

THE MILLFIELD AND THE PEOPLE'S PARK

A LONG FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF A LEISURE AND
SPORTING VENUE IN OLD PONTYPRIDD

Millfield Pontypridd



THE MILLFIELD
AND THE PEOPLE'S PARK

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**MILLFIELD
AND THE PEOPLE'S PARK**

BY

GARETH HARRIS

Introduction

The Millfield, sometimes called the People's Park, was a small patch of land close to the center of Pontypridd that has largely been forgotten. At its height in the early 1890s it became the playground of the mining community of the town and Rhondda Valleys. With the Taff Vale Railway viaduct towards its northern end, it was the home to many gypsy caravans and some of its travelling members were a real nuisance to the local police. The field later became the home of the Pontypridd Rugby Football Club for three seasons and boxing booths would see the likes of Jimmy Wilde appear there. Altogether this book shows what society was like in those days when Pontypridd was the coal capital of South Wales.

MILLFIELD OR THE PEOPLE'S PARK

(The first year)

In 1995 a road bypass was built across a field near the railway viaduct at Pontypridd leading to the Rhondda that brought to an end the long story of the Millfield or People's Park as it was once known. And in 2015 an application for a retail business (Lidl) at the former council depot at Millfield, Pontypridd, and the building of a supermarket brought an end the past glory days of this small piece of land near the town centre.

The mill that once stood on this field was run by John Williams in the 1860s and by his son David until the end of the century and was known as the Upper Mill. It was situated just below Mill Street School and the mill-race extended from a weir on the Rhondda River close to the Merlin Bridge to serve the mill. The mill-stream ran out under the seven arch railway viaduct before it discharged in the river alongside the Thomas Jenkins tannery, occupied later by Humphries Garages.

With the expansion of the Taff Vale Railway up towards the Rhondda Valley in February 1861 a viaduct was built just outside Pontypridd towards Pwllgwaun. It was the building of this viaduct, that lay the foundations for the People's Park, for the land on which it had been built, known locally as the Mill Field, covered a much larger area than was actually needed by the railway and a wayleave* must have allowed them to build a viaduct, though the field itself still belonged to the landowner.

* Wayleave – A right of way granted by a land owner, generally in exchange for payment and typically as to the erection of telegraph wires or laying of pipes (or a viaduct in this case). Companies must have wayleaves for work they want to carry out on private land

For decades the land was practically ignored apart from the occasion grazing animal belonging the local population, and occasionally 'travellers' would park their caravans there. However, it appears that (rugby) football was being played at the Mill Field at an early date. The Western Mail of 14th November 1887 reported:

Serious accident on Pontypridd football field.

'On Saturday afternoon, during a match between the Pontypridd junior club and the Treforest Crusaders at the Mill Street field, Pontypridd, one of the visitors' forwards Mr. John Rees, Ash Cottage, Rhydyfelin, happened to come into violent contact with one of the opposing team, and he fell heavily to the ground, and when picked up he was found to have sustained a compound fracture of the leg. Medical assistance was at once obtained, and Rees's injuries were attended to, and he was taken home. Play was at once discontinued. An unfortunate fact connects itself to the occurrence. Rees was a pupil at the Pontypridd Grammar School, and intended

to sit in for a Civil Service examination next month. Owing to the accident he is entirely prevented from entering the Civil Service, as he will be beyond the age limit before the next examination. So the Mill Field was already being used for 'junior' games, the Pontypridd first XV playing at the Trallwn or Ynysangharad fields at this time.

1889

The Pontypridd Chronicle of 26 April 1889 carried this small report: This celebrated hippodrome (circus) will pay a visit to the Millfield, Pontypridd, and the Rhondda Valley shortly. Being the largest show in the world, and the only establishment that gives its performance in three rings, the collection of race and field sport, elephants, thoroughbred horses and ponies, real jockeys, llamas, camels, kangaroos, dromedaries, buffaloes, and animals of every conceivable kind, is simply prodigious, and should be visited by all—old and young, rich and poor alike, there will also be a grand spectacular street parade every day. Sanger's world famed circus will visit Pontypridd on Thursday, 9 May. The visit was not reported.

The Maritime Rugby team

In 1888 the newly formed Maritime Colliery (rugby) Football Club were looking for a ground to play on. Eventually they secured the Millfield, and the club spent a small amount of money levelling the ground, erecting fencing and constructing an enclosure. This initial venture at the ground came to premature end after only three months as the club were given a better field on the Maesycoed Farm. Here are some of the Maritime games played on the Mill Field:

Season 1888-89

As a new team Maritime would have to build up their fixture list and initially have to play the lesser teams in the district until with good results and a growing reputation they could play the more established town teams of south Wales. The club, later, however, had sufficient players to run a second and junior team as well.

Pontypridd Juniors v Maritime Seconds

December 1st 1888

This match was played at the Mill Field, Pontypridd, on Saturday, in the presence of a goodly number of spectators. The ground was in a wet condition, notwithstanding which the play on both sides was good, that of the juniors being particularly creditable. A. Rowland, G. Thomas F. T. Williams, A. Morgan, and G. Nicholas did well for the juniors; and W. Hague, N. Fletcher, A. Horwood, and P. Devereaux were noticeable for their energy on behalf of the "heroes of the black

THE MILLFIELD

PONTYPRIDD,

THURSDAY, MAY 9th, 1889.

'John Sanger and Son's

ROYAL ROMAN HIPPODROME & NORTH AMERICAN EXHIBITION. The Largest Show in the Entire World, and the only Establishment that give their Performance in THREE RINGS, all going at the same time, Two Rings of 50 feet diameter, and a Canvas enclosed RACE TRACK, 50 feet wide and nearly half a mile in circumference, EVERY KIND OF RACE AND FIELD SPORT, with English Thoroughbred Horses and Real Jockeys, WESTERN WILD AND PRAIRIE LIFE, with genuine Mexican Rangers, and Texas Cowboys. The Herd of Ten Huge PERFORMING ELEPHANTS of every known and conceivable species, the BAND of MUSICAL ELEPHANTS, the pugilistic Boxing Elephant, THE CLOWN ELEPHANT, THE MILITARY DRILL ELEPHANTS. THE GRAND SPECTACULAR STREET PARADE. The Greatest and most inspiring Pageant ever witnessed. The STREETS LITERALLY ABLAZE with Massive Chariots and COSTLY MONUMENTAL PILES of BURNISHED GOLD. Three Hundred Horses and Ponies of every kind and description. Caravan of Camels & Dromedaries, Teams of Llamas, Emus and Ostriches, Kangaroos, Sacred Cattle Yaks, Nyl Ghazs, Chacma Baboons, Buffaloes, God Horses, and a quantity of other Curious and Rare Animals.

THE PROCESSION TAKES PLACE DAILY AT ONE O'CLOCK.

Seats may be secured on arrival of the Company at Ticket Office, Encampment Ground. Liberal arrangements made with Schools. An inspection of the Stud and Animals is respectfully invited.

The prices of admission are—Grand Tier (carpeted), 3s; Boxes (carpeted): 2s; Second Class, 1s; Third class, 6d. Children half-price to all parts except Gallery.—Two Performances each day at 2.30 and 7.30.

Messrs Sanger and Son's will visit the following towns in the Rhondda Valley:—

PORTH, near the Rheola Inn, Thursday, May 2nd.

TREHERBERT, The Sports Field, Friday, May 3rd.

TREORKY, the Fair Field, Saturday, May 4th.

YSTRAD, The Foundry Field, Monday, May 6th.

PANDY, The Partridge Field, Tuesday, May 7th.

FERNDALE, The Cricket Field, Wednesday, May 8th.

A newspaper advertisement for what today we would call a circus at the Millfield April and May 1889. However no report of the event was published.

diamond." The game resulted in a win for the juniors by a goal, try, a disputed try, and a minor to a minor.

The following constituted the respective teams: Pontypridd Juniors:- Back, G. Nicholas three-quarter backs, A. Rowland (Capt.), G. Thomas, J. Wilkins, and D. Reynolds; half-backs, A. Morgan, and G. Williams. Forwards, E. Hopkins, L. Jenkins, A. Edwards, M. Gale, T. Richards, W. Hunt. D. Hunt and G. James.

