

1979

ST. DAVID

WHO AM I?

For next edition of W.A.Y. News, I encourage everyone to write the answer to the above question. We all know that March 1 is a very important day for all Welsh people. Let's hear what you think it's all about. Please submit your story, poem, research on 8 1/2" x 11" white bond paper, preferably single spaced, use as much area of the typing page as possible so we can get a lot of information into our next copy of W.A.Y. News. Your document should be typed. Just do your thing in your best way, for W.A.Y. and let's hear your comments about St. David.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF W.A.Y. NEWS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO CYNTHIA JONES, [REDACTED] GLENDON AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90064, NO LATER THAN JUNE 1, 1979. ANY CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED AFTER THAT DATE WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER.

****SUPPORT W.A.Y. IN NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 1979, HILTON****
HOTEL AT W.A.Y.'S SECOND ANNUAL BREAKFAST, SUNDAY MORNING, 8:00 A.M.
(Tickets are now being sold through Mair Monkhouse and through the registration packets you'll receive in the post -- EVERYONE IS EXPECTED TO PURCHASE A TICKET IN SUPPORT OF W.A.Y. - THE YOUTH - YOUR CHILDREN.

W.A.Y. NEWS HOPES YOU ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUPPORT THIS NEWSLETTER, THE W.A.Y. ORGANIZATION AND ALL WELSH EVENTS IN CANADA, UNITED STATES, IN WALES AND ALL OVER, WHERE WE ARE GETTING IT TOGETHER TO PERPETUATE OUR WELSH CULTURE, HYMNOLOGY AND WELSH HERITAGE.

W.A.Y. NEWS MUST DEPEND ON YOU FOR SUPPORT, CONTRIBUTIONS - FINANCIAL AND LITERARY (NO MATTER HOW MUCH OR HOW PROFESSIONAL).

WE ALL HAVE WORKED VERY HARD TO KEEP W.A.Y. GOING IN THE PAST YEARS, BUT UNLESS WE GET YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS, ETC. UPDATED IMMEDIATELY, W.A.Y. WILL HAVE TO MAKE CONSIDERATIONS OF ITS FUTURE STATUS. NO ORGANIZATION CAN KEEP GOING WITHOUT CONTINUED SUPPORT AND FINANCIAL AID IN THE FORM OF DONATIONS THROUGH MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND JUST GOOD OLD DONATIONS FROM GOOD WELSH FOLK.

I PERSONALLY WANT TO THANK ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED W.A.Y. IN THE PAST FOR THEIR GENEROUS EFFORTS, FUNDS AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

IN MINNEAPOLIS, MR. WILLIAMS, MR. GRIFFS (HE KNOWS WHO HE IS) AND MR. CARR AND MR. E. JONES AND HIS WONDERFUL CREW WERE JUST MARVELOUS IN THEIR SUPPORT OF W.A.Y. ACTIVITIES -- I THANK YOU ALL ON BEHALF OF W.A.Y. I'D LIKE TO THINK WE CAN DEPEND ON SOMEONE ELSE NOW.

BEST WISHES TO YOU ALL FOR A HAPPY WELSH DAY - MARCH 1.

Please write to me - anyone, with suggestions, ideas, etc. Thank you.

Cynthia Jones, President

W.A.V. FOR EVERYONE

at afternoon tea

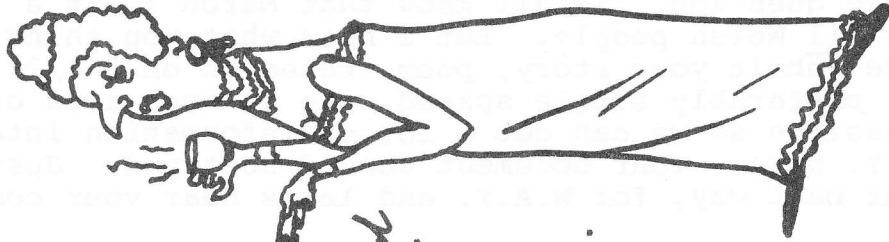
the other day,
An English Lord was heard

"The Welsh have this thing, they
to say, they
call it W.A.V.;
a newsletter of interest and cultural play.

Now we have nothing so profound,
So with stiff upper lip and duty bound
Prepare to compete, but that's the rub
Or better still why not join the club?
My grandfather was of Celtic origin,
So send my subscription, that's a beginning.

TEA TIME LATER THAT MONTH:-

Reached good reading Old Deer, even
if he is not totally of
Welsh stock eh what?!



Our Handiwork

We who behold our youth
In shocked amazement,
Wondering why
They spurn, so undeniably,
Our calmer, safer ways
To revel in revolt
With wild abandonment,
And dare the dangers we avoid
With smug conceit,
Should wake at once,
From mere, convicting stupor,
To perceive
This is, in very truth,
Our handiwork,
And strive to rehabilitate
Ourselves.

Can we expect our youth
To find, enjoy and propagate
Sagacity or even decency
In such a seething maze
We tolerate?
Where justice, reason, charity
Are jostled roughly
To incite our youth
To drugged intemperance,
And seek in rhythmic orgies
That appear and often sound
Like pandemonium,
Relief from disillusionment
With us and with our world,
Of which we seem so proud,
Incomprehensively?

R.J.Lewis
Saskatoon, Sask.
May 1, 1967.

W.A.Y. MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE IMMEDIATELY

All individuals receiving this copy of W.A.Y. News are asked to kindly complete the information below and submit by check or money order in United States funds their membership funds now very much over due.

W.A.Y. has been generously supported by the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association Endowment Fund in the past, however, we cannot continue to distribute newsletters, plan events if our subscriptions/memberships are not kept current. It takes money to keep any good organization going continuously and no matter how large or small.

