

Greenmeadow and The Lewis's - Tongwynlais

What follows is a transcript of two fascinating accounts from The Cardiff Times, one dated 12th February 1910 and the other 19th February 1910. Greenmeadow was demolished in 1945 after being abandoned, the land having been bought by Cardiff Rural District Council, The estate had gone into decline, financial pressures making it impossible to maintain. This article provides a brief, but interesting insight into the Lewis family that owned it and a fascinating description of what was a wonderful landmark and an important part of the history and heritage of Tongwynlais.

These articles are available from **The National Library of Wales – Newspaper Archives**

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The Cardiff Times – 12th February 1910

WELSH COUNTRY HOMES.

XVII. The Van.

A TUDOR MANOR HOUSE.

The Story of a Famous Family.

In a series of articles dealing with Welsh country homes no apology is needed for a mention of The Van, the ancient Tudor house which stands on the hillside to the east of Caerphilly, because though much of it is now ruinous and has fallen from its high estate, its interests remain, and as long as one stone stands upon another the charm of old associations will compass it about. _

The fact that it was the former residence of and gave its name to one of the most notable families in South Wales is in itself abundant justification for reference to it here. The illustrations to this article speak for themselves. Much of the old place was some time ago in danger of falling, but the present owner, the Earl of Plymouth, whose reverence for ancient edifices is well known, has taken every care to preserve the fabric, and in one of our pictures the huge beams which support the remains of the great porch are to be noted. To-day the old place has degenerated from a manor house into a farm building, and pigs grunt and geese cackle where in days past the lord of the manor and his household aired themselves in the golden sunshine. The family of Lewis of Van is one of the most celebrated during the past four centuries in the history of Glamorgan. From them sprang the branches of Lewis of Cilfach Vargoed, Lewis of Penmark Place, Lewis of Listaly-bont, Lewis of Glyn Taff, Lewis of Llanishen, Lewis of Newhouse, and Lewis of 'Green-meadow. Oliver Cromwell was descended from the Van family on his mother's side. Evidence of the influence which the family exercised in South Wales over a long period of years is provided by the fact that between 1549 and 1858 members of the Lewis of Van family were High Sheriffs of Glamorgan on no less than twenty three occasions. The family have always been distinguished for the manner in which they have kept alive old Welsh customs and ideals, and as long as they resided there The Van re-echoed with the strains of the harp.

A Family Rooted in Antiquity,

The beginnings of the family are rooted in a remote past. Certain Welsh genealogists have, claimed to trace their pedigree back to one, Gwaethfoed, Prince of Cardigan. With a greater desire for accuracy, however, it is sufficient for our purpose to indicate that prior to the coming of the Normans the ancestors of this famous Glamorgan family were powerful lords in the eastern portion of Morganwg. In the eleventh century Meuric ap Cadivor was the master of these lands, and he by his marriage with the daughter of the Lord of Gwent probably did much to strengthen his position. Their grandson was the famous Ivor Bach, who early in that twelfth century greatly enhanced his family's influence and broadened their possessions by his marriage with Nest, who was the heiress to the Cantreff of Senghenydd, which her great-grandfather Einion ap Collwyn had received in the distribution of lands at the Conquest. It was a vast, but at the time valueless, lordship, for it was seven or eight centuries later before its boundless mineral wealth was developed. It stretched from the Taff to the Rhymney Valleys, and northward to the confines of Breconshire, and on the south it was bounded by Castell Coch with its mountain barrier above Whitchurch. Besides Castell Coch this long rampart had another fortress, Castell Morgraig, and in one or other or both of these Ivor Bach held his camp.

An Interesting Reflection.

It is an interesting reflection, and one which one can hardly do otherwise than note in passing, that to-day, only a few hundred yards south of the mouldering ruins of Castell Morgraig, stands Newhouse, a nineteenth century residence of the Lewis family, while an equal distance south of Castell Coch is Greenmeadow, the home of Colonel Henry Lewis, who is today the male representative of the descendants, through the Lewises of Van, of Ivor Bach. From that famous twelfth century chieftain, Colonel Henry Lewis is the twenty-second in direct male descent.

To the exploits of Ivor Bach there is no need to refer in detail here. To those who visited the Cardiff Pageant his name will be recalled as that of the hero who eight or nine centuries ago visited retribution, fierce and sudden, upon Earl William in his stronghold at Cardiff when the brave Welsh chieftain brought the proud Norman to his knees and dictated his own terms. The Normans called Ivor Bach Sir Ivor Petit. His son, Griffith, is alleged to have married a daughter of the Norman Earl, and their son, Rhys, made a still greater match by wedding Ellen, the daughter of Rhys, Prince of South Wales.

Howell the Yellow.

Their grandson, Howell Velyn, or "Howell the Yellow," was so called because as an infant he was smuggled out of Castell Coch in a cradle covered with yellow rennet. This Howell the Yellow married the daughter of Sir Mayo le Sore, Lord of St. Fagans, Peterston and Odyn's Fee. Mr G. T. Clark, a very reliable authority, considers it probable that it was from the Yellow Howell that the Earl of Gloucester took by force the site on which, in 1271, he built Caerphilly Castle. Anyhow, Howell removed the family headquarters into the district which is now Merthyr, and there two branches of the family dwelt for a time, one having the Court House and lands, and the other the Pont Rhun or Troedyrhiw estate. The seventh in descent from Howell the Yellow was Lewis ap Richard Gwyn of Pont Rhun, and he, who was far wealthier than his kinsman, bought the Court lands and once more united the estate, ruling, it is stated, as Lord of Merthyr. This was about the end of the fifteenth century, and from this time forward the family were known as Lewis, for Lewis ap Richard Gwyn's heir was known as Edward Lewis, and his life marks a notable era in the history of the family.

