willersley, in the county of Gloucester, Esq., and by that marriage left issue, Richard, James, William, John, Jane, and Elizabeth. James Gough Awbrey of Yniskedwin, her son, rector of this parish, happy in his marriage with his beloved Eleanor, daughter of George Williams, of Aberpergwm, Esq., caused this marble to be inscribed in the year 1784."

Near the communion rails is a monument, almost obliterated by the care and attention of the beautifiers of the church, though a wet towel would make the letters visible. (The arms are, vert a chevron gules between three pheons sable impaling, argent three chevronels gules between three boys' heads couped at the shoulders proper.) Nearer the communion table, on a black stone, "To the pious memory of Morgan Awbrey of Yniskedwin, Esquier, who was interred the 19th of June, 1648, his age being 29 years," after which follow some verses, which, if the four first lines do not satisfy the reader, we must intreat he will take the trouble to visit the monument to peruse the remainder—

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.

These letters are of later date than 1648, but this also has been whitewashed, and the arms above are completely covered with lime. Underneath is a stone, with letters in relief, to the memory of Morgan Awbrey, but the remainder of the inscription is either effaced or concealed; this however is probably the gravestone first placed over Morgan Awbrey, who died in 1648, and that upon the wall was affixed there when the letters on this were nearly worn out. (1)

## CHAPEL COELBREN.

At the distance of five or six miles south east of this church is a chapel, which we believe to have been anciently a private oratory, and to have been erected by one of the Herberts of Cil y bebill; it is now called Coelbren; (2) the present fabric was rebuilt in 1799 entirely at the expense of Mr. Walter Price, of Glynlech, who possesses five out of seven tenements of which the hamlet consists. There is as yet but one seat in the chapel, which belongs to Mr. Price, and no bell, though a shed has been prepared for covering it, whenever any kind benefactor shall think proper to bestow one upon the inhabitants; in this chapel however, unadorned, and indeed unfinished as it is, may be seen an inscription of some antiquity upon a stone covering, the remains of a man of great wealth and influence in this country about two hundred years ago. The stone is upon the floor, and the letters are in relief and tolerably well preserved; "Heare lyeth the body of John Herbert, esquier, sonne to Watter, sonne to William, sonne to Sir Richard Herbert of Colbrooke, knight, he married Margaret, vz. Jenkin David, paternally issuing of Einon Sais, who had issue XII children, now living five, William, Water, John, Jonet, and Luce, he

(1) There is a donation of two pounds per annum to the poor of this parish.

(2) Coelbren y Beirdd (the alphabet of the bards), say Owen and Edw. Williams; here however Coelbren is a corruption of Cil-bryn, church hill, or the hill of the sanctuary, as Cilybeill in the neighbourhood is the church of the tents.

deceased the VII day of January, 1601." (Arms, 1 Herbert, 2 three martlets, in chief a label of five points, 3 Milo Fitzwalter, 4 Bernard Newmarch, 5 Bleddin Broadspeare, 6 Proger, 7 a lion passant, over all an escutcheon of pretence gules, 1 a buck tripping, 2 a lion passant, 3 Sande Hardd, 4 three jams coupé.) This curacy, to which the rector of Ystradgynlais nominates, has been augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty.

## THE ANTIQUITIES.

Except the Sarn Helen, which runs along a high ridge of Cefn, <sup>(1)</sup> as the Welsh call it, separating this parish from Ystradfellte and afterwards Cadostone, we do not know that the Romans have left behind them any vestiges of their progress or residence in Ystradgynlais: upon the hills in this parish, adjoining Llywel and Carmarthenshire, several Carneddau, and the remains of two or three small British encampments, may be seen on the south east of these mountains. At a place called Penwyll, the lime bursts out, whose quality is held in high esteem by the farmers of Breconshire, and particularly of the hundred of Devynock; it has however near one hundredth part less of carbonate than that at Ystradfellte.

The family of Price of Glynllech have adopted that surname for upwards of two centuries, but they are descended from Sir Roger Vaughan of Bredwardine, and bore in the last century the arms of Vaughan; of late years, from the division of the property among the sons and daughters, the eldest son became only a small freeholder. They are now, however, once more rising into opulence and respectability; Lewis Vaughan, from whom they are derived, was, according to our genealogies, the fourth son of Sir Roger Vaughan of Tretower. He was a natural son, and bore the baton over his arms, but this was no objection to him in those days, and he accordingly married a rich heiress and daughter of Andrew Prees Andrew, of Abercamlais; his descendants are here inserted, the prior part of the pedigree will be seen upon reference to that of the general ancestor of the Vaughans.

## PRICE OF GLYNLLECH PEDIGREE.

Brychan Brecheiniog, Prince or Lord of Brecknock—"Ein Ted ni oll"—from whom the county takes its name, lived A.D. 400. He had several sons and daughters; one of the latter married.

Gwen of Talgarth married Llyr Meini and had issue.

Cradoc Fraich-gras or Cradoc of the strong arm, Lord of Gloucester, Knight of the Dolorus Tower and of the Round Table of King Arthur, married Tegau'r Fron, dau. of Celynor.

Cawrdaf regulus of Fferreg and Brecknock married.

Caw ap Cawrdaf regulus, &c., married.

Gloyw regulus, &c., married.

Hoyw regulus, &c., married.

Cynfarch ap Hoyw married.

Cyndeg ap Cynfarch married.

Teithwalch ap Cyndeg married.

Tegid ap Teithwalch married.

Auharawd ap Tegid married.

Gwendy ap Anharawd married.

Gungy ap Gwendy married.

Hydd Hwgan or Hugenus married. (He was defeated by Elfredd.)

Drybenog, Lord of Cantreff Selyff, married Gwennlian dau. of Jestyn ap Gwrgan. (He was possessed of the manor of Alltonarchan, now owned by Lord Ashburnham, circa. 1076.)

Moriddig Warwyn married Elinor dau. of Rhys, Prince of South Wales (contemporary with the conquest of Brecknock by the Normans A.D. 1088).

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<sup>(1)</sup> On this ridge (according to Strange, in the *Archæologia*, vol. IV, page 7) between Coelbren and Cefn hir fynydd, on the side of the road, was a military (See plate XII, fig. 5), the inscription on which was not legible further than that the first letters appeared to be IMPC; whether this stone has been broken or removed we know not, but we have never been able to discover it.

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Llewelyn married Joan dau. of Cynhylyn, Lord of Ystradwy.

Sitayllt or Cecil married Lleici or Lydia dau. of Griffith ap Madoc ap Cadrod.

Howell married Gwladys dau. of Morgan Vychan, Lord of Aeron.

Rhosser Fawr or Roger the Elder of Llechryd married Joyce dau. of Sir William Walbaffe.

Rhosser Vychan, otherwise Roger Vaughan (the word Vaughan is a contraction of Vychan, meaning the younger, thus distinguishing this man from his father), married a dau. of Sir Miles Baskerville.

Gwalter Sais or Walter the Saxon (so called from his having for a long period resided in England) married Florence dau. of Sir Walter Bredwardine.

Rhosser Hên, or Roger the Aged, of Bredwardine, married Ann dau. of Sir Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers of Chartley.

Sir Roger Vaughan of Bredwardine married Gwladys dau. of Sir David Gam. (He fell at Agincourt with his father-in-law, and was knighted when dying on the battlefield by King Henry V.) Gwladys' second husband was Sir William ap Thomas, who also fought at Agincourt, and was likewise knighted. He subsequently became the father of Sir. William Herbert, K.G., created Baron Herbert of Herbert on the 26th July, 1461, and Earl of Pembroke on the 27th May, 1468, and of Sir Richard Herbert, Knt., of Coldbrook, co. Monmouth.

Watkin Vaughan, of Pembrey, Carmarthen, married a dau. of Sir Henry Wogan, from whom Lord Ashburnham. This branch married into the Porthamal family in the 6th generation after this, and the two estates were joined).

Sir Roger Vaughan, of Tretower, married Denys, dau. of Thomas ap Philip Vaughan.

Sir Thomas Vaughan of Tretower.

Sir Roger Vaughan of Porthamal (from whom the Earl of Ashburnham).

Watkin Vaughan (from whom the Vaughans of Marthyr Cynog, Llanfillo and Cathedine).

LEWIS VAUGHAN married a dau. and heiress of Andrew Prys Andrew of Abercamlais.

Thomas Vaughan (son of Lewis Vaughan) married a dau. of Morgan Shon Jenkin Griffith ap Owen Gethin.