Not only has a request for renewal of memberships been made earlier this year, but a request has been made to have you contribute to your newsletter in whatever way you can. We need copies of your work - no matter how good. We need people to help us in Niagara Falls, New York at the upcoming event in September, 1979. Please, I can only urge you all at this time to look into the future and realize that without your membership renewals, etc. W.A.Y. cannot continue to distribute its quarterly newsletter, hold annual events. Membership fees are a mere \$2.50 and I'm certain that you all have that available to you. I believe that W.A.Y. is moving ahead at this particular time during its conception -- W.A.Y. made great progress in Minneapolis with the help of many fine welsh people who attended the W.A.Y. breakfast and for those who supported W.A.Y. at the Annual Meeting of the National Gymanfa Ganu. Now it has to be the right time to keep this thing we call W.A.Y. moving upward at a tremendous pace so we can support the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association and take our places as members of committees and add our suggestions and ideas to the pot to make the Welsh activities and events in Canada and the United States worthwhile for everyone of all ages. PLEASE SUPPORT US NOW.

(DETACH THIS FORM AND SUBMIT WITH \$2.50)

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City and State: _____ Zip: _____

This is a donation to W.A.Y.: _____

This is a gift subscription/membership from _____
_____ to the name above.

This is a renewal of an old membership: _____

This is a new membership: _____

I will be attending the Niagara Falls, New York Gymanfa Ganu: _____

I would like to help at the W.A.Y. registration desk in Niagara Falls: _____

I want to send in a contribution to the newsletter. _____

(Membership fee: \$2.50 per person, U.S. funds)

The Annual Pittsburgh Gymanfa Ganu occurred on Sunday, September 10, in the East Liberty Presbyterian Church, East Liberty, Pennsylvania. My mother, Mary Jane Brown, who is Secretary of the Saint David's Society, Pittsburgh, chaired the event. My father, sisters (Bronwen and Penny), and I helped to prepare for the Gymanfa by folding programs and compiling hymnbooks. Nansi Richards, who delighted the attendants of the Minneapolis National Gymanfa Ganu with her voice, served as the conductor, she blessed us with spontaneous solos during the Gymanfa. Nansi's husband, Alun, added much to the afternoon with his prayers and readings. Dr. David L. Mandry, the new Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association President, addressed the crowd, numbering about 600. Dr. Heaton, East Liberty Presbyterian church organist, and his choir participated in the service. A tea followed in the church hall.

The Gymanfa was very successful and as has happened at past Gymanfas, quenched my thirst for the Welsh hymns that I hold so dear to my heart.

Melanie Brown

It is with sadness that I relay to the members of W.A.Y. and members of the Welsh community at large of the tragic passing of a father, devoted welshman and a member of the Welsh community in Ottawa.

Myfanwy Davies' father, Albert Davies, was tragically killed in an automobile accident in the early part of December, 1978. Myfanwy was Secretary-Treasurer of W.A.Y. and her sisters supported the W.A.Y. activities in Ottawa through the urging of their father and mother, all of them devoted welsh people.

I was most upset to hear from Myfanwy of her family's great loss and we all hope and pray that they will find strength in the memories they retain of their father, Albert. Albert Davies was most generous with his time when it came to Welsh activities and events. He was most active in all Welsh events in Canada and he sang with the Welsh choir in Ottawa. The Welsh community has lost a good man. Our thoughts are with his family in their time of sorrow.

1979

Welsh Events Upcoming

- 1979

Gymanfa Ganu - Venedocia, Ohio, on the first
sunday in September at 7:30 P.M. - Salem Church.

Gymanfa Ganu - United Church of Christ in Gomer,
Ohio at 7:30 P.M. on the first sunday of September.

(submitted information from Maggie Dewey)

ONTARIO GYMANFA GANU ASSOCIATION

1979 WELSH FESTIVAL SPONSORED BY THE O.G.G.A.

TO BE HELD AT THE HOLIDAY INN,

KINGSTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

APRIL 27, 28 and 29, 1979

Contacts:

Dr. Don Mills, President
[REDACTED] Pentland Crescent
Kanata, Ontario
K2K 1V5
Canada
(613) [REDACTED]

Mr. Alun Hughes, Secretary
[REDACTED] Queenston Street
St. Catherines, Ontario
L2P 2X8
Canada
(416) [REDACTED]

All W.A.Y. members should attend this event if time permits. Be certain to look up either, Cynthia Jones, (that's me), President of W.A.Y. of Canada and the United States, or Myfanwy Davies, or other young adults and see if you can't get together and plan a luncheon together while you are attending the Gymanfa. Check the reservation desk in the hotel lobby and see if the above mentioned people are registered and don't hesitate to contact them. We should all make an effort to make contact with one another. Let's keep this thing, W.A.Y. active and an interesting organization wherever we may be in this world. Support your culture.

We are hearing so much about Nazi War Crimes and Criminals after the television special "Holocaust". I hope the following will be of interest to all readers of W.A.Y.

I recall during World War II hearing the startling news that Rudolph Hess, Deputy Fuehrer of Nazi Germany was captured on a lone flight to Scotland in 1941. In 1942 he was brought to Abergavenny near Pontypool, Gwent, and incarcerated in Maindiff Court which was a county mental hospital and it was from here he was flown to Nuremburg in 1945 to stand trial as a war criminal.

His favorite resort when allowed out under guard was the ruined stronghold of White Castle, a great favorite tourist attraction in the Abergavenny area.