The Builder of the Van.

Edward Lewis was a man of great wealth and influence, and he appears to have had instincts which led him away from the wild and trackless hill country to the confines of the civilisation of that day, nearer in fact to the home of his forbears, and early in the sixteenth century he came to Caerphilly, and there he built the Tudor Manor House, parts of which are inhabited to this day, and which, with its ancient dovecote, forms such an interesting feature of the landscape on the slope of the hill to the-eastern side-of Caerphilly. The date of its erection must have been prior to 1530 because Leland in his itinerary, which was written in that year, remarks, "There is a faire place at Caerphilly called 'The Vanne,' where Mr Edward Lewis dwelleth." He was known as Edward Lewis of The Van, and here he and his descendants dwelt for at least a century, though the name was associated with the family for a much longer period. The Van must in those days have been a fine residence. Unlike many Tudor houses it was well placed, and, as the name implies, stands high. It was at that time surrounded by a walled park of 850 acres. Edward Lewis added to his estates by purchasing Roath Keynsham. He soon became recognised as a man of influence in the county, and was sheriff in 1548, 1555 and 1559, and was deputy Custos. One notable feature of the Lewis of Van family that makes it of special interest in the county was the way in which its members married and intermarried with leading families all over South Wales. An example of this in one generation is provided by the children of Edward Lewis, who intermarried with Kemeys of Kemeys and Cefn Mably, Herbert of Colebrook, Button of Worlton, Van of Marcross and Pritchard of Llanover.

A Residence in St Mary-street, Cardiff.

Edward Lewis's heir, Thomas Lewis of Van, was sheriff of Glamorgan in 1569, and it is interesting to note that he also had a house which he built on the site of the Old Town Hall and Post Office in St. Mary-street, Cardiff, a fragment of which, known as the Lewis House, was standing until 1865. It was probably Thomas Lewis who added considerably to The Van by building the great gallery and porch, for which were utilised some of the materials of Caerphilly Castle. Thomas Lewis died at his house in Cardiff in 1593, and was succeeded by his son Edward, who was knighted in 1603. Sir Edward was probably the largest local landowner of that day. It was he to whom we referred in a recent article as having purchased St. Fagans from Sir William Herbert in 1615-16. Sir Edward died in 1628 and was succeeded by his son Edward, who had been knighted by James I. In 1610 he was a gentleman of the privy chamber to Prince Henry and afterwards to Prince Charles. He married Lady Ann Sackville, widow of Lord Beauchamp, and was succeeded on his death in 1630 by his son Richard Lewis, who purchased the Manor of Corsham.

Hanged at Cardiff for Sheep Stealing.

It was during the latter days of the Lewis occupation that one night some sheep were stolen from The Van. Suspicion at once fell upon a farmer named Rees George, who lived at Ty Fry Farm hard by. That night after dark the then owner of the Van sent his servants to the farm of Rees George, where they found some sheep skins bearing the mark of "Lewis Van." Proceedings were at once taken against Rees George, who was brought before the Caerphilly magistrates and committed for trial, found guilty, and hanged on the Heath. Cardiff.

The Van Dismantled.

Richard Lewis greatly neglected The Van and, according to Mr G. T. Clarke, probably dismantled it. The probable explanation of this neglect of The Van was the fact that by this time its accommodation had become quite inadequate to the style in which the family then lived, for

when in Glamorganshire they appear to have resided at St. Fagans. Richard Lewis was succeeded by his son, Thomas Lewis, who was a pronounced Jacobite, and is said to have been fined £10,000 to escape the results of a correspondence which was discovered between him and the young Pretender. This Thomas Lewis sat for a quarter of a century in the House of Commons, representing in turn Winchester, Hampshire, Southampton, New Sarum and Portsmouth. He died in 1736 leaving his daughter Elizabeth Lewis of Van the sole heiress, and she married Other Windsor, the third Earl of Plymouth. She was the last of the Lewises of Van, but the younger branches of the family still survive, as we shall show in our next article, --- Next Week-GREENMEADOW.

Photos included (see below):

THE OLD PORCH.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE VAN.

THE DOOMED DOVECOTE.