Watkin Vaughan married Cissil, dau. of John of Cray, ap Gwilym Thomas hir of Bailybrith.

Rees Watkin Vaughan married Llywella dau. of Jeffrey Edward Jeffrey of Llywel. He bought Glynlltech in 1574 from William Walters of Cardiff, and had issue Watkin ap Rees Watkin.

Watkin ap Rees Watkin married Margaret dau. of Lewis David Phillip of Cilgwyn in Myddfe and had issue Rees Watkin ap Rees.

Rees Watkin ap Rees married Agnes dau. of Howel Griffith ap Howell ap Jean Dafydd of Blaencrai about 16th August, 1639, and had issue Howel ap Rees.

Howel ap Rees (who subsequently adopted the surname of Pries, being a contraction of ap Rees) married Janet dau. of Walter John of Ton y foel draf, and had issue Watkin Pries.

Watkin Pries (the first to adopt the surname of Price) married Margaret dau. of Rees Watkin, Dofynnock, about 5th June, 1719, and had issue Howel Price.

Howel Price married Margaret dau. of Daniel Williams, of Llwyn y Wernwood in Myddfe, about 5th Nov., 1745 and had issue Walter Price.

WALTER PRICE married Gwenllian dau. of Thomas Jones of Berthlwyd in Ystradfellte about 31st May, 1782.

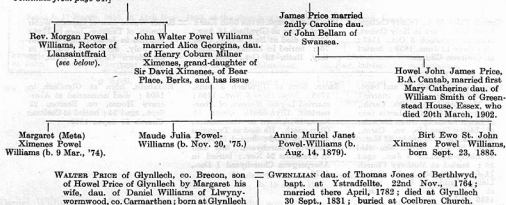
Margaret married LEWIS POWEL OF MAESCARNOG.

Margaret married Rev. John Williams, of Cilgwyn.

Howel Jones Price married.

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A

Anne, widow of Thomas Jenkins, of Gelly House, co. Glam.; formerly Anne Jones, dau. of Thos. Jones, of Ffaldre, Resolven; born at Ffaldre 29 Nov.; bapt. at Llantwit 13 Dec., 1806; married at Cadoxton-juxta-Neath 4th May, 1837; died at Glynlech 1 June, 1843; buried at Coelbren Church. 1st wife.

James Price, of Glynlech, born there 23 Jan.; bapt. there 1 Feb., 1801; died there 13 Jan., 1861; buried at Coelbren Church. Will proved 3 Aug., 1861 (dated 9 July, 1858).

Margaret Caroline, dau. of John James Bellam, of Swansea; born 12 March, 1814; married at Llansamlet Church 19 March, 1850; died at Llansamlet 15 Feb.; buried in Llansamlet Churchyard 20 Feb. 1873. 2nd wife.

B

Gwenlian Jones, born at Glynlech 8 March, 1838; died there 29 Feb., aged two years; buried at Coelbren Church 1 Mar., 1840.

Margaret, born at Glynlech 19 Jan.; bapt. there 29 Jan., 1840; married at Cheltenham Parish Church 6 April, 1863, William Morgan of Tremaim, co. Glamorgan; bapt. at Cadoxton 10 June, 1825; he died at Ponylan 25 Feb.; buried at Aberpergwm Church 2 Mar., 1871; she died at Bridgend 10 Nov.; buried at Aberpergwm Church 15 Nov., 1872.

Gwenlian Jones, born at Glynlech 28 Sept., 1841; bapt. there 18 Oct., 1841; married at Loughor Church 15 June, 1865, Alfred Benjamin Price, of West House, Bridgend, born 2 March, 1837; bapt. at Llantwit Major; he died at West House 28 Feb.; buried at Llantwit Major 3 March, 1882. She died at Bryngollen House, nr. Neath, 23 Nov., 1901; buried at Llantwit Major, 28 Nov., 1901.

Mary, born at Glynlech 21 May; died there 23 May, 1843; buried at Coelbren Church.

James Benjamin Garsed Price, of Glynlech, J.P. (High Sheriff, Breconshire, 1909); born 3 April, 1866.

Mary Ellen Vaughan Price, born 20 April, 1867.

Walter Alfred ap Prys Price, born 6 Aug., 1868; died 15 Dec., 1892.

Rice Edwin Vaughan Price, born 19 Feb., 1870.

A

Margaret, born at Glynlech 4 Jan., 1783; bapt. there 25 Sept., 1785; married at Callwen 31 Jan., 1806; died 31 March; buried in Devynock Churchyard 7 April, 1869.

Lewis Powel, of Maes-carnog, co. Brecon, born 29 Jan.; bapt. at Defynock 7 Feb., 1777; died 12 June; buried at Defynock Churchyard 21 June, 1864.

Howel Jones Price, capt. Breconshire Militia.

Margaret, dau. of William Morgan, of Bolgoed, co. Brecon, born there in 1781; married at Llanspyddid Church 25 Aug., 1812; died at Defynock Place 22 Dec.; buried at Vaynor Church 23 Dec., 1855.

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Thomas Price, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, Clerk in Holy Orders, born at Glynllech 5 Oct., 1787; died there 12 June, 1839; buried at Coelbren Church.

Mary, born at Glynllech, and bapt. there 15 March, 1792; married at Morthvev Church, co. Carm., 2 Sept., 1814, David Lewis (son of Lewis Lewis by Gwen his wife) of Lletty-Evandle, co. Carm., born at Lletty Farde 22 Mar.; bapt. 28 Mar., 1787. She died at Lletty-Evandle 9 Jan., aged 39; buried at Morthvev Church 14 Jan., 1831 (M.L.). He died at Lletty Farde 11 Dec.; buried at Morthvev Church 14 Dec., 1836 (M.L.).

Rice Price, a capt. in the 56th Essex Regt., born at Glynllech 16 Aug., 1789; died at Bath 8 Oct., aged 75; buried in Lansdown Cemetery, Bath, 13 Oct., 1865.

Sarah, born at Glynllech 5 June, 1795; bapt. there 6 Nov., 1796; married Leyson Morgan, of Abernathir, Glyn-neath about 15 Sept., 1818, born at Abernathir, Glyn-neath. He died at Tremains 8 March, 1872; buried in Aberpergwm Churchyard. She died at Tremains 24 Nov.; buried in Aberpergwm Churchyard 1 Dec., 1873.

Sarah Webb, dau. of Captain Webb Smith, of Taunton, born in 1784; married in Jersey; died at Bath 25 July, aged 73; buried in Lansdown Cemetery, Bath, 30 July, 1857.

Elizabeth, born at Glynllech in 1806; died unmarried at Abercepr House, co. Brecon, 22 Sept., aged 34; buried at Coelbren Church 29 Sept., 1840.

## B

An infant, born 15 Feb., 1851; died same day; buried at Llansamlet Churchyard.

Elizabeth Bellam, born at Glynllech 28 May; bapt. there 25 July, 1852; married at Llansamlet Church 5 April, 1870, Robert Kirkhouse, of Maesmalin, born 4 Sept.; bapt. at Llwynelcyn 2 Oct., 1846.

Walter Jones Bellam Price, born 30 Jan., 1855; died at Glynllech 28 Oct.; buried at Coelbren Church 2 Nov., 1857.

HOWEL JOHN JAMES PRICE, of Glynllech, Christ's College, Cambridge, B.A. 1881, and of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law, D.L., J.P., for the co. of Essex, High Sheriff for Brecknockshire 1900; born at Glynllech 14 June; bapt. there 1 Nov., 1857. He married secondly, 1904, Dora Mary, daughter of the late Robert Gosling, of Hassobury, Essex, (and 28, Portland Place, W.), D.L., J.P., M.F.H. Has issue one daughter, Joan, born 1906.

Mary Catherine, only child and heir of William Smith, of Greenstead House, co. Essex, by Mary his wife, dau. of James Reeves of King Somborne, co. Hants; born at Greenstead House 18 Dec., 1858; bapt. at Stanford Rivers, co. Essex, 17 Feb., 1859; married at Greenstead Church 4 June, 1885. She died 20 March, 1902.

Gwendoline Mary Vaughan, born at Greensted 26 March; bapt. at Greensted Church 16 May, 1886.

Elinor Olive, born at Greensted 15 May; bapt. at Greensted Church 12 July, 1888.

Janet Anita Vaughan, born at Greensted 4 August; bapt. at Greensted Church 26 Oct., 1890.

HOWELL PRICE of Glynllech m. Margaret d. of Daniel Williams of Llwynwormwood, Morthvev, Carmarthenshire.