Maritime - Back, N. Fletcher; three-quarter backs, R. Ellis, J. W. Siberry, and A. Horwood (Capt.); half-backs, W. Hague and A. Ware; forwards, P. Devereaux, E. Griffiths, W. Thomas, T. Spencer, J. Connelly. J. Devereaux, G. Thomas, W. Watkins, and W. Nooks. Umpires, Messrs J. Humphreys, and H. Morgan; Referee, B. Goodman.

On Saturday 14 December 1889 the Maritime reserves played Ferndale at the Mill field and the game resulted in a draw, the score being a goal and 2 tries each. The Nicholas did well for the juniors; and W. Hague, N. Fletcher, A. Horwood, and P. Devereaux were noticeable for their energy on behalf of the "heroes of the black diamond." The game resulted in a win for the juniors by a goal, try, a disputed try, and a minor to a minor. Tries for the home team were scored by G. Welsh, H. Brunsdon and A. Ware. G. Welsh placed the goal from a difficult position.

The Maritime team's short stay at the Millfield ended when they played their first game at their new ground on the Maesycod farm on 21st February 1889.

A new venture

Local junior (rugby) Football teams continued to play on the Millfield until local businessmen were inspired that the Millfield could be used for other events and the result was that sports were tried on a trial basis in the summer of 1890. However, there was already competition in the district. From 1880 at the Treforest Running Ground (later the fields of the Girls Grammar School and now the South Wales University grounds at the Glyntaff Campus) were holding occasional running events behind the Collier's Arms, while close by, the ground, known at the time as Robert's Field, which would eventually become Taff Vale Park, was in 1890 being developed by the Pontypridd (rugby) Football Club. But the main rival would be the Ynysangharad fields, which were occasionally used for various events by the kind permission of Mr. Gordon Lenox of the chainworks. However, many believed that 'sports' in the town should not have to prevail upon Mr. Lenox all the time and in June 1890 an unnamed 'committee' ventured to hold their own athletic meetings at the Mill Field. Initially, the competitors would be local sportsmen competing for small prizes.

UNDER MOST DISTINGUISHED
PATRONAGE;

THE
PONTYPRIDD ATHLETIC SPORTS

Will be held at

The Mill Field.

ON MONDAY (MINES' HOLIDAY), JULY 7, 1890.

In conjunction with the Sports, the Renowned
Band of Her Majesty's

Coldstream Guards,

(By kind permission of the Colonel Commanding)
will give a Grand

OPEN AIR CONCERT,

Conductor - Mr. Cadwaladr Thomas.

THE CYPARTHFA BAND (By kind permission
of Messrs. Crawshay Brothers) will also be in
attendance. Conductor, Mr G. F. Livsey.

FOR EVENTS SEE BILLS.

In the evening the Coldstream Guards' Band
will give a Grand Military Concert at the Market
Hall.

Admission to the field, 6d. Enclosure, 1s. extra.
Gates open at 11.30, Sports to commence punctu-
ally at 12.30. Refreshments of all kinds will be
provided. No admittance to the field on Sunday.

Admission to the Market Hall at 7.30 p.m., to
commence at 8 sharp. Reserved Seats (limited),
5s. Front do., 3s. Second do., 2s. Third do.,
(limited), 1s.

Plan of the Hall may be seen at Messrs Thomp-
son and Shackell, also at Messrs Leath and Sons,
both of Pontypridd.

For further particulars apply to the Hon. Sec.,
E VAN P. THOMAS, Sportsman Inn, Pontypridd

**An early advertisement for athletics at the
Millfield, July 7 1890**



A switchback railway of the period that may have looked like the one erected at the Millfield.

Pontypridd Athletic Sports

(Pontypridd Chronicle 13th June 1890)

It will be seen from an advertisement in another column that these sports will come off in the Mill Field next Mabon's Day, July 7th. The sports themselves will be sure to draw a large attendance, but in addition to these, lovers of instrumental music will certainly not lose the opportunity of enjoying such a treat as the Band of the Coldstream Guards is certain to afford, to say nothing of the excellent Cyfarthfa Band, which will also be in attendance. In the evening the Coldstream Guards' Band will give a Grand Military Concert.

Pontypridd Athletic Sports

(Pontypridd Chronicle 11th July 1890)

On Monday (7th) athletic sports and bicycle races were held in the Mill Field, but owing to the wretched state of the weather the attendance was not very large. The judges were Mr. Hudson and Mr. Jenkins; starter, Mr. Herdson; stewards, Messrs Parry Thomas and Philip R. James, and secretary, Mr. E. P. Thomas. A covered bandstand had been erected on the ground, and during the progress of the sports it was occupied by the celebrated Cyfarthfa band (under the leadership of Mr. G. F. Lindsey) which acquitted itself in a manner that won general encomiums.

Shortly after 4 o'clock the band of the Coldstream Guards arrived and made their way up to the field, where they gave several musical selections to the delight of the crowd who had ventured out to hear them. One of the items on the programme was "Reminiscences of Wales," arranged by Mr. Fred Godfrey, and introducing Welsh National songs and dances. This received a furore of applause. The events passed off as follows: - (Handicap in brackets): -

120 yards open handicap, open to members of the Pontypridd Wanderers Football Club, only to be run in football costume. First heat, 1 A. Rowlands (scratch), 2. A. Northcott (5 yards); 2nd heat, 1. J. Gamblin (scratch) 2. W. J. Davies (scratch). Final - 1 W. J. Davies; 2 A. Rowlands; 3. J. Gamblin.

120 yards open handicap, 1st prize, £3; 2nd do., £1; 3rd do., 10s. First heat, A. E. Morgan, Pontypridd (141 yards); second heat, Tom Harry, Pontypridd; third heat, Billy Atkins, Llwynypia (9 yards); fourth heat, J. Richards, Pontypridd (12 yards) final: - A. E. Morgan; 2. J. Richards; 3. Billy Atkins.

1½miles bicycle race, confined to members of the Pontypridd Wanderers' Cycle Club. 1st prize, Silver Cup; 2nd do., Silver Medal; both given by Mr. D. Parry Thomas; 3rd prize given by Messrs Morris Bros. 1. W. J. Davies, Pontypridd (40 yards); 2. Edward Sheen, Pontypridd (scratch); 3rd, Richard Davies, Pontypridd (50 yards).

Three mile open handicap bicycle race. 1st prize, £3; 2nd do., £1; 3rd do., 10s. 1. Evan Jones, Coedpenmaen (180); 2. Lewis Williams, Pontypridd (180); 3. Alfred Osborne, Pontypridd, (155).

440 yards open handicap. 1st prize, £3; 2nd do., £1; 3rd do., 10s. First heat, 1. A. E. Morgan, Pontypridd (30 yards); 2. James Davies, Merthyr (15 yards); Second heat, 1. Tom Harry, Pontypridd, (19 yards); 2. J. Richards, Pontypridd (30 yards); Third heat, 1. J. Hackett, Pontypridd (28 yards); 2. David Thomas, Rhydyfelen (5 yards). Final, 1. D. Thomas; 2. A. E. Morgan, 3. J. Hackett.

1½ miles bicycle race. (Open to all Military Cyclists in uniform only). 1st prize, Gold Medal, value £3 3s.; 2nd do., Gold Medal, value £2 2s.; 3rd do., Silver Medal, value £1 1s.; given by Mr P. R. James. **First heat:** Private A. W. Mathews, Cardiff (75 yards); **second heat,** Private L. Lougher, Cardiff (scratch); third, Sergeant W. Marks, Cardiff (95 yards); fourth heat, Private Augustus Rowlands, Pontypridd (60 yards).

Final - 1. Private Lougher, Cardiff; 2. Private Augustus Rowland; 3. Private A. W. Mathews, Cardiff. Much praise is due to the committee for the admirable manner in which the arrangements were carried out.

A new era for the Mill Field

The success of the above events must have inspired other local businessmen that perhaps something could be made of the Mill Field after all and soon preparations were underway to make it the centre of attraction in Pontypridd. After the previous events in 1890, Mr. Philip R. James and Mr. C. W. Poole (Welsh Harp Hotel), two men involved in the licensing, food and catering industries in the town, took out a lease with the Taff Vale Railway Company for the land and they soon started to fence off their newly gained property.