Towards the end of the last century his father Carl Hess was in the domestic service of the bishop of Gloucester and there met and married Elizabeth Mackie, a native of Michaelston-y-Vedw, Gwent. Some time afterwards she died and her body was brought to this parish for burial at Cefn Mably Church, the bereaved husband being accompanied at the funeral by his brother a photographer of Ayr in Scotland. The grave adjoins the path leading to the church and is cared for by the Mackie family which is still represented in the locality. The tombstone reads

"Erected by Carl Hess of Schleswig in Loving Memory of his wife Elizabeth Mackie who died at Bystock, Exmouth, Devon, June 13th, 1891, Aged 35 years. In life beloved, in death never forgotten."

Carl Hess subsequently entered the service of an American and during his travels in Egypt remarried at Alexandria and returned with his second wife to Germany where he engaged in the hotel business.

The Deputy Fuehrer was a son of the second marriage. One cannot help wondering whether Rudolph Hess was aware during his imprisonment in Gwent that less than 20 miles away his own father had once stood in sorrow by the side of the grave in which his early love was buried.

When on an extended visit to Wales in 1977 I decided to take a friend with me to see the gravesite of Carl Hess' wife. As a child I remember going to the graveyard and looking at the tombstone, but as time has gone so quickly by I knew that I should look for an aged tombstone when returning in 1977. After my friend and I arrived at the graveyard, we both started looking for the tombstone, but I was certain of its location when thinking back on my first visit to that site as a child. A little time had gone by when I viewed the spot where I believed Carl Hess' wife had been buried, but there was a new stone placed there, but as I approached and came into better view of the inscription on the stone, I realized that someone had replaced a new stone over the old one. My friend and I let our thoughts drift back to the days of World War II, the little graveyard, Germany and here we were in Wales.

How quickly time has gone, but the memories and the past still remain with us all.

RECIPES

Caws Pobi - Welsh Rarebit

- 8 oz. grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 level teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 4 tablespoons beer (or milk)
(preferably beer for the bite
in this particular dish)
- a shake of pepper (little bit)
- 4 slices of toast.

Place cheese, flour, mustard, sauce, butter and pepper into a saucepan, mix well, then add beer (or milk) to moisten. (Don't make it too wet). Stir over a gentle heat until all is melted. When it is a thickish past stop stirring. Leave to cool and toast the bread. Spread the rarebit over one side of the toast and brown under a hot grill for a short time.

Buck Rarebit

Use the above recipe plus a poached egg served on the top. Also diced onions, bacon, ham or even pre-cooked hamburger can be added to the rarebit. Or even yet, pour/spread rarebit over hot hamburgers, cooked vegetables, etc. It tastes super, and is almost what one would call a "Welsh Pizza". Look out Shakey's! (DELICIOUS - TRY IT BEFORE YOU LOSE THIS RECIPE)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"One has only to grow older to become more tolerant. I see no fault that I might not have committed myself."

Goeth.

(Taken from Bethesda Chapel Magazine, 1974. Rogerstone, Gwent, Wales.)

Victoria Jones
W.A.Y. Supporter
Artist of Cover Pages
on All W.A.Y. Newsletters

WELSH RESORT CONJURES FAIRYTALE

Portmeirion the fairytale Welsh village, located in Penrhyndeudraeth, that is also a hotel was the brain child of Welsh architect Clough Williams-Ellis. Set on a seaside hill, it is made up of a series of dream-like cottages, spires, arcades, balconies and bell towers. Guests live amidst this curious landscape, which was a favorite haunt of such luminaries as the Duke of Windsor, when Prince of Wales, and Noel Coward.

The old seaside mansion on the site has been transformed into an elegant hotel with unusual, as well as usual, amenities and a cellar and cuisine that are exceptional.

A television series The Prisoner used the resort as The Village, a seemingly benevolent but diabolically devised escape-proof prison. "Six of the one, a half dozen of the other" was a catch phrase from the show, whose main character, Patrick McGoochan, was known only as "Number six".

Information on group and individual rates is available from Michael Trevor-Williams, Resident Director, Portmeirion Hotel, Penrhyndeudraeth, Wales or Scott Calder International, 295 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

Mary E. Roberts
Ridgewood N.J.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY WELSH CELEBRATION

The Central New Jersey Welsh Society, Thomas Williams, President, will celebrate Saint David's Day on Saturday March 3 with a banquet at the Ramada Inn, Clark, New Jersey at 7 p.m.

A fine entertainment program and guest speaker has been arranged, and reservation chairperson is Miss Charlotte D. [REDACTED], P.O. Box 74 Lyons, New Jersey 07939- Telephone 201 [REDACTED]

Mary E. Roberts
Ridgewood N.J.

An Interesting Piece (I hope you think so too)

*Wrexham is the burial place of Elihu Yale. His father emigrated from Plas-yn-Ial House to North America in 1637, and Elihu was born in Boston, Massachusetts soon afterwards. Yale was the founder of Yale University for in 1691 he sent a cargo of books and Indian goods from Fort Madras, India, where he was governor.

These were sold for over five hundred pounds, which initiated the university in 1692. Yale university has a Wrexham Tower in the Memorial Quadrangle.

His tomb is inscribed thus:-

'Born in America, in Europe bred,
In Africa travelled and in Aisa wed,
Where long he lived and thrived, in London dead.
Much good, some ill he did;so hope's all even,
And that his soul through mercy's gone to heaven,
You that survive and read his tale take care,
For this most certain exit to prepare,
When blest in peace, the actions of the just,
Smell sweet and blossom in the silent dust.

*Wrexham:-North Wales.

There must be thousands of Welsh people and those of Welsh descent who have interesting stories of their ancestors etc. An idea for a competition perhaps e.g. the most unusual or funny? The most interesting amongst many has to be that of Dr. D.C.Jones and his family. How about it Madam President.

A Brief Outline on the Prehistory of Wales

The Palaeolithic ("Old Stone Age") in Wales covers the time period from the beginning of human existence to 9000 B.C. The earliest cave-dweller yet found in Wales is dated to 16,500 B.C. After the "Ice Age", the climate improved and Wales was reoccupied during the Mesolithic (9000-5000 B.C.) by people who specialised in hunting and fishing.