The Cardiff Times – 12th February 1910

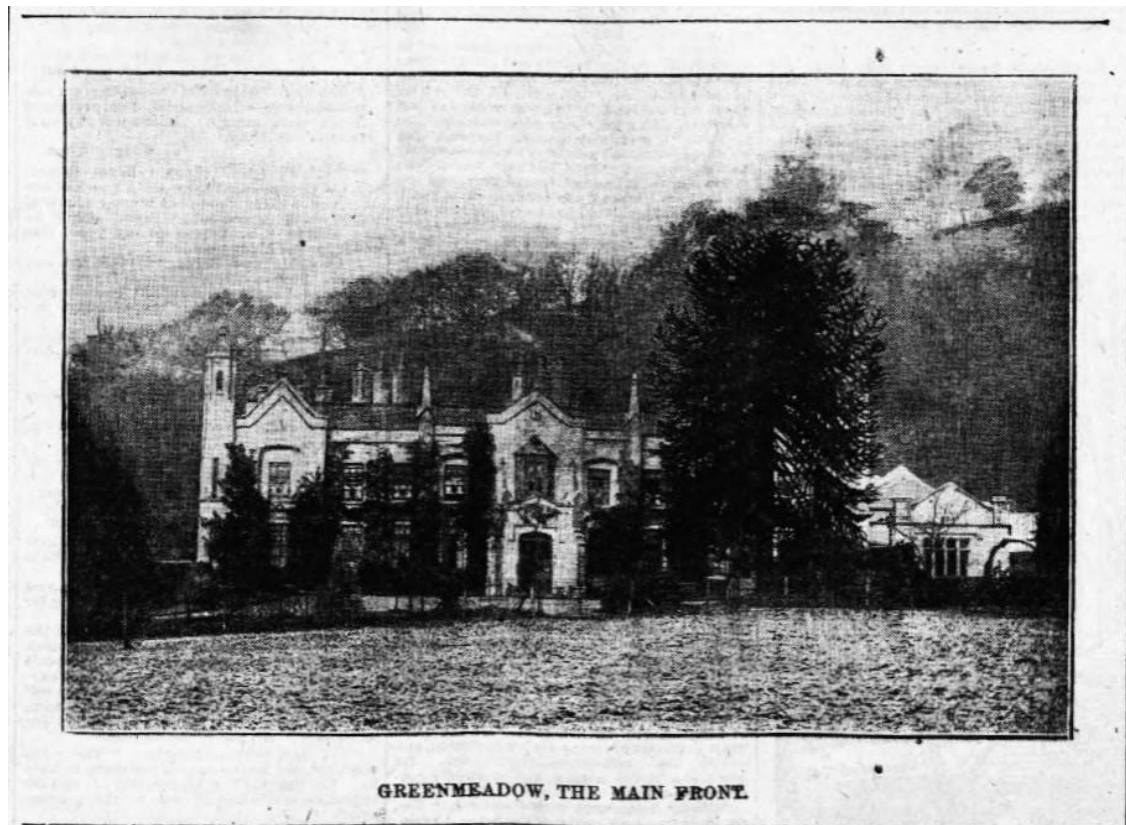
WELSH COUNTRY HOMES

XVII. Green meadow.

LORD BEACONSFIELD'S VISITS.

A Great Statesman's Romance.

The natural sequel to the article which we published last week dealing with the ancient-, home of the Lewis of Van family, is one describing their present residence at Green- meadow where Col. and Mrs Henry Lewis worthily maintain the fine old traditions which characterised their ancestors in the past. Greenmeadow nestles in a hollow of greenery on the eastern slope of the Taff Valley, some four miles north of Cardiff on the road to Pontypridd, and adjacent to the hamlet of Tongwynlais. Above it frowns the towers of Castell Coch, which occupies the site of the ancient citadel of Ivor Bach, from whom, through the Lewises of New House and of Llanishen and the Lewises of Van, Col. Lewis can claim direct descent.



An Old Religious House.

The present mansion, which faces nearly due south, occupies the site of an ancient religious house. Documentary records regarding the latter are very scanty, but it would appear to have been fortified, a very necessary precaution one would suppose, considering its position in the disputed area between Celt and Norman, which was the cockpit of so many skirmishes and raids centuries ago. In those days it had a wall all round it; in fact, this remained until well on into the last century, for Col. Lewis recalls the fact that his father, the late Mr Henry Lewis, told him that as a boy he remembered seeing the wall. The late Mr Henry Lewis was born in 1815, so that this outer defence must have stood till about 1830 if not later.

This wall was of extraordinary thickness, so much so, in fact, that it would have been possible to drive a coach round the top of a portion of it.

The Present Mansion.

When the present house was erected much of the old religious building was built into the new fabric, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the newer was built on to the older, for the existence of the massive wall of the old edifice would appear to have dictated in some measure the lines of the present house, which was erected about the beginning of the last century. At that time the present front, an illustration of which we append, was erected, but from time to time additions have been made, the latest of which includes a charming room which was built by the present owner on to the eastern end. Looking at the front one would be unable to form any idea of the age of portions of the house, but when you come, under the kindly guidance of Col. Lewis, to explore the long and narrow passages at the back of the interior you soon begin to realise that they are of a period far more remote than a century ago. The walls here are in parts fully three feet in thickness, and the general arrangement with its endless corners and staircases is quite in harmony with the theory that its architect was one of mediaeval ideas.



THE DINING-ROOM WITH CARVED OVERMANTEL AND SIDEBOARD.

Lord Beaconsfield and Greenmeadow.