A major problem of the position of what was initially just a field was that it was easily overlooked by the railway embankment from across the river. In summer, it was not so much of a problem as leaves from the trees on the riverbank stopped anyone having a free view, but after autumn, and the fall of leaves, there was indeed a very good view. Messrs James and Poole had thought about this, however, with major events being stages near the viaduct, away from the riverbank, and when events unavoidably had to go near the riverbank, brattice cloth shields were erected to mask the area. And soon boxing made an appearance at the People's Park.

* Mabon's Day was named after William Abraham M. P. who had pushed for the miners to have an unpaid holiday of a single day on the first Monday of each month. This short holiday he won for them in 1888, but unfortunately Mabon's Day also speedily developed a reputation for being a day of hard drinking, usually followed by hard scrapping, both of which had become firmly established as the chief leisure time activities of the miners.

Tom James v Jack Raymond

Boxing at the People's Park in July 1890

This fight took place at the People's Park, which had started to emerge as an increasingly popular venue for glove fighting. The match caused a great deal of excitement in the town, with the police gradually beginning to show a great tolerance towards local venues being used for the purpose of boxing. The crowd was amongst the largest seen, being somewhere in the region of 1,500 strong. Both men were well known as fighting men in the town, although neither had done much to mark themselves out from the herd.

Raymond had first come to the attention of the local fight crowd after an early and quite effortless victory over Jack Doad at Pontypridd's Victoria Hall. Raymond appeared to have taken his training for the match with Tom James lightly, choosing to stay at Pontypridd to do the training under the eye of local fighter and trainer 'Bungey' Hill. Training hadn't gone exactly as wished under Bungey as Raymond seemed quite fleshy, carrying at least half a stone of flab. There was a formidable

crew in Raymond's corner, consisting of William Samuels, a promising Cardiff lad named Patsy Perkins who had recently returned to Wales from London, and Pontypridd fighter Tom Davies. Tom James appeared to have recovered particularly well from his defeat at the hands of Ynyshir mountain fighter Sam Butcher, and a hard training camp under the watchful eye of trainer Oliver Hornett at Weston-Super Mare had ensured that the Aberaman man was trained to a hair and as fit as a fiddle. His corner was well stocked with Shoni Engineer, trainer Oliver Hornett and his once great rival, Sam Butcher assisting him.

Raymond's beefiness did not seem to put the local punters off betting on their man, and Raymond emerged as the favourite to take the honours, with odds of 2 to 1 being offered on his victory. At the start of the first round, James went tearing into the fray, throwing a fast left hand that caught the Pontypriddian flush on the jaw. Raymond lashed out but his punch went astray. In a blink the fight went to close range and with a fast exchange of punches ended in a huge right hand from Raymond that was skilfully avoided by James, who stopped Raymond's assault dead with a matching pair of fierce slashing right hands that halted his antagonist in his tracks. Although boxing with reckless abandon, it was clear that James was forcing his way to a definite points lead, continuing to dodge Raymond's blows while throwing near deadly shots at Raymond's jaw before switching to the body. By the end of the round, Raymond had been twice forced onto the ropes and it looked as though Tom James would have the match entirely his own way.

At the start of the second, Raymond appeared particularly distressed and it seemed as if the Pontypridd man would struggle to stay on his feet for very much longer. Acting on the advice of Sam Butcher and Shoni Engineer, Tom James hustled his opponent towards the ropes, landing stinging lefts and rights en route. Raymond in his exhaustion dropped his hands, and before he knew where he was, James was punching him in the face. The Pontypriddian took fright, but the beating that he had endured had taken a mighty toll. Following him about the ring, it took nothing more than the work of a second and one smashing straight punch to lay Jack Raymond flat out on the canvas, and the match was given to Tom James. It was the kind of victory that Tom James needed to feel like he was back on top.

Dai St. John v Tom James
People's Park July 1890

A rematch between Dai St. John, heavyweight champion of Wales and Tom James (Aberaman) took place at the People's Park in July 1890. As Tom James stood six foot high and usually weighed about 13 stone and was roughly the same age as St. John, he was as good an opponent as was likely to be found to have half a chance of standing up against the Resolven giant, despite being defeated by St. John at the start of the year. For this reason the prospect of another fight between these two had 'battle of the giants' written all over it, and was eagerly awaited by local fight

fans. Dai was always nearer fifteen stone than fourteen and appeared to almost reach into the clouds, being six foot 3 inches tall and people would stop in the street and gaze in wonder at his size, as most Welshmen at this time were short in stature.

The locals at Pontypridd had taken the big man from Resolven to their hearts. With such a large local following, the match was a guaranteed earner. There was some disappointment that no indoor venue had been secured for the match, although the Park did have the advantage that vast numbers of spectators could be accommodated with greater ease. Tom James had taken matters a great deal more seriously than he had in their previous encounter, and both men appeared to be in perfect condition. Dai had trained under the watchful eyes of Sam Butcher. Morgan Crowther had also offered his expertise, helping Dai prepare at the seaside town of Porthcawl. The decision to use Crowther, the past master of endurance fighting, paid off handsomely. The Resolven man weighed in at a chiselled 14 stones. Tom James was also prepared for a hard fight having relocated to Weston-Super-Mare for his training and had put his faith in the well known trainer Oliver Hornett and was in better shape than ever before, being 13 stone and in hard condition.

Dai sprung into action, leading off with his left as he attempted to stamp his authority on the fight from the opening round. Tom James refused to be drawn and stopped Dai's left and sent in a rib bender that checked the giant's pace. Dai quickly discovered that this was not the Tom James of old. As the end of the round approached, Dai took the fight to his game opponent, using his superior strength and power to drive the Aberaman man about the ring, landing a number of shots on the face and body, enabling him to take the first round. If Dai had the upper hand, it didn't last for long. The second round saw James renew his assault. His superior short arm work paid off, and he landed a crashing right cross that detonated of the point of Dai's jaw. The giant staggered across the ring, and for a few moments appeared dangerously close to collapse. Tom James was slow to seize the extraordinary opportunity that had been placed before him. Against all odds St. John somehow managed to recover well enough to put up a cautious defence and last out a round that had looked for a moment as if it could well be his last.

By the third round, the physical exertion of the fight had taken its toll, with both men having been greatly weakened by their efforts. Exchanges were wild, and Tom James was the first to get home a punch of any real merit, landing heavily on Dai St. John's mouth. Dai appeared groggy and out of sorts throughout the round although James' inexperience went against him and he failed to capitalize on the situation. The great strength of the giant was slowly beginning to ebb, and as time went on it looked as though James would outwork the larger man. James landed two hard punches on the neck in the fourth round before getting clean away from the giant, and ended the round visibly livelier than his rival.

The Resolven giant refused to give in, and in the fifth round he brought all his terrifying power into play, forcing the fight. Dai bulldozed his opponent and tried to open up the Aberaman man with his great left hand. In the middle of the round he finally saw his opening, and landed an uppercut that lifted Tom James clear off his feet, and sent him crashing back into a heap in the corner of the ring. James valiantly scrambled to his feet, but in an instant, St. John set about him with renewed vigour with both hands and forced his opponent across the ring. Finally James was sent into the ropes and the round ended with Dai raining punches down on his rapidly buckling adversary.

The fight ended in the sixth round after Dai knocked James deep into a corner. Trapped, half beaten and confused, there was no way to avoid the punches that kept coming and before long James was smashed into submission by Dai St. John.

Note: It is believed that these fights, with an estimate crowd of 1,500 spectators, must have been held in the open air. But Jack Scarrott, who was living in a caravan at Millfield, is recorded as having a 'Boxing Booth' there at this time. Some time in 1890 Jack had made up his mind to run his own booth. He took a delivery of timber and canvas, rolled up his sleeves, and built his first booth at the Millfield. It was probably a fairly humble affair, and its exact location has been lost to time and as perhaps more substantial buildings were later built, but its location is still a mystery.