Rice Walter

Sarah m. David Powell of Tyle, 1771.

Sarah b. 1779, m. Philip Watkin of Yaguborfawr, Penderyn, December, 1802.

Catherine b. April 21, 1812, m. Thomas Williams, May 15, 1834.

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Sarah b. 17 March, 1835, m. 11th Nov., 1853, at the church of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London, Jenkin Rhys, of Llywcoed House, Glamorgan.

Catherine m. John Williams Wm. Rhys.	Rhys Jenkin.	Philip Thomas b. 1858, d. April, 1906.	Margaret d. in infancy.	Gwilym d. in infancy.	Rachel Elizabeth m. 1885 Edmund James Jones of The Forest, Pont Neath Vaughan.	Mary Llewelyn m. Rev. Edwin Jones, M.A. Oxford, vicar of Holyhead, Anglesey.	William Llewelyn m. Catherine Dingle of San Francisco. Llewelyn Rhys, d. in 1906.
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Sarah Jennette m. Frederick William Gibbins of Garth Môr,  
Neath, 18th May, 1898.

Frederick Wm. Rhys Gibbins,  
b. 18 April, 1901.

Bevington Rhys Gibbins,  
b. 3 April, 1903.

Daniel Williams (<sup>1</sup>) of Llwynywormwood, was the son of David Williams of the same place, by Anne Bouicot his wife. They had issue,

1. David m. Anne Griffies of Coed (issue a son, Erasmus, who d. aged 32, in Sept., 1785).
2. Margaret m. Howell Price of Glynllech (and had issue (1) Rice, (2) Walter, (3) Sarah, who m. David Powell of Tyle).
3. Mary m. Rees Price of Cilgwyn and Porthyrhyd, Carmarthenshire (and had issue MARY m. THEOPHILUS JONES, THE HISTORIAN OF BRECONSHIRE).
4. Joan m. Rev. J. Griffies, Croydon, formerly of Coed, and had issue, George, who on the death of Erasmus was made the heir of his uncle, David Williams, attorney-at-law, and assumed the name of Williams, in addition to Griffies, on succeeding to the Llwynywormwood estate. He was created a baronet in 1815.
5. John m. M. Lisle of Morpeth.
6. Rice.
7. Sarah.
8. Elizabeth, who was buried at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Brecon, in Jan. 1797.

MARGARET, b. at Glynllech 19 Jan., bapt. there 29 Jan., 1840, m. at Cheltenham Parish Church 6 April, 1863, WILLIAM MORGAN of TREMAINS, co. Glamorgan, bapt. at Cadoxton 10 June, 1825.

Leyson, who died  
in infancy.

Sara m. Walter Rice Evans of Eaglesbush  
House, Neath.

Dorothy Mansel  
Rice.

Gwladys  
Margaret.

Mary  
Gwenlian.

Herbert  
Walter.

Claudia Kathleen  
Violet.

Powel of Glynllech isaf, descended from Brychan Brecheiniog, is also a family long settled in this parish, but we have not been able to connect them with that genealogy. (<sup>2</sup>) Most of the inhabitants however of the vale of Ystradgynlais claim their origin from him or Cradoc Fraich-fras, being driven by the Normans into this extreme nook of the county; but those who settled here, though they might lament the disgrace of their defeat, had little reason to complain of their change of situation.

The whole or greatest part of the valley of Glyntawe being much lower than that of the Usk, and vegetation consequently more forward, it was anciently overgrown with wood on both sides of the river. The progress of population, and the purposes of agriculture, soon required the removal of part of this clothing, but a sufficiency was left to render the country remarkably picturesque, until the manufacturer

(<sup>1</sup>) Daniel Williams of Llwynywormwood had a brother David who was a Clerk in Holy Orders and had a living in Breconshire.

(<sup>2</sup>) Owen Gethin, from whom many Breconshire families were formerly anxious to derive their descent, was of this parish; he was ancestor to Owen Gethin, a respectable farmer, now living there, but we are not able to bring the pedigree correctly down to him and his brothers.



established himself at the bottom of the glen, when his wants soon denudated it, or at least robbed it of many of its beauties, improving at the same time the value of the soil, rendering it more productive for the use of man, and leaving still many romantic and shady dells on each side of the river.

#### THE RIVERS AND STRATA.

On the north of the Tawe a little below the fall of the Tawyne is a rock called Daren yr ogof, or the rock of the cave. From this springs up at once a sufficient quantity of water for turning a grist mill at all seasons of the year. This brook, or rather river, called Llynfell (from Llyn a liquid and ell a common termination), after crossing the turnpike road from Brecon or Treacastle to Swansea, soon falls into the Tawe; the inhabitants observe that on a rainy day this river does not perceptibly increase, but that on the following day it becomes muddy, and the quantity of water is considerably greater. There is nothing singular in this; the rain falling on the mountain above has not only a very considerable depth, but many varieties of soil to penetrate, before it reaches the hollow of this cavern, and consequently a long portion of time is required before the additional water can swell the common current, which is certainly extraordinary, though not equal in quantity to the great spring at Ogmere in Glamorganshire. But though we cannot rival that magnificent fountain, yet if we follow the Tawe about two miles downwards, and then cross southward to the Llech, or rather Llechog (the stony), a small river between the mansion of Glynllech and Coelbren chapel, a scene occurs which mocks description by the pen, and almost defies the powers of the pencil. The waterfall called 'Sgwd yr hén rhyd must not however pass unnoticed. This cataract, in point of height, in comparison with those of Hepste and Pyrddin, are mere mill spouts.

This little mountain stream, which sometimes swells into a considerable river, and is then only seen to advantage, runs over a bed of rocks, without a tree on its banks, until it crosses the road from Ystradfellte to Glynllech and the vale of Ystradgynlais; after passing a few yards westward, it is lost at once, and the traveller only catches a peep at the summits of a woody glen sweeping round towards the Tawe. The stream first throws itself into foam, about three or four yards upon a ledge of rocks interrupting its descent, after which it falls in one unbroken sheet of water, upwards of ninety feet perpendicularly; it then runs concealed by trees and the banks, which are nearly precipitous and entirely clothed with underwood, in a semicircular direction to the Tawe, into which it falls.

At the Aber of this little river, the upper vein or stratum of coal, with which fossil this parish is pervaded at different depths, first *crops out* (as the colliers term it), but it is neither of sufficient thickness, nor can its direction be followed without too great an expense, to be worked with profit here; as we proceed down the vale indeed, other veins or strata have been discovered, but principally on the north west side of the Tawe, in such situations that by driving levels and other mechanical expedients, a very considerable trade in this article, as well as in iron stone, is now carried on, which is increased tenfold since the completion of the canal from Swansea to Hén neuadd in this parish; by this conveyance, the coal, being of that nature called stone coal, and chiefly used in drying malt and hops, and the smaller particles of the same fossil, called culm, which is of less value than the lumps, and used in burning lime, are conveyed in barges from the different collieries, and shipped at Neath for various ports in England. This canal is in length nearly seventeen miles; from Swansea to the Twrch, on the confines of the counties of Glamorgan and Brecon, the distance is twelve miles and 1672 yards, and from thence to Hén neuadd, three miles and a half.

The river Twrch, which from its source to its fall into the Tawe is a boundary between the above counties, and reminds us that one or two of the streams, conducing to swell the larger, remain still unnoticed. Twrch, in Welsh, signifies a hog, and from the habits of this animal in digging up the earth with its snout, many rivers forming deep channels or holes, into which they sink into the earth, and are lost for a distance, are so called; a small brook, Banw, in Llanfigan, meaning a little pig, has been said to be of this family, but we are inclined to think the little rivulet which gives the name of Cwmbarw to that dingle, signifies ban wy (water from the summit). The appellation of Twrch given to the torrent at Ystradgynlais is peculiarly descriptive of its rapidity and effect, as it pours down in a continued stream from its source to its fall, rolling before it immense stones and tearing up the soil sometimes to a great depth; yet turbid as this torrent appears, particularly in a flood, its ravages have been productive of discoveries useful to man, which might otherwise have remained for ages concealed, and the *strata* laid open on its banks have successfully directed the researches of the collier and the mineralogist.