In the Neolithic Period ("New Stone Age" -- 5000-1800 B.C.), small bands of people began to arrive from the European continent who were already adapted to an agricultural way of life. These farmers also produced hand-made pottery--the first ceramics to appear in Wales. The most common structures found in Wales from these people are megalithic ("giant stone") tombs consisting of underground passages and chambers and lined by large upright stones on the ground surface. The underground stone masonry of these tombs is quite impressive, but many have since been robbed. By about 2500 B.C., henge monuments (upright settings of stones or timber) were being built. Trading of stone axes from Mynydd Rhiw and Graig Lwyd also appeared as well as extensive flint mining. At the end of the Neolithic, a new group of immigrants from the continent appeared, called by archaeologists the Beaker People (after their numerous drinking vessels). These people played an active part in religious developments involving stone circles as well as henge monuments and built the Llandegai Circles about 1850 B.C. Regarding technology, the Beaker people were the first in Wales to use copper for daggers and pins.

The Bronze Age in Wales was a time of great technological development. Bronze, which is an alloy (mixture) of copper and tin, was being produced and traded. Also, extensive gold mining was centred on the lower Dee River for the finest craft work. The greatest concentration of wealth lay beyond the Severn. Characteristic monuments of this period are large standing stones (Welsh: maen hir, meini hirion) which were isolated burial markers, were associated with cairns (burial mounds), or were used as trackway markers--especially near Harlech and Dolgellau, but may also be found throughout Wales.

The Iron Age in Wales began about 700 B.C. when the repeated immigrations of Celtic people occurred. Iron was at first a rare metal and bronze continued to be used. Hillforts in southeast Wales are quite common during this period. These forts were strongholds built communally and became more elaborate as time progressed, especially at Llanmelin and Sudbrook on the Lower Wye. These forts included ramparts for control of the entrance, wall-walks for observation, and massive stone walls as at Caer y Twy in northwest Anglesey and Garn Fadrun in the Lleyn Peninsula. Most defended sites enclose an area of about 2½ acres. The fields of independent homesteads ("celtic fields")

were of rectangular shape and lined with stone walls.

The Roman Period in Wales began in A.D. 74 and 78 as a military campaign to conquer Britain. These campaigns of legionary troops met the fiercest resistance from the Silures of southeast Wales. A complete network of auxiliary forts was established connected by well-engineered roads all over Wales. The Roman course of action was usually to follow occupation with civil administration. Caerwent and Carmarthen were established as tribal capitals. Roman villas were built by favoured Welsh landowners in the southern countryside to help to preserve the social order and commercial life, especially at Llantwit Major in West Vale of Glamorgan and Ely in the East Vale of Glamorgan. In other areas, commerce was promoted through the exploitation of the gold mines at Dolaucothi (Upper Tywi River) and the copper and lead mines at Parys Mountain (southeast Anglesey) and Ffrith (Lower Dee River).

After imperial control began to weaken, the official Roman withdrawal was in A.D. 410, at which point the Welsh were then threatened with conquest by the Anglo-Saxons of Wessex. Little is known of the following "Dark Age". Rulers and battles are recorded to some detail in the "Heroic Literature" of Wales. Concerning monuments, the great dykes built by the rulers Wat and Offa in the 8th century A.D. (which presently span some 60 miles north-south and are especially well-preserved along the Dee River) are the finest memorials to the success of the Welsh princes in preventing conquest and establishing their right of independence.

Linda Ellis
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Harvard University

News on New Books:

The Penguin Book of Welsh Short Stories, Edited by Alun Richards, 1976.
(Available from: Penguin Books Inc., 7110 Ambassador Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21207 or Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 41 Steelcase Road West, Markham, Ontario, Canada) \$3.95, paperbound, 358 pages.

This is an anthology of 24 short stories by both Welsh men and women. All are published here in English; 8 were originally in Welsh and have been translated into English especially for this volume. The stories are from both well-established authors and younger writers.

The stories in this collection reflect and criticize life and society of modern Wales and depict a blend of rural and urban lifestyles.

The writers represented are: Rhys Davies, Glyn Jones, Alun Lewis, Geraint Goodwin, Kate Roberts, Gwyn Jones, Dylan Thomas, D. J. Williams, Gwyn Thomas, E. Tegla Davies, Caradoc Evans, Brenda Chamberlain, B. L. Coombes, T. Hughes Jones, Eigra Lewis Roberts, Moira Dearnly, Jane Edwards, Harri P. Jones, John Morgan, Leslie Norris, Ron Berry, Alun Richards, Islwyn F. Elis, and Emyr Humphreys. This is indeed an impressive and much needed collection. No collection of English or Welsh literature can afford to be without such a rich accumulation of authors. Poetry is such a dominating genre in the Welsh literary tradition that it is refreshing to have high quality fiction from Wales, as represented by this book, to appear in one volume and not scattered in journals.

This particular Penguin edition is not so easily available and not well advertised--I have searched over a year for this volume. Therefore, I have included the addresses above for those who might wish to purchase Welsh Short Stories.

Linda Ellis



THOMAS INTERNATIONAL Co.

KINGS ROAD, MADISON, NEW JERSEY 07940, U. S. A.

AREA CODE 201 — TELEPHONE

Section One: Page 28 ◇ + THE SUNDAY STAR-LEDGER, December 17, 1978

Madison man writes about Welsh history

By NANCY JAFFER

Looking at life from a Welsh viewpoint is Dr. Islyn Thomas' trademark.

A former president of the prestigious St. David's Society of New York, Thomas has been active in Welsh causes nearly all his life.