Forthcoming sports at Pontypridd
(South Wales Daily News 29th July 1890)

The Brass Band and Instrumental Solo competitions and the athletic meeting, to be held at the Mill Field, Pontypridd, next Bank Holiday (August 4th) promises to be one of the most successful events of the kind held in the district. With an energetic secretary and strong working committee, the arrangements are in a forward state. It is proposed to make the event an annual one, as it cannot fail to attract a large number of people. The entries for the present occasion are coming in satisfactorily, but intending competitors are reminded that the entries close on Thursday morning, July 31st. The committee has been fortunate to secure the services of Mr. George Riseley, of Bristol, who will adjudicate on the musical competitions. The secretary, Mr. E. P. Thomas, Sportsman Inn, Pontypridd, is the secretary to the undertaking, which, it is to be hoped, will be crowned with complete success.

Athletic Sports and Brass Band contest at Pontypridd
(Pontypridd Chronicle August 8th 1890)

On August Bank Holiday Athletic Sports and an interesting band contest were the chief attractions at Pontypridd. The sports were held in the Mill Field, and the day being fine, there was a large attendance. Everything passed off without a hitch, and

we must congratulate the committee upon the perfection of the arrangements. The stewards were Mr. Thomas Davies (chairman of committee), Mr. D Parry Thomas, Mr. P. R. James, Mr. W. Watkins, and Mr. E. W. Rees. Mr. C. H. Herdson made an excellent starter, while Mr. Geo. Beith, Mr. A. O. Evans, and Sergt. E. Llewellyn acted as judges, and gave general satisfaction. The secretary was Mr. E. P. Thomas, who was most energetic and obliging. The events were as follows —

Bicycle Race, One Mile Novice (Handicap). First prize, value £2 (given by Messrs Morris Bros.), second, value £1. 1. J. Haynes, Cilfynydd (40 yds) 2, W. J. Davies, Pontypridd (scratch).

120 Yards Boys' Race, under 16 years of age. Handicapped on the ground. First prize £1, 2nd 10s, 3rd 5s. 1, Rees Davies, Pontypridd 2. W. Rowlands, Pontypridd; 3, Herbert Vranth, Hopkinstown.

440 Yards Open Handicap. First prize £3, second £1. Third 10s. 1, James Hockett, Pontypridd (14yds) 2. Geo. Gould, Pontypridd (10yds); 3. Tom Harry, Pontypridd (5yds).

Cricket Bowling (confined to Pontypridd District). Each competitor throwing three times. First prize cricket bat, second cricket ball. 1, Hemsworth 2 Hill.

Bicycle Race 1½ miles (Handicap). First prize value £3, second value 30s, third value 10s. 1, W. J. Davies, Pontypridd (100yds) 2, Edward Sheen. Pontypridd (100yds); 3, Lewis Lougher, Llandaff (scratch).

Cornet solo, Vincent J. Howe, Ferndale. **Euphonium solo,** H. Prothero (Cyfarthfa Band), Merthyr. **Trombone solo** H. Parson (Cyfarthfa Band), Merthyr.

200 yards handicap (confined to persons living within a radius of 4 miles of the town of Pontypridd. 1st prize, Cup, value £2 2s. (Given by Mr. F. Jenkins, Pork Butcher, Pontypridd); 2nd., value 10s. 6d. 1, George Green, Porth (5 yards); 2, William Howell, Pontypridd (10 yards).

Football Contest; the best drop kick. T. Nicholas, Pontypridd. **Best place kick** - Gay, Pontypridd.

120 yards open handicap.—1, W. Hopkins, Caerphilly (14 yards): 2, George Green, Porth (14 yard); 3, Charles Peacott, Pontypridd (16½ yards).

Bicycle race, 3 miles (handicap), 1st prize, value £4; 2nd, value £2; 3rd, value £1. 1, Edward Sheen, Pontypridd (250 yards) 2, W. J. Davies, Pontypridd (250 yards); 3, Lewis Lougher, Cardiff, (scratch). **One mile open handicap.** 1st prize, £5; 2nd,

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provided. No admittance to the field on Sunday.

Admission to the Market Hall at 7.30 p.m., to
commence at 8 sharp. Reserved Seats (limited),
5s. Front do., 3s. Second do., 2s. Third do.,
(limited), 1s.

Plan of the Hall may be seen at Messrs Thomp-
son and Shackell, also at Messrs Heath and Sons,
both of Pontypridd

For further particulars apply to the Hon. Sec.,
EVAN P. THOMAS, Sportsman Inn, Pontypridd

30/- 3rd, 10/- 1, Morgan Perkins, Porth (scratch); George Gould, Pontypridd (20 yards); James Hackett, Pontypridd (40 yards).

Tug of War, 10 aside, 1st prize, £1 1s.; 2nd, 10/6. 1. Pontypridd Volunteers; 2nd. Town Team.

The chief event of the day was the Brass Band Contest, and the competition was followed with great interest. Prizes of £17 17s, £6 6s, and £3 3s respectively were offered to the brass bands which would best render the chorus of – ‘We never will bow down’ (Bandel). Arranged by J. Wood. Published by Metcalf & Son,

Wolverhampton. Mr. George Riseley, Bristol, adjudicated, and awarded the first prize to the Ferndale Band, conducted by Mr. W. R. Stowe; the second to the Cymmer Brass Band, conducted by Mr. R. Martyn and the third to the Aberaman Brass Band, conducted by Mr. James Prestwood.

Enthusiastic gathering

An open-air demonstration, organised by men (railwaymen) on strike, was held on Tuesday evening, August 12th 1890, on the Mill Field, Pontypridd, and attended by many thousands of people. The men met about four o'clock at the Coffee Tavern, marching three abreast along the principal thoroughfares to the rendezvous.

The procession, which was headed by the Pontypridd brass band, included representatives of all trades and industries in the district, and all along the route the greatest enthusiasm was shown, the townspeople in their thousands turning out to mark their sympathy with the strikers.

The People's Park, Pontypridd (South Wales Echo 17th April 1891)

The Millfield, Pontypridd, is to be converted into a "People's Park," the date of opening has been fixed for Monday, May 4th, next Mabon's Day. The field, which is centrally situated and easily accessible, has been secured under a long lease by Mr. Charles W. Poole, of the well-known Poole's Myriorama Company, and Mr. Philip R. James, Pontypridd, celebrated throughout the Rhondda as the most enterprising and successful of caterers of amusements in South Wales.

These gentlemen announce that no expense will be spared to make the field the finest recreation ground in Wales, and that it is their intention to produce upon it during the forthcoming season a series of fetes and galas on a scale of expenditure and magnificence never before attempted in the Principality.

Pontypridd, we are informed, has been chosen for this because it is the junction for the Rhondda, Aberdare, Merthyr, Caerphilly, Llantrisant, and other valleys, easily accessible by train, thus enabling the promoters to launch upon an enterprise which otherwise would have been impossible. Athletic sports, bicycle and foot races, and other entertainments will be arranged, and buildings and tents are to be erected on the ground so that the performances can be given, be the weather wet or fine.

The crack bands of her Majesty's regiments are to be engaged to appear at intervals, and negotiations are pending for the appearance of "leading stars." Among the permanent means of amusements to be constructed will be the identical switch-back railway that has delighted so many thousands at the Alexandra Palace, London, and an Alpine railway.

Messrs Poole and James are to be complimented upon their enterprise and, well-managed as it undoubtedly will be, the People's Park will be an endless source of amusement and entertainment to the toiling masses of the district.

A People's Park for Pontypridd.
(Pontypridd Chronicle 17th April 1891)

An advertisement in another column announces the opening of a People's Park for Pontypridd on May 4th (Mabon's Day). The proprietors and managers are Messrs Charles W. Poole, of Poole's Myrioramas, and Philip R. James, the well-known and enterprising entertainment caterer, of Pontypridd. They have taken a lease of the Millfield, and intend making it the finest recreation ground in this part of the Principality. During the summer fetes and galas will be held on Mabon's Days, and at frequent intervals sports, bicycle, foot and other races will take place and the crack bands of her Majesty's regiments will be engaged, and buildings and tents will be erected to enable the performances to be given in weather wet or fine.