The next river proceeding on the same side of the Tawe up the vale in Breconshire, is called Gwraidd, from Gwraiddio or Gwreiddio (to root up), for the same reason that the former river derives its appellation; it is however not nearly equal to the Twrch, either as to the quantity of water or the impetuosity of its



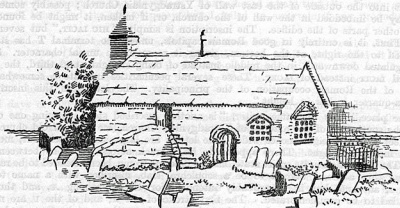
torrent. Passing the Cráf and the Llynvell, we come to Haffes, another stream, the meaning of which we know not, unless it be Háf-hesp, or Hesp yn yr háf (dry in summer time), so called because there is no water in the brook in summer. Proceeding a few yards higher up, we approach the confines of the parishes of Llywel and Treacastle, where the Tawe divides into two streams, nearly equal in point of size; the current however bearing this name proceeds north west to Llywel and the borders of Caermarthenshire, or rather springs from thence, while the other, called Tawyne, a diminutive of Tawe, rises eastwardly in the parish of Devynock. The Bridges in this parish, except that at Abercráf, which is upon the county, are repaired by the inhabitants of the district.

#### ECCELESIASTICAL PATRONAGE.

The advowson of this rectory was anciently in the lords of Brecon; to whom it was granted after the forfeiture, does not clearly appear, but it seems to us to have been taken possession of by John Walwyn, receiver for the crown of the rents of the duke of Buckingham's estates in Breconshire, whose daughter and sole heiress Margaret married Walter Wynter of Brecon, who, as well as his son and grandson, were Roman Catholics, and may have lost it from their inability to present, though their descendants claimed the right of patronage as late as the year 1738, when William Wynter, Esq., having presented Penry Bailey, clerk, and Christopher Portrey, of Yniscedwin, Esq., having also presented John Portrey, clerk, the bishop of the diocese issued a commission directed to three or four of the most respectable gentlemen in Breconshire, empowering them to meet in the parish church, to examine witnesses, to swear a jury, to inquire and to return their verdict *de jure patronatus*: they accordingly met, when after the inspection of authentic documents and hearing the evidence of several old persons, the jury found that the advowson was in Christopher Portrey and not in William Wynter. This verdict is entered in the bishop's register at Abergwilli, but how this right came to the family of Yniscedwin we never could learn.

The rectory (not valued in Pope Nicholas's taxation) remains in charge, is estimated in the Liber Regis at 9*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.*; tenths, 19*s.* 4*d.* Procurations and Synodals "*in ordinaria Visitatione*" 10*s.* 5*d.* Archdeacon's procurations, 7*s.* 5*d.*

The register book commences in 1721.



YSTRADGYNLAIS OLD CHURCH.

(From a drawing in the possession of Colonel Gough—from which it appears that the church had but little architectural merit.)

Augmentations to Ystradfellte, March 20, 1901, for a Parsonage: Dioc. Soc. £100. Q.A.B. £100.

1 acre of land, gift of Lord Tredegar, £100, Nov. 5, 1902 „ „

March 18, 1903. Subscriptions £50; Dioc. Soc. £50. Q.A.B. £100.

Ystradgynlais communicated by Fleming Gough, Esq., Nov., 1899.

## LATER PARTICULARS.

The parish of Ystradgynlais, now divided into Upper and Lower, consists of mountains and a lay valley running from the Beacon range in a south westerly direction to the boundary of Glamorgan. It is traversed throughout the whole of its length by the Neath and Brecon Railway, which the Midland Railway Company works from Brecon to Coelbren. There is a local trade in anthracite coal, tin plate, iron, bricks, silica, shab, and fire clay, and in consequence of its mineral wealth the district has enjoyed great prosperity, the population having increased from 993 in 1801 to 4,345 in 1861, and to 5,785 in 1901 for the whole parish, which has an area of 22,034 acres of land and 155 of water.

By order dated March 11, 1875, under which the Union of Pontardawe was formed, Ystradgynlais was placed within that Union for Poor Law purposes, the other parishes being within the County of Glamorgan. Higher and Lower Ystradgynlais form three electoral districts, and the former, with a population of 820, returns one member to the County Council; the Lower district is divided into (a) the hamlets of Gurnos, Penrhos, and Garth, with a population of 2,059, and (b) the hamlet of Palleg, with a population of 1,525. Each of these divisions returns a County Councillor. There is a Rural District Council here.

## THE CHURCH AND ANCIENT STONES.

The present church was re-built in 1860 by voluntary contributions, at a cost of £2,500, the Rev. Dr. Walters, the rector, a native of Trallong, being his own architect. It has a chancel, transept, nave, aisles, north porch, and a total of 149 sittings. In the turret, which has a spire, is one bell, not inscribed, which was taken from the ancient church; of this old edifice we have no later account than that given by Jones, but from a drawing of it in the possession of Col. Gough, and reproduced here, we do not find that it possessed any architectural merit.

In the churchyard are three yew trees, one of which measures 36 feet in girth; it is very ancient, and some authorities consider its age to be as much as 1,500 years. Here also is a column with an inscription which says that it was erected on the site of the chancel of the former church of Ystradgynlais, in which the remains of several of the Portreys and Awbreys, and also those of the Rev. James Gough Awbrey, of Yniscedwyn, were interred.

Writing about the year 1855, Professor Westwood says, "We now come to an early monumental inscription, built into the outside of the east wall of Ystradgynlais Church; possibly some other portion of the stone may be imbedded in the wall of the church, or, if broken, it might be found by a careful examination of other parts of the edifice. The inscription is simply, "HIC IACIT," but several peculiarities merit notice. First, it is entirely in good Roman capitals, unless the terminal T has its down stroke a little angulated to the right, at the bottom, giving it more of an uncial character. Second, the A has the bar angulated downwards in the middle instead of being straight; and third, the mis-spelling of the second word IACIT instead of IACET. These several peculiarities indicate a somewhat more recent date than that of the Roman occupation of the principality. The letters in this inscription measure about two-and-a-quarter inches in height."

"At the same place," says the same writer, "is another inscribed stone, forming one of the steps of a staircase on the south side of the exterior of Ystradgynlais Church (see plate of old church). The stone measures four feet long and eight inches wide. The letters are large and coarsely cut, measuring about three-and-a-half inches in height. There appears to be a crack across the stone between the first and second letters. The inscription in its entire state, has, as it seems to me, been intended to be read "ADIUNE"; from its standing thus alone, I take it to be a sepulchral slab, inscribed with a name terminating not in the genitive I, as usual but in E, probably intended for the diphthong AE, and thus indicating a female as intended to be commemorated. The first stroke of the A, and of the U are nearly upright; the curved stroke of the D is slightly detached at each end from the upright first stroke; as are also most of the strokes of the other letters. I suppose this inscription to be not much more recent than the 5th or 6th century."

## CHARITY.

In a Parliamentary return, dated 1786, it is stated that Morgan Awbrey, at a period unknown, gave a rent charge of £3 per annum for the poor of Ystradgynlais. The same was charged upon a farm called Twyncaelog, in the parish of Defynnook. No further information could be obtained relating to this charity, but the sum of £4 5s. 0d. is annually received by the churchwardens, and carried by them to the church rates, and, it is presumed, by them and the Rector, duly distributed to the poor.

## CHAPEL COELBREN.

This is about five miles north east of Ystradgynlais. It was formerly a chapelry to Ystradgynlais, but it is now a separate incumbency, being a vicarage of the net annual value of £206, in the gift of the Rector of Ystradgynlais. The Rev. John Williams has served here since 1894, residing at Abercrave. The old church was restored in 1876, and contained a monument to John Herbert, who died in 1601, who is reported to have been a man of great wealth and influence.

The augmentations to this chapel are as follows: £200 by lot in each of the years 1745, 1752, 1772, 1787, 1793, and 1825. In 1895, Mrs. Gwyn gave a benefaction of £100; Mrs. Price and Mrs. Evans, £75; public subscription realized £85; and Queen Anne's Bounty, £200.

Services connected with the church are also held at the Mission Church, Cwmtwrch; at the School Church, Abercrave; and at Penycæ School.

## NONCONFORMITY.

There are besides in the parish the following Nonconformist places of worship:—Baptist: Nantyffin; Airon; and Beulah, Pentwrch. Methodist:—Cwmgiedd, built in 1806, re-built 1824 and again in 1859; Ynis, 1856; Bethania (Cwmtwrch); Tabernacle, 1890; Carmel (Abercrave), 1898. Congregational:—Tyn-y-coed, a very old cause; Bethlehem; Sardin, 1843; Bethel (Cwmtwrch); and Ebenezer (Cwmtwrch).