The Madison resident is the author of "Our Welsh Heritage," a 64-page text which has gone through four printings and contains information on everything from Wales' national flower (the daffodil) through a description of Welsh language and history to a list of well-known people of Welsh extraction.

Thomas explained the Welsh are one of six Celtic groups in the world. Among the others are the Irish and Scottish.

The Brythonic Celts, whose heritage is the pride of present day Welsh, were confined to their present boundaries in the 8th Century by the Britons after centuries of fighting.

Today, the Welsh are striving for home rule and Thomas is involved in a movement that would give more regional independence to Wales.

A native of Wales, Thomas moved to this country as a child with his father, a coal miner and engineer, when mine shutdowns plagued his homeland in the 1920s.



Photo by Ronald F. Moffat

Dr. Islyn Thomas cuddles his cat 'Tory' at his home in Madison

"I'm an American," he notes firmly, "but you still have a feeling for the old country."

His Welsh interests are really an avocation he pursues when not involved in his work as a plastics engineer. He is a past president of the Society of Plastics Engineers.

His contributions to the plastics industry earned him the Order of the British Empire, which was presented to him three years ago at Buckingham Palace by Queen Elizabeth.

Thomas is currently involved in organizing the Welsh Youth of America.

Another of his pet projects is research into the voyages of Prince Madoc, whom some schools of historical thought contend sailed into Mobile Bay, Alabama in 1170.

There is no doubt in Thomas' mind that the Prince discovered America.

"What about Columbus?" he was asked.

"That's a city in Ohio," Thomas retorted.



THE PLEASANT LAND OF GWENT

by
Fred J. Hando

For too long the importance and even existence of Gwent as a Welsh County has been left a questionable issue. Those of us better informed have always known what an important part our beloved County has played in the religious, cultural and political life of Wales. It is with extreme pleasure I submit the following extract from Mr. Hando's book. It is recommended that you locate a copy of this lovely book and read the remainder of its contents.

Preface and Historical Sketch.

MY AIM IN WRITING THIS BOOK is to persuade its readers to see the little places of a shy county.

Monmouthshire has never sought the limelight, and her sons, with few exceptions, have not brought its rays to bear upon her. Visitors travelling through by train get glimpses of a flat land, small villages, and one industrial town. Motorists wind through the Wye Valley, call at Monmouth and Raglan, and feel that they have done the county justice. To the outer world, Llandegveth and Llanvair, Moun-ton and Mathern, are as little known as the Skirrid and Twyn Barllwm, the Soar Brook and the Honddu.

Gwent is the southern gateway into Wales. Until 1535 it was a part of Wales, as it is clear that Nature intended it to be. In that year Henry VII abolished the authority of the Lords Marcher, and the twenty-four Lordships between the Usk and the Rhymney were taken to form the new county of Monmouth. Legally therefore in England, Monmouthshire is in Wales as far as sport, education and religion are concerned. In some parts of the county "Eden's tongue" is heard still, and the lovely old place-names reward careful study.

Washed on the south by the Severn Sea, Gwent is bordered on its other sides by mountains and rivers; on the east by the Wye, on the north-east by the Monnow, by the Black Mountains of Brecknockshire on the north, and on the west by the River Rhymney. From the flats of Caldicot and Wentloog, the land rises by gentle hills in the centre to the ranges and peaks of the Black Mountains. Many of the hills are surmounted by the circular or oval camps of our early races; many of the ranges are traversed by ancient ridgeways. The ridge from Newport almost to Chepstow was clothed with the great forest of Wentwood, for many years a royal Chase. Our valleys, formed by streams flowing from the heights, are full of charm. Some in the north-west have been changed into smoke-laden channels of industry, but even there much beauty remains. Others, like the Cwm near Shirenewton, resound to birdsong and water-music.

We have four rivers—the Wye, Usk, Ebbw, and Rhymney. The Wye, from Bicknor to Beachley, is too well-known to be missed. I have travelled along it from Plynlimmon to the Severn, and know no lovelier stream, but its fame has caused its humbler neighbours to remain undiscovered. A journey from Llanwenarth along the Usk through Abergavenny and Usk to Caerleon; a day

spent exploring the Soar brook; a swim in the Monnow at Skenfrith; a rest on the banks of the Honddu, or

Ebbw's voice in such a wild delight
As on he dashed with pebbles in his throat
Gurgling towards the sea with all his might
—these are the joys of Gwent waters. The names are very ancient. "Usk" and "Wye" are among our oldest names for water; "Ebbw" is "talking water"; "Candwr" is "singing-water"; and the Rhydney, now a black stream, was originally the Swans' River.

The levels near the coast are drained by "reens." This word, like "Rhone" and "Rhine," is an old water-word. ("Rhondda" is "good water"). There are 500 miles of ditches on the moors, and this ample supply of water produces such good pasture-land that some of the fields yield three tons of hay to the acre, and have not been fertilised within living memory. In the olden days the labourers used a long pole called a "powt" to help them in leaping over the reens. Severn salmon, caught at Goldcliff, are taken in "putchers"—long tapering baskets made from the pollard "withies" of the Llanwrern district. "Putchers" were in use in the reign of Henry IV.

Much of the modern prosperity of Monmouthshire has been due to its 200 square miles of coal-beds in the north-west. Yet over a half of the county is covered with Old Red Sandstone, which provided excellent building material for the post-war reconstruction following 1485. The Tudor houses, and many of the castles which I describe, owe some of their charm to the beauty of the stone, quarried in the hills, and will survive when the post-war houses of the last generation are forgotten. The rich colour of our soil is due also to the "old red," and I recommend you to see a ploughman at work at Llanvair in autumn, turning over the red-brown earth, while a flock of sea-gulls follows the plough.

Historical.