Negotiations are pending for the appearance of "leading stars," and also for the purchase of the Thompson Patent Gravity Switchback Railway, 420ft. long, from the Alexandra Palace, London. Messrs J. I and W. Wilder, of Birmingham, have been especially retained to introduce the latest novelties in fireworks. The first display will be on the colliers' holiday, May 4th. We are assured that no expense will be spared to make the undertaking a people's park in every sense of the word, and as we can rely upon its being properly conducted, we have no doubt as to the success of the venture. Thousands of holiday makers now go to Cardiff who would prefer coming to Pontypridd if the place was made sufficiently attractive. We wish Messrs Poole and James every success.

The People's Park at Pontypridd – A gigantic undertaking.

The *Western Mail* of 28th April 1891 reported: - We recently paid a visit to the Mill Field, Pontypridd, and were genuinely surprised at the extensive and elaborate preparations which Messrs. Poole and James, the enterprising lessees, are making for the grand opening of the People's Park on Monday, May 4. The field has been levelled at considerable expense, and gravel pathway made through the centre. Carpenters are busy at work putting up the framework of the patent gravity switchback railway, while other important structural works are rapidly being pushed forward. The outlay entailed by the undertaking will not be measured by hundreds, but by thousands, of pounds. The enterprise, it will thus be seen, is on no ordinary scale; but anyone acquainted with the populous districts of Pontypridd and the Rhondda will have no hesitation in predicting for the plucky speculators a quick and substantial return.

The centrality of its position entitles Pontypridd to rank as a unique locale for an undertaking of the nature of that which Messrs. Poole and James have just embarked on. For the opening day a programme quite "Bijrnumite" in its proportion is announced. The band of her Majesty's Life Guards and that of the Severn Division of the Royal Engineers have been specially engaged at enormous expense, while the People's Park Band will also be in attendance and add to the musical repertoire. Chief among the artistes engaged on the day will be Minting, the marvellous cyclist, who will ascend and descend a spiral column 50ft. high on the one wheel of an ordinary bicycle.

There will also be comedians, acrobats, musical clowns, instrumentalist, vocalists, jugglers, &c. In the evening; there will be a grand display of fireworks. The gate will be opened at eleven o'clock, when the switchback will be going, and the other performances will commence at one o'clock. Further particulars may be gleaned from an advertisement elsewhere.

Preparations continue

The Pontypridd District Herald of May 2nd 1891 carried the following report: - "The arrangements in the hands of Messrs W. Poole (Poole's Myrioramas) and Philip R. James for converting the Mill Field into a kind of miniature Rosherville Gardens* without the floral embellishments, are being carried out on a scale very much more extensive and costly than we contemplated.

The field having an area of 4 acres it appears has been taken for three years at a heavy rental, and considerably over £1,000 is to be spent in providing the permanent attractions, setting aside the expenditure certain to be incurred in engaging picked military bands and special artists.

The conception of Messrs Poole and James to cater for outdoor amusements for the masses during the summer months is on a scale unprecedented in the history of the town and marks a distinct recognition of something more advancing and more permanent and more varied in the way of popular entertainment's, than have yet been reached.

* Rosherville Gardens, a famous pleasure garden at Gravesend, Kent, at the time.

We have been informed that about 50 men having been daily working on the field in erecting the necessary staging and other matters. The Switchback Railway was purchased from the Alexandria Palace, London.

The Switchback Railway, already of considerable length, will, it is said, be extended, so as to be one-quarter of a mile in length, and will no doubt ultimately become a permanent attraction.

We are glad to find that with a most varied selection of Acrobatics, Athletics, including the 'Marvellous Minting.' Foolhardy, dangerous and sensational exhibition parachutists are not contemplated.

**GOOD NEWS FOR PONTYPRIDD &
THE RHONDDA VALLEY.**

Messrs C. W. Poole (of Poole's Myrioramas) and Philip R. Jones (Pontypridd) have secured a lease of the Mill Field, Pontypridd, which they intend converting at once into

'The People's Park'

And making it the
**FINEST RECREATION GROUND IN
WALES.**

The Grand Opening

Will be on

MABON'S DAY NEXT, MAY 4

During the Summer Season a series of

FETES & GALAS

Will be produced on a scale of expenditure and magnificence never before attempted in the
Principality.

An advert published in the local newspaper showing the opening date of the People's Park at the Mill Field, May 4th 1891.

The Grand opening Monday, May 4th 1891

The weather was everything that could be desired, and during the day the field was visited by thousands of People. Up to the present the arrangements are not of the complete character, but the proprietors intended erecting substantial buildings on the ground, with dancing, music hall entertainments, concerts and other amusements may take place in addition to the usual outdoor sports and athletic attractions. Shooting Gallery's, shows, and other paraphernalia of a show ground were also conspicuous on all sides."

The chief attraction, however, was the engagement of the First Lifeguards. Both afternoon and evening they played an excellent selection of music of varied character, many of the pieces being splendidly applauded. The band of the Seventh Volunteer Division of Royal Engineers also went through an enjoyable repertoire of music. During the intervals, on a stage especially erected, Victor and Ellis, musical clowns, entertained the audience with their "funniosities."

Excellent turns were also gone through by Conde and Little Alright, Japanese performers; Essman, clever juggler; The Brothers Leandar, trapeze Artists; Jose Parker, trick jumper; Hester & Lisbon, roller skaters and comedians; Hassan, wire walker and somersault thrower; Askey, a drawing room entertainer; and Minting, a marvellous cyclist.

The latter, in addition to the usual tricks on stage, ascended a spiral column 50 ft high on one wheel of a bicycle, and also ascended in the same manner. His performance was warmly applauded, both at the afternoon and evening entertainments. The whole proceedings terminated shortly after 9 o'clock with a display of fireworks.

This first venture was an unqualified success and so it was in early 1891 that preparations for a gala opening of the Mill Field, that would now be known as the People's Park. Musicians, artists, displays and shows all had to be booked; sports had to be arranged; posters requesting competitors and advertising the grand opening had to be printed.

Officials for the sports had to be arranged, including handicappers, judges and timekeepers, while field markings and ropes to cordon off the paying public had to be purchased and no doubt Messrs. James and Poole were hoping for a quick return on their initial outlay.

Messrs. Poole and James deserved the thanks of the public for their enterprise, and the People's Park appears to be the great attraction of Pontypridd in the future - somewhat similar to the Belle Vue Gardens in Manchester!

'The Peoples Park:

PONTYPRIDD.

**Proprietors and Managers .. Messrs Poole
and James.**

NOW OPEN EVERY EVENING.

Read the opinions of the press. The "South Wales Daily News" says:—Messrs Poole and James opened the grounds on Monday by a Fete and Gala on an elaborate scale. The Band of the 1st Life Guards was loudly applauded.

The "Western Mail" say (—The grand opening took place on Monday, and the enterprise of Messrs Poole and James has every prospect of being the show of the future in the Rhondda, if not in South Wales.

THE PEOPLE'S PARK BAND

Will play every evening from 7 to 9.30; also Thursday and Saturday afternoons from 2 to 5. Dancing on the Green commencing May 11th.

Admission to the Park .. Threepence Each.

The Thompson Patent Gravity

SWITCHBACK RAILWAY

Will be running every day throughout the Season
Also The Alpine Railway.

Special attractions for Whit-Monday. Next Big Fete and Gala, Mabon's Day, June 1st. Enormous Engagements now made.

An advert published in the local newspaper showing how the opening date of the People's Park at the Mill Field, went.

The People's Park – A bright future

The *South Wales Daily News* of 14th May 1891 reported: - Messrs Poole, and James, the enterprising lessee's of the Mill Field, now transformed into the People's Park, Pontypridd, are making a bold bid for success, and, judging from the support so far given to their venture they seem to be in a fair way of securing it. Hundreds of pounds have already been spent on the ground in the formation of a bicycle track, the erection of switchback alpine railway, and other amusements which formed the attraction on Mabon's Day list but greater expenditure yet is contemplated go as to make the ground still more suitable for amusement purposes.

A trotting track will at once be formed and a skating rink constructed, the latter to be utilised during the coming summer as a dancing saloon during wet weather. A large concert-hall is also to be erected on the aground. A capital programme has been arranged for Mabon's Day next, the promoters having, out of regard for the forthcoming Foresters' Fete, decided not to hold any sports in opposition on Whit-Monday. The celebrated Cyfarthfa band will, however, be in attendance at the Park during the whole of that day. The People's Park band discourses sweet music on the ground every evening,; and dancing on the green is largely indulged in. A sacred open-air concert will be given on the ground next Sunday evening.