Board Schools were built here at Glantawe; Colbren; Penrhos; Oddfellows Street, Ystradgynlais; Yniscedwyn; Tro'rghren (Cwmtwrch); Pantyowrt, Abercrave, transferred to the Board in 1870; Ystradgynlais National Schools were transferred in 1879; and a National School at Pencae, with accommodation for 132, was built by voluntary subscription.

## A DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT.

From some notes on the Swansea Valley, written after 1863, by the late John Davies, of Ystalyfera, a well-known local antiquary, and communicated to us by Mrs. Edmund J. Jones, of Fforest Legionis, we quote the following:—"Climbing the hill past the old Drosgeoe House, leaving Ty'r Lan on the left, and crossing Nantargam, we come to the old mansion of Glynllechuchaf, the heritage of the old family called Price ap Rhys. The last heir, but lately dead, was James Price, esq., who left his estates to be divided between his two daughters and his widow. I have heard it said that Mr. Price's grandmother, the wife of Mr. Howell Price, had the gift of poesy, but I failed to ascertain if any production of her muse is extant.

"Near this spot, on a slope called Tyllan Price, are some hillocks that resemble Druidical sepulchres, similar to those on Cwm Caer Tawe. It appears that the same family has resided at Glynllech for the last 250 years. . . . Howell Price, who died in his 87th year on Sept. 30, 1808, was buried under the family pew in Ystradgynlais Church on the following Tuesday. Margaret Jones of Borthllwyd, died in February 1811, in her 85th year.

"In the old days of 100 or 120 years ago, a number of people lived by tramping the district, some as pedlars, and others as beggars. Many an old dame did very well out of fortune telling, and a noted specimen of this class was Bess Dregwr. Lewis of the maimed hand sold books, such as *The Pilgrims Progress*, *The Short and Useful Catechism*, *A Vision of the World* and *The Vision of the Sleeping Bard*, &c. Old Shân sold thread, needles, pins, &c., and sweets for the children. These tramps one and all received their board and lodging gratis at the different farm houses. Then, as now, there were degrees of hospitality. One of the most open-hearted was the wife of Dafydd Rhys Morgan Phylip of Cefncoed uchaf. . . . David Rhys and his children added many new fields to the Cefncoed farm, by bringing mountain land under cultivation. The old man was blind for over 20 years, and died at Clyr Mawr, Abercrave, in 1820 or 1821 when bordering on his 90th year.

"On a boggy level between Glynllech uchaf and the river Tawe, stands Glynllech isaf, an old mansion that is still the property and residence of the Powells, as it has been for many generations. Some assert that this ancestry goes back to Brychan Brecheiniog. The two mansions of Glynllech received their names from a rivulet called "Llech" or "Llechog." The Llech's spring is high up the mountain side. It then flows for miles over slate-like or "llechog" rocks, past the farm Blaenllech and the two Heurys, upper and lower. A few score yards below the old house called Heurys isaf (this really should be Heurhyd not Heurys, as there never was a fordable passage near the spot called Heurys isaf), a one-arch bridge was built, as is surmised, about 180 years ago. Just below the bridge is a very deep pool called Pwll

yr Heuryd; in a shallow part of this pool the people of Glynllech used to wash their sheep. In the year 1820, two servant girls of Mr. Walter Price's were drowned here, in spite of all efforts to save them, and the servant man nearly lost his own life in trying to save the maids.

"Where the Llech issues from Pwll yr Heuryd, it falls 90 to 100 feet over a precipice, and descends like an endless chain of fleeces into the middle of a large open space, something resembling one of the old Roman amphitheatres. This is the Heuryd waterfall.

"Beyond the Llech, on the hill-top between us and Onllwyn, stands Capel Coelbren; and I am inclined to agree with a writer, who says that the name should mean the place of casting lots, "brwr Coelbren." This is especially more probable as the remains of a Roman camp are still seen near the spot, and it is well-known that the Romans were great at the casting of lots. It may be, therefore, that this old building was used for that purpose. Two fields breadth from the Chapel, stands the old farm house of Coelbren: it is possible that this was the building where the lots were cast, and that the chapel received its name from that house. . . . There is an old bell at the chapel, inscribed, Presented in 1805 by Mr. Richard Pendryl, but it is cracked right across."

#### BRIDGES.

A district with so many streams has of necessity many bridges. The county repairs a bridge (No. 237) at Ystradgynlais, whose new latticed girders have replaced a wooden structure; formerly this was a single stone arch. Castle bridge (No. 236) with girders carries the Swansea water mains as well as the highway; the Corporation contributed one third of the cost. This bridge is on a new site, and replaced an old single arch stone bridge. Abercraf is a single arch stone bridge over the Tawe (No. 235). Pont rhyd arw (bridge of the rough ford) (No. 235), is also a stone bridge over Tawe. Llynfell bridge (No. 233), over a brook of that name, is a single arch of stone. Pont haffes-isha (No. 232) is half in Ystradgynlais, lower. Cwmguidd is over the Guidd (? Guraidd) brook.

The following are on district roads: Glanrhyd (by the ford), of stone abutments and girders; Clayfron, of iron piers and a timber superstructure; the Rectory footbridge; Cwmtawe, with stone abutments. Pont yr offeiriad (priests' bridge) carries the road over the River Tawe to Penwyllt station; the new road was made at the expense of Madam Patti-Nicolini (Baroness Cederström), and dedicated by her to the public. Llech bridge, erected in 1896, over the river Lech, is a timber bridge with stone piers. Hendrhyd bridge, upper and lower Brynmorgan bridges over River Twrch. Gwys over that river, a kindred name to Wye; Lamb bridge over the Twrch; Brynhenllys over river Twrch; Tyr gof over Gweye, and Ystradawr over Cynlais.

#### SOME HILL AND RIVER NAMES.

The hill names are Cribbarth (a ridged hill), Drum (a watershed), Garth (enclosed hill), Disgwylfa (a watch tower), Bryn Ongeliad and Bwynfaldud (the Shepherds' hill and the hill of the fold); while of others the names denote their character, such as Goch (red) Llwyd (grey), or Cadnan (the fox hill). The rivers are Tawe (the silent), Twrch (the boar, from its burrowing propensity), Gwaidd (of similar meaning), Llynfell (smooth lake), the Haffes (summer stream), and Llech (the flat); the smaller brooks are the Gunlais, and Nant Ceiliog (the cock's brook). The rainfall averages 74 inches.

#### THE IRONWORKS.

The iron works belonging to the Yniscedwyn Company were considered to be among the oldest in the country, and the discovery in 1795 of an old pig of iron in a cinder bank, on which was the date 1612, seems to confirm this. Some years ago, these works comprised seven blast furnaces for smelting the ore, air furnaces and cupolas for converting the pig-iron into castings, with fineries for making the refined metal, used by the tin manufacturers. In 1828 a very powerful machine was erected here, from designs by Mr. Brunton, of London, worked by a water-wheel of large diameter, and this and a large steam engine provided the necessary power for blowing the furnaces. These works employed some 1,000 men.

The Swansea canal, a branch of which reaches these works, terminates at a place called Hên Neuadd, two miles above the church, and to this canal formerly converged numerous tramways which conveyed the produce of the works. About the year 1825, there was laid down by John Christie, Esq., of London, a long tramway, extending from the Gwain Clawdd over the great Forest of Defynnock to Rhyd-y-briw, in the Vale of Usk, by means of which a communication was established between this mineral branch and the heart of Brecknockshire. A branch, six miles in length, from Penwyllt to the head of the Swansea Canal, forming a junction with the main tramway, was also constructed. In 1847 an Act was passed

for the construction of a railway on the broad gauge, from Abercrave Farm in Ystradgynlais to Swansea, called the Swansea Valley Railway. But these earlier efforts have been superseded by the Neath and Brecon and Midland Railway systems, which now serve this district.