Before describing the interior of the house, reference must be made in passing to the charming romance which has been woven about Greenmeadow by its associations with the Earl of Beaconsfield. When the great statesman published his novel *Sybil* he dedicated it "to one whose noble spirit and gentle nature ever prompted her to sympathise with the suffering. To one whose sweet voice has often encouraged, and whose taste and judgment have ever guided its pages, the most severe of critics, but a perfect wife." That was the beautiful tribute of Benjamin Disraeli himself to the lady who, before he married her, was Mrs Wyndham Lewis. Mr

Disraeli was once private secretary to Mr Lewis, and it was as the result of his influence and support that the future Prime Minister, then a young and unknown man, first entered Parliament for Maidstone. On the death of her first husband Mrs Wyndham Lewis resided at Greenmeadow, and it was hither that Mr Disraeli, during the scant and hard-earned leisure that his political and literary labours left him, used to come and pay his addresses to her. Mr Disraeli on these occasions used to stay at Llandaff, whence he would ride or walk across, stopping oftentimes to chat with mine host of the "Cow and Snuffers," either going or returning. After Mrs Lewis became Mrs Disraeli they used Greenmeadow as their country house until they bought Hughenden, when Greenmeadow was handed over to Mrs Henry Lewis, the grandmother of the present owner, who, with her family, went to reside there.

An Ideal Marriage.

Mrs Wyndham Lewis was a very bright and vivacious woman. Mr Disraeli's first impression of her was that she was "a flirt and a rattle," and he adds, "she told me she liked silent, melancholy men. I answered that I had no doubt of it." But fuller knowledge of her character brought to light nobler traits of womanhood, and one likes to reflect upon the fact that the marriage so romantically initiated proved an ideally happy one.

Let us leave this charming association of Greenmeadow with the well-merited tribute of which the famous historian, James Anthony Froude, paid to Lady Beaconsfield: "She devoted herself to Disraeli with a completeness which left no room in her mind for any other thought.... She was his helpmate, his confidante, his adviser. From the first he felt the extent of his obligation to her, but the sense of obligation, if at first felt as a duty, became a bond of friendship perpetually renewed." Lord Beaconsfield used to visit at Greenmeadow during the lifetime of the late Mr Henry Lewis, and Col. Lewis remembers, as a boy, seeing the great statesman there, and talking with him.

Greenmeadow To-day.

But the interests of Greenmeadow are not bounded by the associations of the past, for the present hospitable owners have enriched the interior of the house with spoils which they have accumulated in all parts of the world: every nook and corner contains objects of beauty and interest which speak of delightful holidays spent in districts far remote from the tracts of the ordinary wayfarer. We are indebted to Col. and Mrs Henry Lewis for a most enjoyable morning spent at Greenmeadow recently, which enabled us to obtain many of the facts set forth in this article. The house, though not as country mansions go a very large one, possesses what, after all, is much more, namely the virtue of comfort. When the newer portion was added, a century back, well proportioned rooms were built at the front, and here, to the right and left respectively of the pretty entrance hall, are the dining-room and the drawing-room. Notable features of the dining-room are a fine carved oak mantelpiece and side-board, the latter of which is covered with old silver plate, some of which has a story to relate.

"Kati Coch" Hunt at the Heath.

Among the silver which adorns the side-board is an old whistling jug, so called because at the bottom of the handle is a whistle, the idea of the maker being, no doubt, that when the person, quaffing his ale from the jug, had emptied it, he should whistle for more! A century ago this jug was in the possession of Madame Price, of The Parc, at Capel Llanhiltern. and she had in her service a maid named Kati Coch or Katie of the red hair. A gipsy made love to Katie, and the scamp succeeded in inducing her to assist him in stealing some of the silver from the house, among the stolen property being this jug. The gipsy, the instigator of the crime, got away, but

poor Katie paid the penalty on the gallows at The Heath. She was the last woman who was hung there.

Tale of an Eye-Witness.

In connection with the hanging of "Kati Coch," Col. Henry Lewis relates an interesting story. He recalls the fact. that years ago an old man named Abraham Williams told him that he was an eye-witness of that execution. Williams, who when he related the story was a great age, said that he himself saw Katie being driven in a cart to the gallows, and that she was sitting on her own coffin, and her red hair was hanging over her neck and shoulders. Few people in Cardiff today know the exact site of the old gallows on The Heath. They were, says Col. Lewis, situated close to the roadway which leads from Allensbank-road to the house and on the present Heath estate. They occupied a site which may still be identified, as there is a little tump there and a clump of trees.

Among many interesting pictures on the dining-room walls is an authentic portrait of Prince Charlie, one of those which Prince Charlie himself gave to his chief supporters, and which through the Duke of Orkney came subsequently into the possession of Mrs Lewis.

A Collection of Quaint Jugs.

One of the prettiest rooms in the house is that which has within the past few years been built on to the eastern end of the house. This apartment has many interests, not the least of which is Col. Lewis' collection of Toby jugs, of which there are about 250, and hardly any two of which are alike. These are arranged on a high shelf all the way round the wall, forming a sort of frieze, while round the fireplace recess there are several rows. They form the quaintest collection imaginable, and are in such endless variety that a very amusing hour or more may be spent in examining them.

They have many of them been obtained by Col. Lewis himself from Welsh cottages. On a wall at the end of the room is a painting of "Little Charrie," the first Welsh horse that won the Grand National. It was owned by the late Mr Henry Lewis, and was ridden by Fred Archer's father, and won the classic event after starting at the useful price of 10 to 1 against. There are some interesting specimens of ancient arms on the wall, including a Dervish sword, and another sword which was used at the battle of St. Fagan's. On a stand in the corner hangs a driving whip which once belonged to King George IV.

Quaint and Rare Curios.