At the end of May 1891 Poole and James it appears, were granted an occasional licence to sell alcohol at the People's Park from June 1st 1891, but, in an area where there was a religious revival and where even sport was frowned upon, this caused uproar. But many thought these objections a bit 'over-the-top,' and this following item appeared in the Pontypridd District Herald of May 30th 1891:

"Messrs Poole & James the enterprising caterer's who manipulate so successfully the arrangements in connection with the People's Park in this town, have succeeded in obtaining an occasional Licence for Monday next. It was granted by Dr. L. W. Morgan, J.P; who was of the opinion no doubt that such as licence would do no harm. As a matter of fact it was likely that more mischief would result in withholding the licence than from granting it. It seems a large number of men brought raw spirits with them into the field, and failing to get water drank it. The result was soon made obvious. We sympathise to a large extent without tea-tottaler friends in their efforts to promote sobriety, but we believe them to be actuated by honest motives. But we are afraid that occasionally their zeal overwhelms their discretion with the result, than in their despite to "dam-up" one current, they open one much more powerful, and certainly much more mischievous.

To recall the Victorian currency: 240 pennies or pence equalled one pound or the value of a golden sovereign. A sixpenny bit was known as a 'tanner' and written 6d. Twelve pennies made a shilling or a 'bob.' And was written 1/- or 1s. The

half-a-crown was 2s 6d. The pound or twenty shillings was written £1, while a guinea was 21s. A shilling became 5p in the new coinage in 1971.

Grand Fete and Gala at the People's Park

1st June 1891

The Pontypridd Chronicle of 5th June 1891 Recorded: - The second Grand Fete and Gala organised by Messrs Poole and James, the energetic and enterprising lessees of the People's Park, Pontypridd, came off on Monday on that popular rendezvous amid much éclat (brilliant displays).

The weather was gloriously fine and, in consequence, the "park" was literally packed from morning to night with thousands of pleasure-seekers. In addition to the switchback, Alpine railway, and ordinary adjuncts of the ground, all of which were largely patronised, the day's performances were by a large number of well-known artistes engaged at great expense. The principal attraction undoubtedly was the splendid performance of the magnificent band of the Royal Marines from Plymouth, who attended by the kind permission of Colonel Machay-Henot, The conductor was Mr. Frank Winterbottom, and the musical programme was both varied and interesting. The variety performers, all of whom gave surprising exhibitions of skill, included the Brothers Hailey, the negro comedians; Nana, the female Blondin. The Ernest family, skaters and musicians; Professor Devereaux, performing dogs and monkeys; the Leopold Leglere Troops of acrobats; the sisters Lallab, on the tight double wires; Frederick's trio of gymnasts, and the amusing Blondin donkey.

The day's proceedings were appropriately terminated by an artistic display of fireworks, which included an ingenious and striking pyrotechnic portrait of the member for the Rhondda. On Tuesday, and every evening during the remainder of the week, the deservedly popular Boston Minstrels gave entertainments at the park.

People's Park granted license

The *Pontypridd District Herald* of June 6th 1891 commented: - "For the first time 'refreshments' could be had on the field, and singular to say, only one case of actual inebriety was seen and in this case it was almost a certainty that the victim had been partially overcome before he entered the field. There seems to be the delusion abroad that the people taking the holiday in this park are the scum and there was nothing either anything in the people or entertainment to which any reasonable exception could be taken." The display was probably the best ever witnessed in Pontypridd and elicited loud expressions of admiration.

The People's Park.

PONTYPRIDD.

The place to spend a happy evening.

NOW OPEN EVERY EVENING at 6.45

To commence at 7. VARIETIES and DANCING.
First Part--GRAND VARIETY COMPANY of
Selected Artistes on the Great Stage,
To be followed by

DANCING ON THE GREEN.

THE PEOPLE'S PARK BAND, &c., &c.

Admission 3d. Seats, 3d. and 6d. extra.

THE SWITCHBACK RAILWAY,

The most glorious form of amusements in existence, running throughout the day. Also the Alpine Railway. Next BIG FETE AND GALA, "MABON'S" DAY, June 1st, when the Grand BAND OF THE ROYAL MARINES, from Plymouth; Nana, the Great Female Blondin; Leopold Legiere, Troupe. Happy Ashby, Sisters Lallah, Devereux Dogs and Monkeys, Brothers Hadley, Ernest Family, Great Fredrick's Trio, Wilder's Fireworks and Other Attractions will be provided.

Expenses incurred for this day upwards of £500.

Newspaper advert May 1891

The pyrotechnic portrayal of Mabon MP; was striking and much enjoyed. When the wives of two local ministers were witnessing the scene from a point that preserved them from the necessity of payment for admission or have contact with the vain and vulgar in the field, were greatly impressed with the sight. Other person's who regarded the arrangements with holly horror did not scruple to enjoy the sights from afar, where they could be seen for nothing.

Forthcoming athletic sports at Pontypridd.
(Western Mail 17th June 1891)

Athletic sports of a most attractive character are promised in the place of the usual fete and gala at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday, July 6th, when substantial prizes will be offered for foot, bicycle, trotting, and Galloway races. The cycle track, already constructed, is an excellent one and straight and trotting tracks of a most suitable character are now being laid by Mr. J. Evans, contractor, Pontypridd. The enterprising lessees of the People's Park intend making their athletic sports worthy of extensive patronage, and we feel sure their efforts will be generously acknowledged by the public. At intervals during the day the band of the People's Park will play selections, and the switchback and other permanent sources of amusement in the park will be kept going. In an advertisement elsewhere a programme of the events will be found.

No expense spared

As the summer progressed new items were presented at the People's Park, the Pontypridd Chronicle of July 3rd 1891 wrote: "The proprietors the People's Park are evidently determined to spare no expense to make it one of the finest in the principality. The cycle track is nightly being patronised by all the "cracks" of the district and the sprint path is now in thorough "going order," and the trotting track will undoubtedly tend to develop in Pontypridd a brand of sport hitherto dormant. For successful sports to be held there on Monday next to be assured nothing is needed, we believe, with fine weather.

The entries for the foot races include all the best local men and will, undoubtedly, be one of the finest meetings we have had or shall have in the valley this summer. The 130 Yards Local Handicap attracts a lot of interest, seeing that most of our local footballers are entered. Refreshments will be provided in a large marquee. Mabon's Day could be spent in a worse manner that at the People's Park."

First Athletic Festival at the People's Park

On Mabon's Day, July 6th 1891 owing to the wretched state of the weather the attendance at the Millfield was not very large. A covered bandstand had been erected on the ground, and during the progress of the sports was occupied by the

celebrated Cyfartha Band which acquitted itself in a manner which won general encomiums. Shortly after 4 o'clock the band of the Coldstream Guards arrived and made their way up the field, where they gave several musical selections to the delight of those who had ventured out to hear. One of the items on the programme was "reminiscences of Wales," arranged by Mr. Fred Godfrey, and introducing Welsh national songs and dances. This received lots of applause. This event was covered by the local newspaper: -

Athletic Sports at the People's Park a big success.

The *Pontypridd Chronicle* of 10th July 1891 reported: - The first grand athletic sports promoted by the enterprising lessees of the People's Park, Pontypridd (Messrs Poole and James), were a big success. But the weather nearly spoiled the whole festival. On Sunday rain fell unceasingly; on Monday morning-still rain, rain, rain. The officials of the Sports looked despondent.

There was a formidable sum at stake. Noon came and still the rain fell with provoking persistency- but there was one gleam of hope - the sky began to look a bit brighter as Sol reached the meridian. "It will be fine yet," said one, and, as if in fulfilment of his prophecy, the rain ceased, and there were rays of sunshine.

The wind, it was true, was rather high, but what did that matter as long as the tantalising rain kept off? Shortly after one o'clock large number of people began to flock towards the Park, and when the sports had got into full swing there was a huge concourse of spectators on the grounds.