## GOUGH OF YNISCEDWIN.

The family of Gough is descended in the female line from the Awbreys of Abercynrig, Richard Awbrey, a younger son of that house having settled at Yniscedwin, where he was succeeded by six generations of his name until the death of Morgan Awbrey without issue in 1683. The estate then passed to Morgan Awbrey's aunt, Catherine, who *m.* the Rev. Richard Portrey, clerk in holy orders; their three sons likewise dying without issue. Yniscedwin was inherited by their daughter Catherine, wife of William Gough of Willersley. Their grandson Richard Gough took the name of Gough in addition to his own surname, and, dying without children in 1808, devised the estate to his brother, the Rev. Fleming Gough, rector of Ystradgynlais, who *m.* Martha, *dau.* of William Taylour, Esq., of Chalford, co. Gloucester, and *d.* 1835, leaving with other issue, an eldest son:

RICHARD DOUGLAS GOUGH, of Yniscedwyn, J.P. cos. Brecknock and Glamorgan, High Sheriff, 1840, B.A. Exeter College, Oxford, *b.* 1800; *m.* 1840, Constance Elizabeth, youngest *dau.* of Dansey Richard Dansey, Esq., J.P., of Easton Court, co. Hereford, by Frances Elizabeth, *dau.* and *co-h.* of the Rev. James Ingram of Burford, co. Salop, and had with other issue:

FLEMING RICHARD DANSEY AUBREY, now of Yniscedwin, *b.* 1855, *m.* 1880, Clare C. F. only *dau.* of the late John Carstairs Jones, Esq., of Gelli Gynon, near Mold, Flintshire, by his first wife, Anne Maria Bamford, only child of John Bamford Hesketh, Esq., of Bryndneas, co. Denbigh. He is D.L. and J.P. Brecknockshire, High Sheriff, 1895; J.P. Glamorganshire; Lt.-Col. Brecknockshire battn. South Wales Borderers, 1897—1911.

*Yniscedwyn House, Swansea Valley; Belton House, Nottingham; Junior Carlton Club.*

(See parish of Llanfigan and Brecon Priory.)

## CRAIG-Y-NOS CASTLE.

In addition to the mansions already described by Jones, there is Craig-y-nos (the Rock of Night), made famous as the property and abode this past few years of Madame Patti-Nicolini, who, by a third marriage, celebrated with much rejoicing at Brecon, became the Baroness Cederström. This lady, so justly celebrated throughout the world as the Queen of Song, was born at Madrid in 1849, her father, Salvatore Patti, having Italian forebears. She trained professionally under Maurice Strakosch, her brother-in-law, and made her first appearance upon the operatic stage in 1859 at New York, and her voice and power as an operatic artist won her immediate success. When, two years later, Madame Patti appeared at Covent Garden she stepped into the front rank of artists, and won that fame which for close upon 50 years never deserted her. As *prima donna* of her day, this gifted lady has been heard in nearly every capital in the world, has received gifts and orders from many ruling monarchs, and received the rapturous ovations of crowds of admirers. Her readiness to use her magnificent voice in the cause of charity has much endeared Madame Patti to the people of her adopted country, in whose capital town she has upon more than one occasion sung for the benefit of the poor, and enabled the Corporation of Brecon to establish a charity called "The Patti Fund."

Madame Patti married first in 1868, M. Louis Sebastian Henri de Roger de Cahuzac, Marquis de Caux, and after the dissolution of the marriage with him she married Mons. Nicolay, known as Signor Nicolini, an operatic tenor. He died in 1897, when Madame Patti became by a third marriage Baroness Cederström, the ceremony taking place at the St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church at Brecon, in the presence of Sir Faudell and Lady Phillips, and a distinguished company of friends and admirers from different parts of the country. The town of Brecon had been beautifully decorated at the expense of the late Colonel John Morgan, the Mayor, who gave the wedding party a semi-civic reception.

Craig-y-nos was purchased by Madame Patti in 1878, and she has lavished upon it considerable sums of money in laying out gardens, building conservatories, aviaries, &c. It is situated upon the left bank of the Tawe, at an elevation of about 700 feet above the level of the sea, and from the railway above the valley the house presents a most picturesque appearance. The mansion is a spacious one,



in the Italian style; it has a clock tower, 100 feet high, containing a set of chimes; and there is a theatre for 200 persons, expensively furnished and fitted; a grand organ; winter garden; and beautiful lawns sloping to the river.

This house was built in 1842 by Rhys Davies Powell, second brother to Llewellyn Powell, of Glynllech-isaf, who married Margaret Price, one of the Glynllech family. This Rhys D Powell was born in 1801, and, after receiving his education at Harrow and Cambridge, travelled abroad and collected many curios. About 1835 he married an heiress, Sarah Dolmage King, and afterwards built Craig-y-nos as stated. Mrs. Powell died here in 1852, and in 1862 her husband also died, both being buried at Capel Coelbren. They had six children:

Sarah Harriet Jane, *mar.* William A. K. Allaway, Captain, Royal Monmouthshire Militia, 1863, and had issue Rhys Powell and Constance. He died 1873, and she died 1878. Both buried at Coelbren.

William Rhys Brychan, died in 1864, as the result of an accident received when hunting in the Isle of Wight. Buried at Coelbren.

Walter Llewellyn, died in France in 1851, buried at Boulogne.

Gwladis Mary, *mar.* Henry John Bullock Webster 1864, and had issue three sons and two daughters. He was of Elton Hall, Ludlow.

Rosomond Hannah, died in France in 1851, buried there.

Catherine Emily (died young).

When Brychan died, the estate went to his sisters, Jane and Gwladis, who sold it to a Mr. Morgan, for £8,000, and this gentleman subsequently sold to its present owner, the Baroness Cederström.

#### THE LEGEND OF THE OVERBEEK CURSE.

By his will, the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes, of Rhodesia, South Africa, who died 26 March, 1902, bequeathed his residence, De Groote Schuur, near Cape Town, to the ultimate use of the Prime Minister of the future Federal Government of South Africa. This romantic mansion and grounds, six thousand miles from Breconshire, is recalled to mind by a curious legend, connecting it incidentally with the equally romantic castle of Craig-y-nos. De Groote Schuur was formerly in the possession of Abraham de Smidt, whose widow is a daughter of the late Jacobus de Witte Overbeek, of Cape Town. The Overbeek family have a long and distinguished record in the public service in Holland, Dutch East India, and South Africa; and their crest consists of two wolves heads—one black, the other silver—back to back (*Deux têtes et cols de loup adossées, de sable et d'argent*). The story runs, and it must be accepted with due reserve, that all who, in any way, unjustly injure a person of Overbeek blood fall under the ban of the family curse—"the black wolf sees, and the white wolf bites." Daniel Anthony van Overbeek, born 6 February, 1765, was Governor of Chinsurah, a Dutch settlement near Calcutta. He married his cousin, Sarah Leonora Eilbracht, daughter of Jacob Eilbracht, Governor of the Dutch possessions along Coromandel Coast, and died 25 September, 1840, leaving, with other issue, a daughter, Cornelia Maria Overbeek, married to Rice Davies Knight, who was gazetted Assistant Surgeon in the Honourable East India Company's Bengal Army, 19 September, 1808, and Surgeon 11 July, 1823. He died at Bareilly, India, 12 August, 1828. This Rice Davies Knight, came of a considerable family in Dorsetshire, who held the manor of Loders, near Bridport. His father, Matthew Knight, of Loders and London, married, 17 January, 1788, Elizabeth Mary Davies, daughter and co-heiress of Rice Davies of Neath and London. Matthew Knight, after the death of his wife in December 1795, went to America, and was last heard of in the year 1807, when he wrote home to England stating that he had made a fortune in Georgia and was returning to resume possession of Loders. It is conjectured, however, that his vessel was either lost at sea or captured by pirates; and a series of lengthy law suits took place to determine the right to the Loders estates. The final action (*Napean v. Doe*, 7 Will. IV., 2 Meeson and Welby, 910) developed into a "leading case" governing presumption of death. Matthew Knight's father-in-law, who had amassed great wealth as a merchant, was one of the first Police Magistrates appointed in London under the New Police Act of 1792. He occupied the bench at the "Public Office for the Administration of Justice," in Lambeth Street, Whitechapel, and was officially described as "a fit and able person, being a Justice of the Peace for the County of Middlesex and County of Surrey," his police jurisdiction extending to Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Surrey and the liberty of the Tower Hamlets, and his qualification being freehold lands and tenements situate in St. Botolph, Aldgate, and Mile End Old Town in the County of Middlesex.