There are several large cabinets in this room which are filled with rare curiosities, brought by Col. and Mrs Lewis from the ends of the earth. Notably among these are many treasures from the tombs of the Incas, wondrous examples of ancient Peruvian civilisation of ages past. Many of these are of silver. There are also many notable finds from African tombs on the Upper Nile and other districts. Then there are examples of the lares and penates of South Sea Islanders, curiosities from China and Japan, and there is a cabinet of costly Nantgarw china, including one dainty tea- cup which was sent out from the pottery, which, of course, was only two or three miles distant, without being painted.

In the Drawing-room.

The drawing-room at Greenmeadow, like so many other parts of the house, bespeaks the clever artistic tastes of its gracious chatelaine. The ceiling, which is quite a triumph of the decorative art, is blue, and is representative of the firmament. There, as you sit in an easy chair and gaze upwards, you may see Ursa Major, and Orion and Cassiopeia, and the other

constellations, all radiant above while the moon in her four quarters fills the corners. The whole idea is daring, but it is wonderfully effective. Space does not permit of a mention of a tithe of the interesting contents of the drawing-room, which includes one of the last of the Bison rugs brought by Col. and Mrs Lewis from the extreme north of North America, and some fine Japanese cabinets. The entrance hall and staircase are also filled with interesting objects which beguile one to tarry and examine them at leisure. Here in a cabinet is a daintily fashioned tea service of either Copeland or Coalport china, beautifully painted by Mrs Lewis herself, while on the long shelf to the left hand of the staircase is a large collection of bowls, the accumulation of which has been a great delight to her. Some of them are representative of English potteries, including the products of Worcester and Lowestoft, while others are 'fine Nankeen and other oriental makes.

A Lewis of Van.

Prominent upon a side-table at the top of the staircase is a fine bust of Thomas Lewis, of Van, who died in 1736, and whose daughter married the third Earl of Plymouth. On the walls of the staircase, as in other parts of the house, are many water colour drawings, which are the work of Mrs Lewis. Many of them display a deal of real artistic feeling, but she herself modestly disclaims any merit and remarks that she values them because they bring back to her mind many charming scenes which she and Col. Lewis have visited in their long travels. Mrs Lewis has in her boudoir a very fine overmantel of Elizabethan date. Here also are bookshelves galore, filled to overflowing with well chosen and well read volumes, evidence of their owner's wide literary appreciations. One of the treasures of this cosy apartment is a charming little painting of primroses, the handiwork of Francois Millet, the son of the creator of "The Angelus" and "The Sower," and presented by him to Mrs Lewis.

In other corners of this delightful country home the sporting instincts of Col. Lewis are manifest in fine old prints of hunting scenes and other countryside pursuits or in pictures of favourite dogs of which Col. Lewis has a faithful and well cared for retinue always in attendance upon him. Greenmeadow, in a word, reflects in every nook and corner the tastes and instincts of its kindly and hospitable owners.

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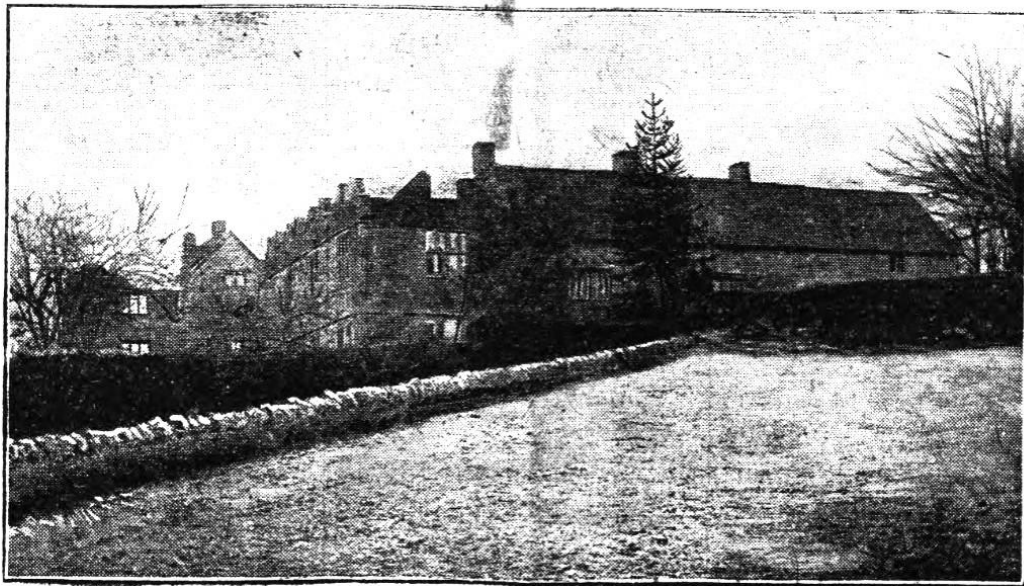
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Hanged at Cardiff for Sheep Stealing.

It was during the latter days of the Lewis occupation that one night some sheep were stolen from The Van. Suspicion at once fell upon a farmer named Bees George, who lived at Ty Bry Farm hard by. That night after dark the then owner of the Van sent his servants to the farm of Bees George, where they found some sheep skins bearing the mark of "Lewis Van." Proceedings were at once taken against Bees George, who was brought before the Caerphilly magistrates and committed for trial, found guilty, and hanged on the Heath, Cardiff.