The people of Gwent lived first in the uplands, as we may see by the remains of their camps, roads, tumps, and stones. Relics found within the tumuli indicate that these races, 1500 years before Christ, believed in a further life after death. My study of pre-Roman Gwent has convinced me that even if there was no actual sun-worship here, the points of midsummer and midwinter sunrise and sunset, and the North-South line, held significance in the minds of the people. Probably the alignment of roads, etc. on these points enabled the knowing ones to indicate a change of season, all-important to a race dependent on crops.

Many of the hilltop settlements overlooked the villages or towns which superseded them, as at Caerleon and Caerwent. The Romans had difficulty in conquering the Silures under Caractacus, the tribe which occupied this land, but in A.D. 75 set up their military capital at Caerleon (Isca Silurum), the headquarters of the 2nd Augustan Legion—a rectangular camp of fifty acres—in which buildings of varying function have been excavated. Outside the walls were the great amphitheatre (designed to seat 6,000 spectators), temples, married quarters of the legionaries, baths, and cemeteries. The amphitheatre is now held by the National Trust.

The Romans built excellent roads, frequently over the ancient tracks, and established important military stations at Burrium (Usk), Blestium (Monmouth), and Gobannium (Abergavenny). Here and there, in my journeys through the county, I have come across rectangular embankments, sometimes in an open field, sometimes in a wood. These were the wayside strong points, fortified to guard a road junction, a strategic height, or, as at Penrhos, the home of an officer.

Caerwent—Venta Silurum—was the seat of civil government, and is now a fascinating relic. Inside the walls lived a sophisticated people, who used a town hall, market place, club, casino, baths, shops, library, and temple, and whose houses were fitted with central heating. A stone of 220 A.D. shows that the Silures had by that time won a measure of autonomy. The Romans left in 449 A.D.

The application of the name Gwent to what is now Monmouthshire dates from the 6th Century. Before that time, Gwent appears to have extended from Gloucester to Carmarthen. The Saxons had met with fierce resistance from Arthur, Prince of the Silures, whose capital city was at Caerleon (and whose "Round Table" at Caerleon has been exposed as a Roman amphitheatre), but after his death the invaders caused such devastation that Morgan, King of Gwent, moved his court westwards, giving his name to Morganwg, the origin of Glamorgan. Gradually, then, the name Gwent came to imply the land between the Wye and the Rhydney.

For the triumphs of King Arthur, who was, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, conqueror of Iceland, Ireland, Gothland, the Orkneys, Norway, Aquitaine and Gaul, the reader is referred to Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," some of which was written in the "Magistrates' Room" at the Hanbury Arms at Caerleon.

The Norman Conquest was followed by a period of peace, but William soon evolved a plan for subduing the Welsh. He appointed three chief Barons at Chester, Shrewsbury and Hereford, where strong fortresses were built, and later, when the Welsh raiders again grew troublesome, he encouraged other Normans to invade

Wales and take possession of any lands which they conquered. Such conquerors were created Lords Baron, and in later times their lands were known as the Lordship Marches, extending from Chester to the Bristol Channel.

The new Barons built castles on the conquered lands; there are twenty-five in Gwent. They divided their land amongst their knights who paid them in peace and war the same kind of service which they in turn rendered to the King. Thus arose the manorial system, with all its picturesque duties, laws, customs, privileges and ceremonial.

In the Domesday Survey, while reference is made to the villages between the Wye and the Usk, such as Llanvair, Caldicot and Caerwent, the land west of the Usk, except Caerleon, is not included, showing that up to 1085 William's authority was not there acknowledged.

The unsubdued Welsh broke out in frequent revolt. Their insurrections became so serious in the reign of William Rufus that the King erected castles throughout Gwent. To protect the Royal Chase of Wentwood, six "agtrarian" castles were built at Penhow, Pencoed, Llanvair, Dinham, Castrogy and Llanvaches. Picturesque ruins of four of these survive.

In the chapter on Grosmont I tell of the influence of the House of Lancaster in northern Gwent. Henry of Lancaster deposed Richard II, and as King Henry IV created his son Henry (born at Monmouth) Prince of Wales. This new appointment, together with the harsh laws imposed upon the Welsh, and the inhuman misgovernment practised by the Lords Marchers, resulted in the enthusiastic support given by the Welsh to their new champion, Owain Glyndwr, a Welshman of royal blood.

Entering Gwent in 1402, Glyndwr, now styled "Prince of Wales," stormed through Gwent, sacking and burning castles and towns, and attacked Cardiff. Overcoming stern resistance, he destroyed castle and town, proceeding then to ravage Llandaff, Caerphilly, and the other castles of Glamorgan.

In 1405 Henry gave orders to his son, aged 17, to attack Glyndwr's armies were defeated at Grosmont and near Usk. The rebellion, supported by 10,000 Frenchmen, dragged on for many years, and there was no real collapse until Owain's death in 1415.

Harry of Monmouth, as Henry V, relaxed in some measure the harsh laws against the Welsh, and when his life was endangered at Agincourt, he was saved by a man of Gwent, David Gam, of Oldcourt.

The Wars of the Roses split Gwent in twain. The north of the county favoured, of course, the Lancastrians, but Richard, Duke of York, was the son of Anne Mortimer (heiress of Caerleon and Usk), and therefore the southern half lay under Yorkist influence. During

the Wars Owen Tudor, a great Welshman, and a warm supporter of the Lancastrian cause, was captured and confined in Newport Castle, but a hundred gentlemen from Anglesey liberated him by a trick. Owen Tudor married Catherine, the widow of Henry V. Their son was Jasper Tudor, the great builder of church towers (including those at Newport and Llandaff); their grandson became Henry VII.