The Home Office in London have no record of Rice Davies's retirement from the Police Magistracy, but other evidence proves that he held the position for at least twenty years, and he died at Neath, Glamorganshire, in July 1818, aged 76 ("Cambrian" newspaper 25 July, 1818.) His will, executed at Neath, 15 May, 1815, was proved in London, 14 August, 1818 by two of the executors—his widow Elizabeth Davies, and Dr. William Powell who had married Rice Davies's younger daughter and co-heiress. This Dr. William Powell had practised at Essex St., Strand, London, and was a scion of the Powell family of Glynlech-isfa, Breconshire, settled at the old farm house of Pentrecribarth, near the field then called Cae-Brynmelyn-Bach, on which the castle of Craig-y-nos was afterwards built. Dr. William Powell not only benefited personally under Rice Davies's will, but the greater portion of the real and personal estate, including the residue, passed ultimately, under the terms of the bequest, to William Powell's son, Rice Davies Powell. The other grandsons of Rice Davies, sons of Matthew Knight of Loders, before mentioned, were David Lewis Parry Knight, a young man studying for the Law in London, and Rice Davies Knight, the military doctor in India. To David Lewis Parry Knight, Rice Davies bequeathed a freehold house in the parish of St. Botolph Without Aldgate; and to Rice Davies Knight the sum of £100 only. It is said that the surgeon in India, married to Cornelia Maria Overbeck, had been Rice Davies's favourite grandson; and there is a further story to the effect that Rice Davies Powell while travelling in India had met his cousin, and that there had been a quarrel between them, each party, as is usual, asserting the other to be in the wrong. Be this as it may, and whether or no after the quarrel the "White Wolf" of the Overbecks shadowed the fortunes of the Powell family, the general opinion of the countryside maintained that fate became unkind to them. As is well known, Rice Davies Powell devoted large sums, in 1842-1843, to building the castle of Craig-y-nos; but the edifice ran into much more money than he had intended and was left unfinished, though he lived there at the time he was High Sheriff of Breconshire in 1847. He married an heiress, Sarah Dolmage King, and had two sons, the younger of whom, Walter Llewelyn Powell, died of cholera while still a lad, in 1851. Less than two years later, Mrs. Rice Powell herself died; and less than two years after the decease, in 1862, of Rice Davies Powell, his only surviving son, William Rhys Brychan Powell met a violent death at the age of twenty-three, while steeplechasing in the Isle of Wight. Craig-y-nos subsequently passed out of the family altogether, and the Powells of Glynlech-isaf have practically disappeared.

## FOLKLORE.

There are two folk-lore stories in the parish. The one relates to Dafydd William Dafydd and the Fairies. Dafydd lived at Brynyranau farm, Ystradgynlais, and was a very religious man, and a noted player on the flute. One day he went to see after his cattle to Llorfa, the mountain above the Gwysg brook; he had taken his flute with him. That night he did not return. His wife called together her neighbours, and they searched for him for many days; they dragged both rivers and pools, and hunted the mountains, but could not find him. So they concluded he had met an untimely end. About three weeks after, Dafydd came home about five one evening. His wife asked where he had been instead of coming home as usual; to which he replied that it was nothing for him to be away from home for a few hours, and why should she talk of three weeks. At last he told her that as he played his flute at the Llorfa he was surrounded by little things like men, who came nearer and nearer until they made a very wide circle. They sang and danced and so affected him that he lost himself. They gave him to eat small beautiful cakes, and he had never enjoyed himself so much in his life! Dafydd being a very religious man, his neighbours were sure he would not say that which was untrue. He had no doubt fallen into the hands of the Tylwyth Teg, and been for a time invisible. This explanation appears to have been considered satisfactory to his spouse.

The other story is known as the "Treasure on the Drum." At the beginning of the 19th century, there lived at Waungynlais a conjurer, who had an iron hand. There was an old legend that there lay treasure hidden at Garngoch, the highest point on the Drum. Iron-hand made the acquaintance of John Gethin, son of a farmer who lived at Werngynlais, and gave him books to study, teaching him the black art. John is said to have made good progress. One day, when at work in the hay field, two men appeared before him. John called to them, "Hi!" One of the men replied, "Is it for this that thou has spoken; thou must come with us to Garngoch to seek the hidden treasure!" On the way, John recognised the man who had spoken as his old teacher. The other being disappeared, nor did John see him again. Arriving at Garngoch, the conjurer bade John on peril of his life divulge nothing that he should see or hear. Opening his books, he lit a candle and began to read, with strict injunctions to John not to be afraid of anything he saw. While the conjurer read, spirits appeared, and surrounded them with great

noise. A great light shone on Garngoch, in the midst of which John beheld three pots of gold. Nothing more happened that night. By direction of the conjurer, John met him a second time on the mountain top, receiving the same instructions to fear nothing. The conjurer then traced on the ground two circles, joined together like the figure 8.

John stood in the ring, the conjurer in the other. At risk of their lives, neither was to fear or to step out of the ring. Iron-hand lit his candle and read from his book, the spirits appeared with great noise, then came a fiery ball which ran at John Gethin, but he stood bravely in the circle and the spirits vanished. The conjurer praised Gethin, and told him that a third night would complete their contest with the evil spirits, and secure the treasure.

A third night John met the conjurer. Opening his book with the same observance as before, he told John that it was a matter of life and death, that terrible things would appear, but no harm would come if he stood fearlessly in the ring. He then took a drop of John's blood to satisfy the Demon. The spirits surrounded them with greater noise than before; then a great wheel of fire, larger than a fly-wheel, rolled towards the ring where John was standing. Alas! his spirits failed him and he stepped out of the circle. The devil immediately took hold of John, and was carrying him off amidst a terrible storm of wind and rain. The conjurer also took hold of Gethin, and a hard fight took place between the devil and the conjurer; at last the devil gave in, sparing John's life as long as the conjurer's candle should last, but adding that neither would get the treasure, but a virgin yet unborn would one day own it.

The conjurer blew out the candle, and gave it to John, warning him not again to light it. John obeyed, and kept it also in a cool place, yet the candle wasted though it was never lighted, and John from that night sickened and died; the candle was then found to have wasted away. The doctor could give no cause for his sufferings, nor did anyone understand them, save those persons to whom he divulged that which had transpired on Garngoch.

John Gethin was buried in Ystradgynlais Churchyard.

#### NOTED CRIMINAL.

At an inn known by the sign of the "Lamb and Flag" in this parish, the outlawed criminal Hatfield, who, under the assumed name of the Hon. Colonel Hope, had seduced into marriage the beautiful and artless Mary of Buttermere, in Cumberland, was arrested; he was committed by the magistrates to the gaol at Brecon, and from thence conveyed to Carlisle, where he was executed after due trial.

#### ROMAN ROAD.

The Roman road, called locally *Heol Lladron* (thieves road), runs east and west above Ynisedwyn House, but this has already been sufficiently described.

#### SOME PARISH CUSTOMS.

On an ordnance map of the year 1858, there was marked, about three or four miles north-east of Coelbren chapel, among the mountains, the Stone of Prayer (*Maen y Gweddian*). It was on an open hill, called the thousand acres, and believed to be private property, and was nothing more than a single flat stone, one of the landmarks between the parishes of Ystradgynlais and Ystradfellte, on which the Rector of Ystradgynlais, when perambulating the boundaries of the parishes, used to kneel and read passages or prayers to those who accompanied him—hence its being called the Stone of Prayer. The custom was always observed on the occasion of walking the boundaries, which took place once in seven years.

Another custom of this parish was this, and was called "Purdan" or Penance. Any woman having more than one illegitimate child, or being pregnant of a second, was compelled to walk with her paramour, if known, up the church during the hours of divine service, covered with a white sheet. This custom prevailed both at Ystradgynlais and Llywel about 1790, and the late Rev. Walter Jones Williams possessed the name of the woman last subjected to this ordeal.

"Cefyl Pren," or the wooden horse, was, as its name implies, a construction of wood with poles to carry it. If a virago outraged propriety by striking her husband, or caused a disturbance by her family quarrels, the wooden horse was brought out by the youths of the Village. Two boys, one dressed as a woman with a broom; the other as a man with a ladle, were mounted upon it, and, elevated on men's shoulders, were paraded in procession before the cottage of the irate person. No violence was offered, but an old woman aged 96 told the writer of this note in 1858 that she had often seen the wooden horse used, and with great effect, as quarrelsome women had a great dread of its appearance.

The wooden horse was also called into requisition in cases of adultery, but on these occasions either the delinquents themselves or persons dressed to represent them were carried round the neighbourhood. These customs prevailed in Llywel as well as Ystradgynlais.

#### THE PARISH COFFIN.

There was in use up to about 1769 what was called the "parish coffin." It was the practice to bury all paupers without a coffin. The practice was this: There was kept in the church porch a parish coffin, and this, upon the death of a pauper, was sent to the house of the deceased person. In it the corpse was conveyed to the churchyard, but when the funeral had been performed the coffin-lid was taken off, the corpse was lifted out and placed in the grave, after which the parish coffin was restored to its old quarters in the porch of the church until it might be required again.

The following extract from the Terrier of Ystradgynlais, dated Oct. 14, 1739, proves the custom: "Clerk's fees. There is a shilling due to the clerk for digging every grave with coffin, but without there is but sixpence due."