The Van Dismantled.

Richard Lewis greatly neglected The Van and, according to Mr G. T. Clark, probably dismantled it. The probable explanation of this neglect of The Van was the fact that by this time its accommodation had become quite inadequate to the style in which the family then lived, for when in Glamorgan-shire they appear to have resided at St. Fagans. Richard Lewis was succeeded by his son, Thomas Lewis, who was a pronounced Jacobite, and is said to have been fined £10,000 to escape the results of a correspondence which was discovered between him and the young Pretender. This Thomas Lewis sat for a quarter of a century in the House of Commons, representing in turn Winchester, Hampshire, Southampton, New Sarum and Portsmouth. He died in 1736 leaving his daughter Elizabeth Lewis of Van the sole heiress, and she married Othor Windsor, the third Earl of Plymouth. She was the last of the Lewises of Van, but the younger branches of the family still survive, as we shall show in our next article.

Next Week—GREENMEADOW.



THE OLD PORCH.

A copy of the newspaper article..... The Cardiff Times 19th February 1910

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WELSH COUNTRY HOMES.

XVIII—Greenmeadow.

LORD BEACONSFIELD'S VISITS.

A Great Statesman's Romance.

The natural sequel to the article which we published last week dealing with the ancient home of the Lewis of Van family, is one describing their present residence at Greenmeadow where Col. and Mrs Henry Lewis worthily maintain the fine old traditions which characterised their ancestors in the past.

Greenmeadow nestles in a hollow of greenery on the eastern slope of the Taff Valley, some four miles north of Cardiff on the road to Pontypridd, and adjacent to the hamlet of Tongwynlais. Above it frowns the towers of Castell Coch, which occupies the site of the ancient citadel of Ivor Bach, from whom, through the Lewises of New House and of Llanishen and the Lewises of Van, Col. Lewis can claim direct descent.

An Old Religious House.

The present mansion, which faces nearly due south, occupies the site of an ancient religious house. Documentary records regarding the latter are very scanty, but it would appear to have been fortified, a very necessary precau-

mine host of the "Cow and Snuffers," either going or returning. After Mrs Lewis became Mrs Disraeli they used Greenmeadow as their country house until they bought Hnghenden, when Greenmeadow was handed over to Mrs Henry Lewis, the grandmother of the present owner, who, with her family, went to reside there.

An Ideal Marriage.

Mrs Wyndham Lewis was a very bright and vivacious woman. Mr Disraeli's first impression of her was that she was "a flirt and a rattle," and he adds, "she told me she like d silent, melancholy men. I answered that I had no doubt of it." But fuller knowledge of her character brought to light nobler traits of womanhood, and one likes to reflect upon the fact that the marriage so romantically initiated proved an ideally happy one.

Let us leave this charming association of Greenmeadow with the well-merited tribute of which the famous historian, James Anthony Froude, paid to Lady Beaconsfield: "She devoted herself to Disraeli with a completeness which left no room in her mind for any other thought. . . . She was his helpmate, his confidante, his adviser. From the first he felt the extent of his obligation to her, but the sense of obligation, if at first felt as a duty, became a bond of friendship perpetually renewed." Lord Beaconsfield used to visit at Greenmeadow during the lifetime of the late Mr Henry Lewis, and Col. Lewis remembers, as a boy, seeing the great statesman there, and talking with him.

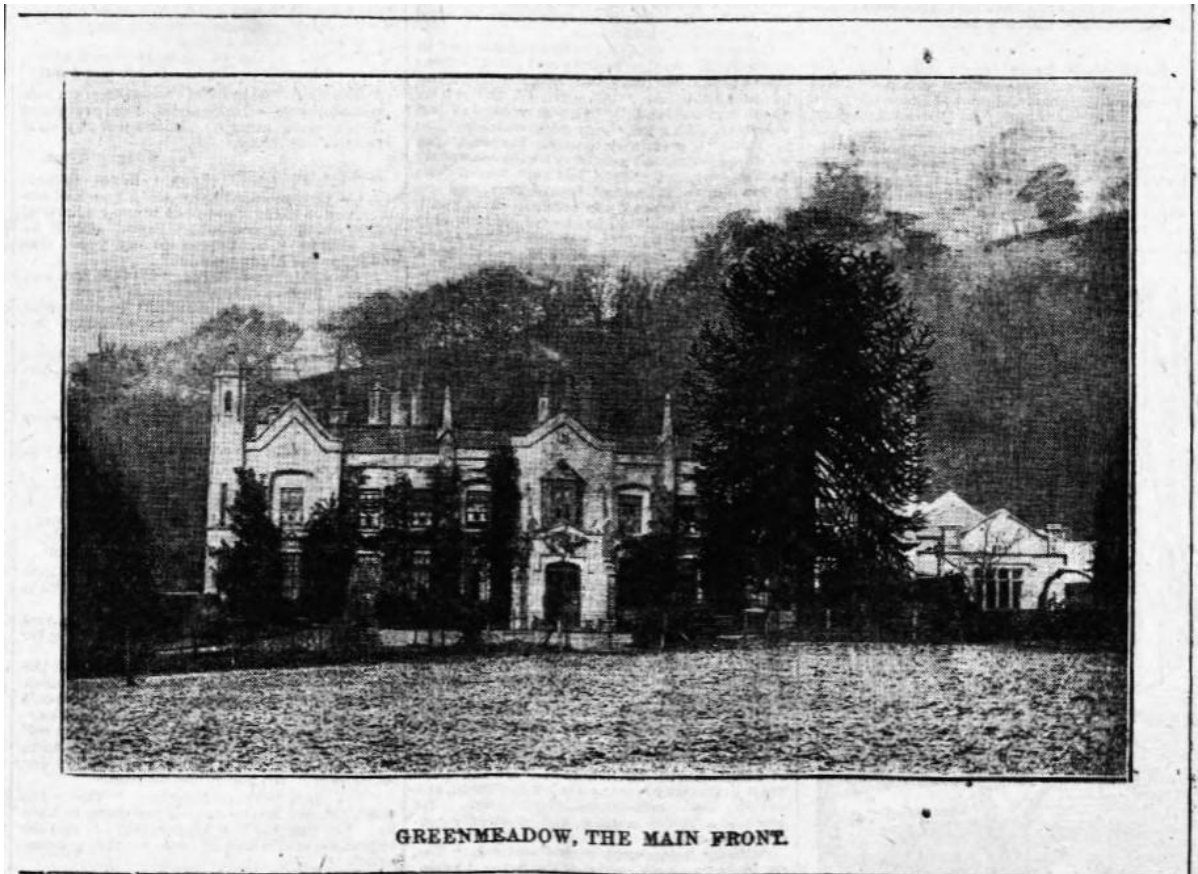
Greenmeadow To-day.