Messrs Poole and James seem actuated with the fixed determination of going onward. Since the last gathering they have gone to enormous expense in laying down running, horse, and bicycle tracks. There are no half measures here.

The tracks will bear more than favourable comparison with any in Wales. Considered as a whole, the Sports were on a scale that had never been approached in this district, or far outside it, before. One important feature about the Park is that there is always something going on to interest the spectators. They are not allowed to have one dull moment.

While the next competitors were getting ready on Monday, there was the popular Switchback and Alpine Railways open to patronage; there were the performances of the Grand Variety Company to witness, and the beautiful instrumentation of the Bristol City Silver Band to listen to. The artistes engaged for the occasion were Rae and Weston, comic and trick bicyclists, Madam Bertolli, the premier youthful contortionist, and the great Carlo troupe of acrobats.

PONTYPRIDD ATHLETIC SPORTS,
PEOPLE'S PARK, PONTYPRIDD,
MABON'S DAY, MONDAY, JULY 6TH, 1891.
FOOT, BICYCLE, TROTTING, AND GALLOWAY
RACES.

PROGRAMME:—

130 Yards Boys' Race (under 16. Entered and handicapped on the ground).—1st prize, £1; 2nd, 7s. 6d.; 3rd, 5s. Entrance, 6d.

130 Yards Local Race (Pontypridd Union District).—1st prize, £6; 2nd, £3; 3rd, £1 10s. Entrance, 1s. 6d.

130 Yards Open Handicap.—1st prize, £12; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £1 10s. Entrance, 2s.

220 Yards Open Handicap.—1st prize, £7; 2nd, £3; 3rd, £1. Entrance, 1s. 6d.

4 Miles Bicycle Open Handicap.—1st prize, value £10; 2nd, value £5; 3rd, value £2. Entrance, 2s. 6d.

2 Miles Amateur Bicycle Handicap.—1st prize, £5; 2nd, £2; 3rd, £1. Entrance, 1s.

1 Mile Novices' Bicycle Race (Handicap. For riders only of Morris Bros.' machines).—1st prize, gold medal, value £4; 2nd, silver medal, value 30s.; 3rd, ball pedals, value 21s.; 4th, lamp, value 12s. 6d. Entrance, 1s.

2 Miles Trotting Handicap.—1st prize, £12; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £2. Entrance, 5s.

2 Miles Galloway Race (15.2 and under. Horses 15.2 to carry 12st.; 7lb. allowed for every inch under. Penalty, 7lb. for winners once and 14lb. for winners twice).—1st prize, £12; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £2.

In addition, a Grand Variety Company, Splendid Band for Dancing, &c., &c.

The Cycle Track is already laid, and Mr. J. Evans, Contractor, Pontypridd, is now laying the 220 Yards Straight Track, also the Trotting Track.

Switchback and Alpine Railways, and a Host of Attractions.

Tenders for Ground, Shows, Refreshments, Stalls, Entry Forms, and all Information, apply the Secretary,

6381

Mr. ALFRED C. BEERE.

Another advert for the People's Park July 1891

The Silver Band's repertoire was rich and varied, and their playing was much admired. Considering that this was the initial undertaking of the kind the Sports passed off with remarkable successful. Messrs Thomas Edwards, Cefn House, and E. Llewelyn performed the duties of judges in a most satisfactory manner, whilst the other officials who also deserve great praise for the energy which they threw into the performance of their multifarious duties were :- Committee, Messrs J. Thomas, F. King, T. Trenchard, D. Griffiths, E. Treharne, W. Leyshon, and T. Morgan. Bicycle Races-Messrs W. M. Morris and J. Livingston. Starter – Mr. C. H. Herdson. Clerk of the Scales – Mr. J. Evans (late Tredegar Arms). Secretary, Mr. Alfred C. Beere. The events were as follows: -

140 yards boys race (under 16-entered and handicapped on the ground). First prize, £1; 2nd. 7s. 6d; 3rd, 5s. 1st, H. Brand; 2nd, H. Green 3rd, Fred Griffiths.

130 yards local race (Pontypridd Union district). First prize, £6; 2nd, £3; 3rd, £1 10s. First in each heat to run in final. **First heat**, H. Davies, Pontypridd, 20 yards; **Second heat**, A. Morgan, Pontypridd, 27 yards; **Third heat**, W. Rowlands, Pontypridd, 26 yards; **fourth heat**, G. Evans, Porth, 8 yards. **Final**, 1, A. Morgan 2, W. Rowlands 3, H. Davies.

One mile novices' bicycle race (handicap). (For riders only of Morris Bros.' machines). First prize, gold medal, value £4; 2nd, silver medal, value £1 10s.; 3rd, ball pedals, value 21s; 4th, lamp, value 12s. 6d. 1st, D. J. Evans, Pontypridd, 2nd H. A. Davies, Pontypridd, 3rd Uri Evans, Pontypridd, 4th, James Allen, Aberaman, 30 yards.

220 yards open handicap. First prize, £7; 2nd, 23; 3rd, 91. First in each heat to run in final. First heat, T. Lewis, Pontypridd,(9 yds½); Second heat, W. Webb, Treforest, (22 yds); Third heat, B. Williams, Blaenhenwysg, (13 yds); in the fourth heat there was a dead heat between D. Williams Merthyr, and W. Bradford, Mountain Ash, and they were both disqualified. Final – 1. B Williams; 2. T. Lewis; 3. W. Webb.

Two mile bicycle handicap - 1st prize, £5. 2nd, £3 third £1. . First and second in each heat to run in final. First heat- 1, Alfred Lewis, Aberaman (60 yds); 2nd Lewis Williams, Coedpenmaen, (160 yds).; Second heat, 1st Alf. Osborne, Coedpenmaen (170 yds); 2nd, Evan Jones, (135 yds);. Final heat: - 1st Alf. Osborne; 2nd, A. Lewis 3rd, Evan Jones.

130 yards open handicap. 1st prize, £12; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £1 10s. First in each heat to run in final. **First heat**, W. Webb, Treforest, (13½ yds); Second heat, H. Miles, Pontypridd, (2½ yds); Third heat D. Williams, Merthyr, (4yds); Fourth heat, G. Evans, (9 yds); Final, 1st W. Webb; 2nd G. Evans 3rd H. Miles.

Four miles bicycle handicap. First prize, £10; second, £5; third, £2. First and second in each heat to run in final. First heat, 1, Evan Jones, Coedpenmain, (260 yds) 2. Martin Griffin, Swansea, (120 yds); **second heat**, 1, Alf. Osborne, Coedpenmaen (330 yds); 2, Alfred Lewis, Aberaman, (110 yds) Final heat 1st Evan Jones 2, Alf. Osborne; 3, Alfred Lewis.

Two miles trotting handicap. First prize, £12; second, £4; third, £2. First and second in each heat to run in final. **1st heat** 1. G. Jenkins, Llantrisant, "Bess," (125 yds); 2, D. Williams, Blaenhenwysg, "Polly," (165 yds); **second heat**, 1, Hugh Powell, Aberaman, "Prince," (230 yds) 2, D. Davies, Ferndale, "Queenie," (125 yds); **third heat** - 1, H. Williams, Llantrisant, Flora," (65 yds); 2, Evan William, Blaenhenwysg; "Dancing Doll," (145 yds); **fourth heat** 1, N. Jeremiah, Cadoxton, "Mountain Maid," (75 yds); 2, M. W. David, Aberdare. Tom," (285 yds); **Final** – 1st G. Jenkins; 2nd H. Williams; 3rd H. Powell.

Two mile Galloway race. First prize, £12; second, £4 third, £2. 1st T. Morgans, Wolverhampton, "Home Again," 2nd M. Parry, New Street, Ross, "No Name"; 3rd. R. W. G. Watkins, Fleur-de-lis, "Pollie Perkins." The Sports concluded shortly after 9 o'clock.

During the intervals the Bristol City Silver Band, who occupied the stand in the middle of the field, gave splendid selections of operatic and dance music while the grand variety company who played on the great stage attracted a deal of attention. Rae and Weston, the comic bicyclists, with their laughable tricks created some amusement.

Madame Bertolli, "the premier contortionist" gained the well merited applause by her manipulation, while the great Carlo Troupe of Acrobats greatly amused the thousands of pleasure-seekers on the field. The next sports will be held on Bank Holiday, August 3rd.