The parish coffin became decayed in 1769 and was deposited by the parish authorities in the grave with the corpse of the pauper it contained. Since that period a coffin has been used at every funeral, as at other places. The expenses of burying this pauper, as set out in an old Parish book belonging to the then overseer, was as follows: "April 1769. Charge towards burying J. J. Journey to the house, 6d.; also digging of a grave 1/-; also shrouing him, 2/-; also burying him, 1/-; also ale for carrying the bier, and carrying the corpse to be buried, 2/6 (the distance was about seven miles); also for pins, candles, thread, cords, &c., 1/-; also for 5 yards  $\frac{3}{4}$  flannel, 4/3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ; also to his wife, 3d.—12/6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

#### DISCOVERY OF BRONZE IMPLEMENTS AT PENWYLLT.

In July, 1886, a number of bronze implements were found, it is said by accident, just below the surface of the ground, by the side of a large boulder, on the mountain above Penwyllt. It is not easy to identify the exact spot, as several small maenhiirs, which are marked on the older ordnance maps, have now disappeared from the hillside. Most of the objects found came into the possession of Mr. J. B. G. Price, now of Dylais Fach, Neath, part owner of Glynlech estate, which adjoins Penwyllt. The find consisted of six celts of various sizes. One is 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins. long, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins. wide, with a thickness of metal of 15 to 25 ins., and is ornamented with four parallel lines. It has a loop for a thong, and is worn quite smooth. Another is 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins. long, and has the metal somewhat thicker (35 in.) and more regular than the first; it has the same four parallel lines and loop for thong; the cutting edge is much broken. The third specimen 3.7 ins. long and 1.5 to 2 ins. wide, with a thickness of metal of 25 ins. It is ornamented with three lines in the form of a broad arrow, much more eroded than the others, and looks as if it had been buried for a long period. Another instrument is 3.75 ins. long, and from 1.5 to 1.9 ins. wide. The metal is irregular, and from 4 ins. to 25 ins. in thickness; it has the lines of the broad arrow, and loop like the last; the lower cutting surface is worn smooth. Another example is 3 ins. long, 1.2 ins. to 1.3 ins. wide, with metal thin, ornamented with four parallel lines, and provided with a loop like the others. The next is 2.5 ins. long and 1.2 to 1.7 ins. wide, with metal thin, and having loop, the rim much broken, and edge very smooth.

Two gouge like implements of uncertain use were amongst the find. One is 2.6 ins. long and 9 ins. diameter, with metal very thin. The gouge is 1.5 ins. long, and the edge is much broken; the other is 3 ins. long, and .7 in. diameter, with metal thin. The gouge is 1.6 ins. long. The chisel-shaped tool is 4.8 ins. long, 1 in. wide at the edge, and 2 ins. wide at the handle; it is about 1 in. thick, with cutting edge scratched, evidently from much use.

Another object is a bronze mould, in the shape of an eye-tooth, possibly being the end of a casting. It is 1.4 ins. long, the fang 1 in., and the thickness of metal 7 ins. Another similar object is 8 ins. long, the fang 1.6 ins., and the thickness of metal 4 ins. The bronze annulus might be the end of a spear; it is 1.5 ins. in diameter, the thickness of annulus .6 in., and has three studs, the largest 4 ins. A bronze broken blade is 1.2 ins. wide, with a thickness of metal .1 in. The large number found on the same spot might raise suspicion that they are forgeries, but Col. W. Ll. Morgan, R.E., of Swansea, who communicated these notes to the *Archæologia Cambrensis* in 1901, thinks they are genuine, and Mr. Price is sure they are, and he is not likely to be deceived. All the implements show signs of erosion, as if buried for a long period. The attempt to clean them has rubbed off most of the patina, but in corners where it could not be touched it looks genuine. The cutting surfaces, scratched in places, are worn quite

smooth, and the cutting edges reduced by use. The small gouge, like the implement, has a fragment of wood left in it, which wood has been converted into traventine (fossilised by the action of lime deposits). This in itself is no sign of age, because on this mountain, wood will become traventine in the incredibly short time of two or three years. Col. Morgan does not think a forger would have been aware of this fact, and he would be more likely to believe that wood would perish where buried; therefore he would not have risked inserting it.

## LIST OF INCUMBENTS.

DATES OF INSTITUTIONS.	PATRONS.	INCUMBENTS.	DATES OF INSTITUTIONS.	PATRONS.	INCUMBENTS.
1490.—The Bishop of St. David, p. h. v.		Thomas, the Bishop's Chaplain.	1687.—Christopher Portrey, gent.		Richard Portrey.
1493.—The Crown, p. h. v. (†)		David ap Gwalter.	1714.—Richard Portrey, Esq. (†)		James Powl.
1514.—The Duke of Buckingham.		Thomas ap Griffith.	1739.—Christopher Portrey, Esq.		John Portrey.
1553.—George Lloyd of Holwood, Arnpney, Gloucestershire, Esq.		Lewis Thomas.	1745.—Ditto.		John Seys.
1601.—Edward Morgan & Edward Kerneys, Esq. (†)		John Llewelyn.	1780.—John Woodhouse, of Bridewell Hospital, Esq. (†)		James Gough Awbrey.
1634.—Morgan Awbrey		Charles Herbert.	1790.—Richard Gough Awbrey, Esq.		Fleming Gough.
1635.—The Crown of lapse. (†)		Charles Herbert.	1835.—Ditto.		Timothy Davies.
1666.—Ditto.		Hopkin Thomas. (†)	1846.—Ditto.		Rev. Walter Jones Williams, B.A.
		John Collins.	1856.—Ditto.		Rev. Dr. Walters.
			1874.—Col. F. Gough.		E. L. D. Glanley, B.A. (†)

## LLYWEL or LLIWEL.

**L**LULLE, alias (†) Llywel, says Ecton; whoever communicated to the editor this mode of spelling the word was correct in the derivation and nearly so in the orthography of the appellation. Llu-le which idiomatically should be written Llu-le is the residence of the army, as is also Llu-wal, Llu-wel or Lluweli. (†)

Upon reference to the first volume it will be seen that Rhys ap Tudor, in gratitude to his nephew, the wild Irishman or Idio Wylt, for his assistance in subduing his rebellious subjects, conferred upon him the lordship of Llywel, in which we have reason to believe were comprehended all the lands eastward of Towy, from Llangadoc to Aberguesin. He endeavoured to strengthen his interest by marrying the daughter of Bleddin ap Maenarch, lord of Brecon; and the melancholy fate of his brother in law made it necessary to take double precautions, not only against the disaffection of his own subjects, but against the power and forces of the Norman conquerors. Under these circumstances the heights of Llywel were admirably calculated for the station of his army, and of those adventurers who accompanied him; as they were equally prepared to resist attacks from Breconshire or Carmarthenshire, or to descend into the vales on either side to punish rebellion, to enforce the payment of the taxes and the supplies of provisions for

(†) During the minority of the Duke of Buckingham, and on the resignation of Thomas, who here again has no surname. This parish is called Ystradgynlais, otherwise Glyntawe at this time.

(†) Tutors and guardians of Walter Wynter, an infant.

(†) Rymor's *Fædera*, v. XIX., p. 780.

(†) When presented is uncertain; he was ousted by the propagators of the gospel in Wales, and succeeded, after five or six years vacancy, by James Jones, a thatcher, who was followed by David Jones, a ploughman. Walker's *Sufferings*, &c., p. 161.

(†) Elinor Wynter, widow, claimed the presentation at this time, and entered a caveat against the institution of Mr. Powl.

(†) He was a trustee of the Yscedwin estate under an Act of Parliament; the advowson was in fact at this time in Mr. Awbrey.

(†) The church at Ystradgynlais was rebuilt in 1860, by voluntary contributions, at a cost of £2,500. The Rev. Dr. Walters was his own architect. It has one bell (not inscribed), which was taken from the ancient church.

(†) The *Liber Laudavensis* gives Llywel as the name of a saint (page 351)—“So the Holy Church was exalted by the coming of Teilo, to whom came those who had been disciples of St. Dubricius, namely Lunapeius . . . Llywel . . . Ondaceus, and many others, of whom he consecrated Ismail to be a bishop, and sent him to take charge of the Church of Menevia, and many other persons he likewise raised to the episcopacy, sending them through the country, and giving dioceses to them to suit the convenience of the church and the people.”

(†) “Gwel is literally a bed, metaphorically any place of rest, hence, house, habitation, manor, estate or tenement.” (Note to Wynne's *History of the House of Gwent*.)