But the interests of Greenmeadow are not bounded by the associations of the past, for built on to the eastern end of the house. This apartment has many interests, not the least of which is Col. Lewis' collection of Toby jugs, of which there are about 250, and hardly any two of which are alike. These are arranged on a high shelf all the way round the wall, forming a sort of frieze, while round the fireplace recess there are several rows. They form the quaintest collection imaginable, and are in such endless variety that a very amusing hour or more may be spent in examining them.

They have many of them been obtained by Col. Lewis himself from Welsh cottages. On a wall at the end of the room is a painting of "Little Charlie," the first Welsh horse that won the Grand National. It was owned by the late Mr Henry Lewis, and was ridden by Fred Archer's father, and won the classic event after starting at the useful price of 10 to 1 against. There are some interesting specimens of ancient arms on the wall, including a Dervish sword, and another sword which was used at the battle of St. Fagan's. On a stand in the corner hangs a driving whip which once belonged to King George IV.

Quaint and Rare Curios.

There are several large cabinets in this room which are filled with rare curiosities, brought by Col. and Mrs Lewis from the ends of the earth. Notably among these are many treasures from the tombs of the Incas, wondrous examples of ancient Peruvian civilisation of ages past. Many of these are of silver. There are also many notable finds from African tombs on the Upper Nile and other districts. There are examples of the lures and penalties of South Sea Islanders, curiosities from China and Japan, and there is a cabinet of costly



GREENMEADOW, THE MAIN FRONT.

tion one would suppose, considering its position in the disputed area between Celt and Norman, which was the cockpit of so many skirmishes and raids centuries ago. In those days it had a wall all round it; in fact, this remained until well on into the last century, for Col. Lewis recalls the fact that his father, the late Mr Henry Lewis, told him that as a boy he remembered seeing the wall. The late Mr Henry Lewis was born in 1815, so that this outer defence must have stood till about 1830 if not later.

This wall was of extraordinary thickness, so much so, in fact, that it would have been possible to drive a coach round the top of a portion of it.

The Present Mansion.

When the present house was erected much of the old religious building was built into the new fabric, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the newer was built on to the older, for the existence of the massive walls of the old edifice would appear to have dictated in some measure the lines of the present house, which was erected about the beginning of the last century. At that time the present front, an illustration of which we append, was erected, but from time to time additions have been made, the latest of which includes a charming room which was built by the present owner on to the eastern end. Looking at the front one would be unable to form any idea of the age of portions of the house, but when you come, under the kindly guidance of Col. Lewis, to explore the long and narrow passages at the back of the interior you soon begin to realise that they are of a period far more remote than a century ago. The walls here are in parts fully three feet in

the present hospitable owners have enriched the interior of the house with spoils which they have accumulated in all parts of the world: every nook and corner contains objects of beauty and interest which speak of delightful holidays spent in districts far remote from the tracts of the ordinary wayfarer. We are indebted to Col. and Mrs Henry Lewis for a most enjoyable morning spent at Greenmeadow recently, which enabled us to obtain many of the facts set forth in this article. The house, though not as country mansions go a very large one, possesses what, after all, is much more, namely the virtue of comfort. When the newer portions were added, a century back, well proportioned rooms were built at the front, and here, to the right and left respectively of the pretty entrance hall, are the dining-room and the drawing-room. Notable features of the dining-room are a fine carved oak mantelpiece and sideboard, the latter of which is covered with old silver plate, some of which has a story to relate.

"Kati Coch" Hung at the Heath.