Through all these years the evils of the Lords Marcher system had grown until, when the Tudors came to the throne, each of the Marches was a refuge for the criminals from the next march. Henry VII did nothing to suppress this lawlessness, but under Henry VIII the problem of the Marches was second only in his mind to the Reformation. He put down the brigandage practised by the Lords Marchers, and in 1534 established the Council of the Marches. The next year saw Henry affect radical treatment of the trouble by his creation of counties and abolition of the Lords Marches.

In various chapters of this book references are made to the growth of religion in Gwent. It is probable that Christian martyrs suffered near Caerleon in the Diocletian persecution; that Christian churches were built here as early as the 6th century; and that in spite of the lawlessness under the Norman barons and the Lords Marchers, Christian communities kept the lamp of faith burning. Under Bishop Urban, who was promoted to the See of Llandaff in 1108, the Church imposed upon the rich the duty of erecting and maintaining places of worship. The first churches were built partly for defence, partly for worship, but soon each little settlement owned its sanctuary, and these ancient shrines form part of the Monmouthshire scene.

At the Reformation there were still eighteen houses of religion in Gwent, although Llanthony had fallen into decay long before. The Dissolution of the Monasteries was accompanied here, as elsewhere, by gifts of land to the wealthy.

The religious terrors of Tudor and Stuart days have their place in the records of Gwent, hovering like dark clouds over the fair fame of Mathern and Usk.

The Civil War, the advance of industry and commerce, the gallant struggle of the Chartist, are dealt with in books of easy reference. Their impact on Gwent comes but slightly within the scope of this volume.

Here, then, is an attempt to interpret the magic of the sequestered places of Gwent. Such enchantment is not for all, but I hope that some of my readers will be tempted to take the advice of "Mr. H. Davies, to 'stand and stare.'" The results of such contempt. on will justify this book.

GOLDEN JUBILEE GYMANFA GANU

Niagara Falls, New York August 31 - September 2, 1979

It appears that the forthcoming Golden Jubilee Gymanfa Ganu in Niagara Falls, New York, will be one very enjoyable event and without your participation at this event we can only think that we will not be properly rewarded with a great weekend.

At this time I urge each and everyone of you to participate in your own way in things Welsh by making plans to attend this next Gymanfa Ganu. Some of the events planned for the weekend of the Gymanfa include the following:

- 1) Noson Lawen;
- 2) Welsh Folk Dancing for everyone interested;
- 3) Gymanfa Ganu Sessions;
- 4) W.A.Y. Breakfast, Sunday, September 2 and you are all urged to purchase your tickets in advance through the pre-registration materials to be mailed in the near future;
- 5) Tours of the Niagara Falls area, etc.

Many events are planned and the Sponsoring Committee of the Gymanfa Ganu are urging all members and interested W.A.Y. supporters to participate.

Please complete the following form and send the completed form to the individual listed below, Rev. Heddwyn Williams, who is waiting to hear from you. If you have talent, and who doesn't have talent, then you must all complete the form and do something in support of our Welsh heritage. We will all have a lot of fun and who knows where this might lead Hollywood????? Please participate--we need your support--don't be shy.

Send completed form to: Rev. Heddwyn Williams
████████████████████ Cathedral Bluffs Drive
Scarborough, Ontario
Canada M1M2T8

I am interested in participating in the Noson Lawen (Talent Event) of the Gymanfa Ganu on August 31, 1979.

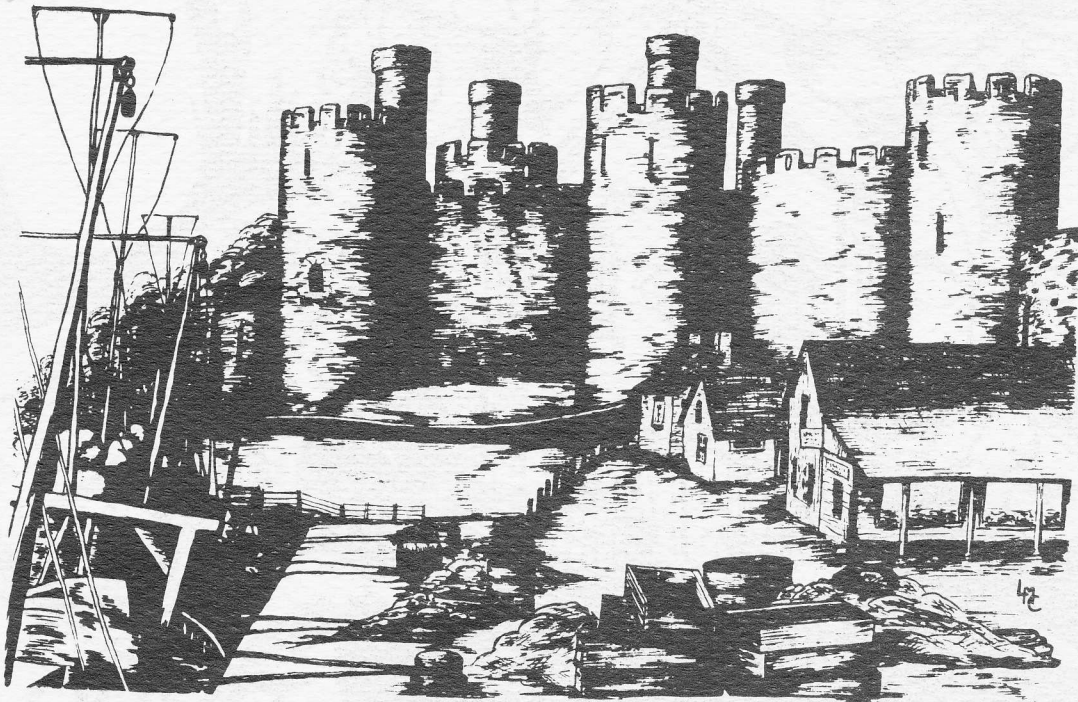
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Talent: _____

(e.g., sing, dance, play an instrument, comedian, etc.)