Among the silver which adorns the sideboard is an old whistling jug, so called because at the bottom of the handle is a whistle, the idea of the maker being, no doubt, that when the person, quaffing his ale from the jug, had emptied it, he should whistle for more! A century ago this jug was in the possession of Madame Price, of The Park, at Capel Llanhilttern, and she had in her service a maid named "Kati Coch" or Katie of the red hair. A gipsy made love to Katie, and the scamp succeeded in inducing her to assist him in stealing some of the silver from the house, among the stolen property being this jug. The

Nantgarw china, including one dainty teacup which was sent out from the pottery, which, of course, was only two or three miles distant, without being painted.

In the Drawing-room.

The drawing-room at Greenmeadow, like so many other parts of the house, bespeaks the clever artistic tastes of its gracious chatelaine. The ceiling, which is quite a triumph of the decorative art, is blue, and is representative of the firmament. There, as you sit in an easy chair and gaze upwards, you may see Ursa Major, and Orion and Cassiopeia, and the other constellations, all radiant above you, while the moon in her four quarters fills the corners. The whole idea is daring, but it is wonderfully effective. Space does not permit of a mention of a title of the interesting contents of the drawing-room, which includes one of the last of the Bison rugs brought by Col. and Mrs Lewis from the extreme north of North America, and some fine Japanese cabinets. The entrance hall and staircase are also filled with interesting objects which beguile one to tarry and examine them at leisure. Here in a cabinet is a daintily fashioned tea service of either Copeland or Coalport china, beautifully painted by Mrs Lewis herself, while on the long shelf to the left hand of the staircase is a large collection of bowls, the accumulation of which has been a great delight to her. Some of them are representative of English potteries, including the products of Worcester and Lowestoft, while others are fine Nankoen and other oriental makes.

A Lewis of Van.

Prominent upon a side-table at the top of



THE DINING-ROOM WITH CARVED OVERMANTEL AND SIDEBOARD.

THE DINING-ROOM WITH CARVED OVERMANTEL AND SIDEBOARD.

thickness, and the general arrangement with its endless corners and staircases is quite in harmony with the theory that its architect was one of mediæval ideas.

Lord Beaconsfield and Greenmeadow.

Before describing the interior of the house, reference must be made in passing to the charming romance which has been woven about Greenmeadow by its associations with the Earl of Beaconsfield. When the great statesman published his novel "Sybil" he dedicated it to one whose noble spirit and gentle nature ever prompted her to sympathise with the suffering. To one whose sweet voice has often encouraged, and whose taste and judgment have ever guided its pages, the most severe of critics, but a perfect wife. That was the beautiful tribute of Benjamin Disraeli himself to the lady who, before he married her, was Mrs Wyndham Lewis. Mr Disraeli was once private secretary to Mr Lewis, and it was as the result of his influence and support that the future Prime Minister, then a young and unknown man, first entered Parliament for Maidstone. On the death of her first husband Mrs Wyndham Lewis resided at Greenmeadow, and it was here that Mr Disraeli, during the scant and hard-earned leisure that his political and literary labours left him, used to come and pay his addresses to her. Mr Disraeli on these occasions used to stay at Llandaff, whence he would ride or walk across, stopping oftentimes to chat with

the gipsy, the instigator of the crime, got away, but poor Katie paid the penalty on the gallows at The Heath. She was the last woman who was hung there.

Tale of an Eye-Witness.

In connection with the hanging of "Kati Coch," Col. Henry Lewis relates an interesting story. He recalls the fact that years ago an old man named Abraham Williams told him that he was an eye-witness of that execution. Williams, who when he related the story was a great age, said that he himself saw Katie being driven in a cart to the gallows, and that she was sitting on her own coffin, and her red hair was hanging over her neck and shoulders. Few people in Cardiff to-day know the exact site of the old gallows on The Heath. They were, says Col. Lewis, situated close to the roadway which leads from Allensbank-road to the house and on the present Heath estate. They occupied a site which may still be identified, as there is a little tump there and a clump of trees.

Among many interesting pictures on the dining-room walls is an authentic portrait of Prince Charlie, one of those which Prince Charlie himself gave to his chief supporters, and which through the Duke of Orkney came subsequently into the possession of Mrs Lewis.

A Collection of Quaint Jugs.

One of the prettiest rooms in the house is that which has within the past few years been

the staircase is a fine bust of Thomas Lewis, of Van, who died in 1736, and whose daughter married the third Earl of Plymouth. On the walls of the staircase, as in other parts of the house, are many water colour drawings which are the work of Mrs Lewis. Many of them display a deal of real artistic feeling, but she herself modestly disclaims any merit and remarks that she values them because they bring back to her mind many charming scenes which she and Col. Lewis have visited in their long travels. Mrs Lewis has in her boudoir a very fine overmantel of Elizabethan date. Here also are bookshelves galore, filled to overflowing with well-chosen and well-read volumes, evidence of their owner's wide literary appreciations. One of the treasures of this cosy apartment is a charming little painting of primroses, the handiwork of Francois Millet, the son of the creator of "The Angelus" and "The Sower," and presented by him to Mrs Lewis.

In other corners of this delightful country home the sporting instincts of Col. Lewis are manifest in fine old prints of hunting scenes and other countryside pursuits or in pictures of favourite dogs of which Col. Lewis has a faithful and well-cared for retinue; always in attendance upon him. Greenmeadow, in a word, reflects in every nook and corner the tastes and instincts of its kindly and hospitable owners.

Next week—DYNEVOR CASTLE.