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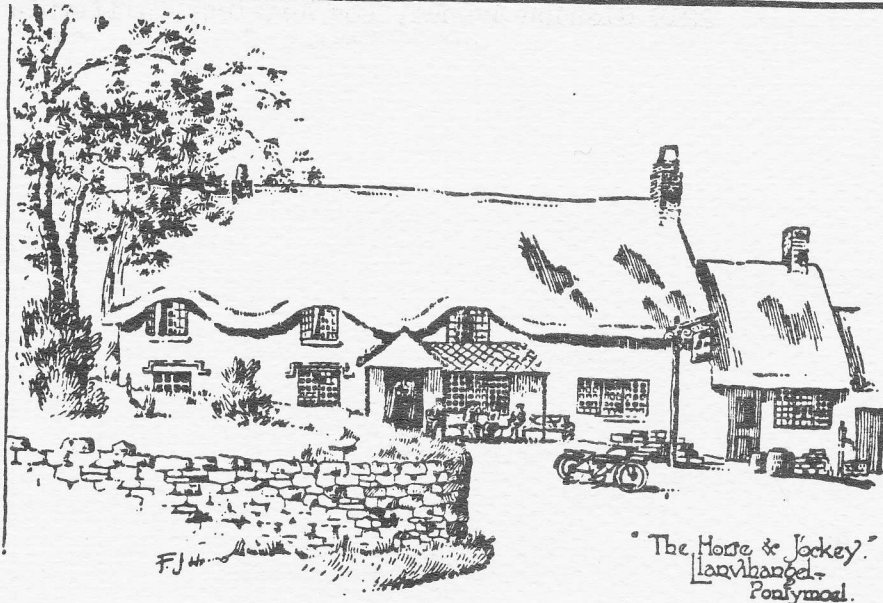
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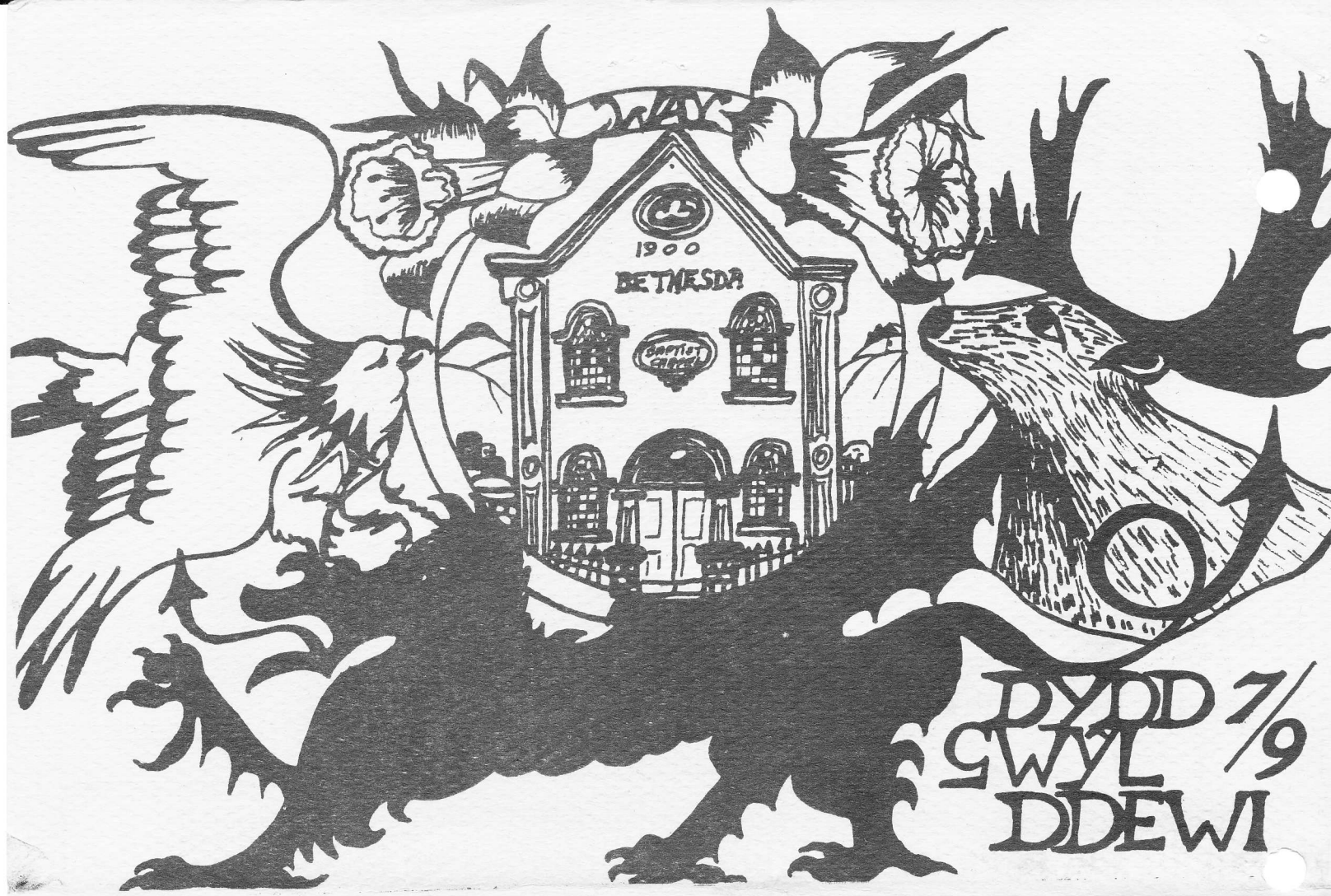
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