Alleged pocket picking at the People's Park, Pontypridd.

(Pontypridd Chronicle 11 July 1891)

At the Pontypridd Police Court on Wednesday, Frederick Johnson, tailor, Newport, was charged (before Mr L. G. Lenox and Mr J. R. H. Williams) with pocket-picking in the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday last.

Mrs E. L. Mills, wife of Mr. J. C. Mills, tea dealer, Pontypridd said she was in the People's Park on Monday, and while a race was being run she heard Mr. James Edwards accuse a man of putting his hand in her pocket. She did not see him. She had given her purse to her husband. Mr. James Edwards, boot dealer, Market Street, now repeated his accusation, and the defendant was remanded. Before the

magistrate the following week Johnson was found guilty and sentenced to six weeks hard labour.

Primrose League picnic
(The South Wales Star of 31st July 1891.)

On Thursday last the annual picnic of the Pontypridd Habitation of the Primrose League was held at the People's Park. Tea was partaken in a large pavilion which had been erected in the park. Mr. Jones-Powell and Miss Thomas, of The Field, carried out the arrangements. Mr. Lenox, Ynysangharad, was appointed ruling councillor, and Mrs Thomas, the Heath, Dame President. It was announced another picnic would be held at Caerphilly Castle on 13th August.

Athletic Sports on Mabon' Day in August 1891

Mabon's Day, Bank Holiday Monday, 3rd August 1891 brought thousands of visitors to Pontypridd. Doubtless one of the greatest attraction in the town was the sports held at the People's Park. The prizes offered were the best in the district, and the proprietors had prepared an excellent programme. They had also engaged several first-class performers, but unfortunately, owing to the very bad state of the weather, all of them failed to perform.

The weather during the day was treacherous and showery, and at the time the sports commenced (one o'clock) rain came down in torrents. At intervals the sun would make its presence known, only, however, to taunt the many amusement seekers. Extensive marquees were erected on one side of the field, wherein refreshments were provided by Mr. George Ham and his hosts of assistants. Another marquee was erected near the entrance to the field on the Tan Yard side, which was a kind of reserved tent for those in the enclosure. The prizes offered formed an inducement to many from the outlying district, the principal events being a mile and a half trotting handicap, and 130 and 220 yards running handicap, for which prizes of £12, £4, and £2 offered brought together 21 competitors. This race excited a great deal of interest, and was run in five heats. The handicap here was excellent.

The Band of the Scot's Guards, which had been especially engaged, played a few splendid selections, but were unable to go through their entire program owing to the weather, but they gave a magnificent concert, which was poorly attended, at the Market Hall at night. The managers, Messrs. Poole & James deserved praise for the excellent manner in which the arrangements were carried out.

The Switchback and swings, shooting booths and the Alpine Railway were in full swing all day. Refreshments were provided in a large booth by Mr. George Ham, of the Morning Star Inn. Good order had prevailed during the races, but towards

PONTYPRIDD.

SPORTS, AUGUST 5th, AT
PEOPLE'S PARK, PONTYPRIDD

The Finest Recreation Grounds in the Principality.
—Vide Cardiff Press.

THE SECOND GRAND ATHLETIC SPORTS

Will be held at the above Park on

MABON'S DAY AUG. 3.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS.

130 OPEN HANDICAP.—First Prize, £5; 2nd, £1 10s.; 3rd, 15s. Entrance, 1s. 6d.

220 OPEN HANDICAP.—First Prize, £12; 2nd £4; 3rd, £1 10s. Entrance, 2s. 6d.

2 MILES BICYCLE OPEN HANDICAP.—First Prize, £10; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £1. (Start limited.) Entrance, 2s. 6d.

1½ MILE TROTTING HANDICAP.—First Prize £12; 2nd, £4; 3rd, £2. Entrance, 5s.

TUG OF WAR

(Between the Men of the various Collieries.) Ten men each side.—First Prize, £10; 2nd, £5. Entrance, 6d. each man; Captain to pay all entrance fees.

GRAND VARIETY COMPANY.

The Magnificent Band of Her Majesty's Scots' Guards will attend and give choice selections during the Sports at the Park, and in the evening will give a Grand Concert at the Market Hall.

SWITCHBACK AND ALPINE RAILWAYS,

and a host of other attractions.

Gates open at 11.30. Sports commence at 12 noon. Entrance to the Park, 6d.; Enclosure, 6d. extra.

Entry Forms now ready.

Refreshments will be provided at reasonable prices.

Tenders for ground, shows, refreshments, stalls, entry forms, and all information, apply to the Secretary, MR. ALFRED C. BEERE.

Newspaper advertisement for
Athletic sports on Mabon's Day,
August 3rd 1891.

the end, when the tug-of-war was being decided, the spectators broke into the enclosure despite all attempts by Mr. Poole and the police to keep them back.

Results: - **130 Yards Open Handicap**, 1st prize £5; 2nd £1 10s, 3rd 15s. 1st W. J. Davies, Pontypridd; 2nd W. John, Treforest; 3rd T. Rees, Porth. **1½ Mile Trotting Handicap** – 1st prize £12; 2nd £4; 3rd £2. 1st R. Wiltshire “Little Rose”; 2nd J. P. Jeremia “Mountain Maid”; 3rd H. Williams “Flora.” **220 Yards Open Handicap** – 1st prize £1”, 2nd £4, 3rd £1 10s. 1st D. Thomas, Rhydfelen; 2 Bradford, Mountain Ash; 3rd W. J. Davies, Pontypridd

The Tug-of-war as it happens was the most exciting contest of all. First prize £10; 2nd, £5. Eight teams entered: - Great Western Colliery, Cymmer, Mountain Ash, Llwynypia, Graig, Maritime, Ferndale and Cilfynydd.

Winners of the first round: Cymmer, Mountain Ash, Llwynypia and Cilfynydd. Semi-final: Llwynypia and Cymmer. **Final**: This took a considerable time to decide, both teams pulling as if it were a matter of life and death.

The cheers of the supporters of the teams could be heard the other side of town. Llwynypia proved victorious and Cymmer took second prize. The officials were, Judges Firbank King and Edward Llewellyn; Handicappers, the committee, Messrs J. Thomas, F. King, T. Trenchard, D. Griffiths, E. Treharne, W. Leyshon and T. Morgan; Starter: Mr. Hurdson; Secretary: Mr. Beere.

No wayleave for People’s Park please

At a meeting of the Rechabites in early August 1891, a resolution was arrived at that urged the directors of the Taff Vale Railway Co; not to grant permission to Mr. Poole, Pontypridd, to erect a wayleave* under their railway on the People’s Park.

* Wayleave – A right of way granted by a land owner, generally in exchange for payment and typically as to the erection of telegraph wires or laying of pipes. Companies must have wayleaves for work they want to carry out on private land.

Forthcoming events at the People’s Park

The *South Wales Daily News* of 24th August 1891 commented: - We would remind our readers of the great attractions promised for Saturday next and Whit-Monday, at the People's Park, in the shape of foot and bicycle contests.

Good prizes will be given, and it is announced that the sport on Whit-Monday will conclude in time to allow athletes to depart by the 1.45 pm train to take part in other sports if necessary in the afternoon.

Sports at Pontypridd.

(South Wales Daily News 8th September 1891)

The sports at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Mabon's Day, attracted, as usual, many thousands of spectators, most of whom, despite the frequent showers of rain that fell remained on the grounds until the last of the many interesting items on the programme were disposed of. The judges were Messrs E. Llewelyn and W. Morris, while the duties of secretary were efficiently discharged by Mr. Alfred Beere. The Ferndale Brass Band, under the conductorship of Mr. W. R. Howe, played a capital selection of music during the day. The events were as follows:—

Quarter Mile Open Handicap.—1, J. James, Ross (20 yds.), and T. Evans, Tonypany (30 yds.), dead heat; 2, T. Harry, Pontypridd (20 yds.). The first prize was divided between Evans and James.

Two Miles' Novices' Bicycle Handicap.—1, W. Jones (scratch); 2, G. Kingslake (70 yds.) 3, T. Morley (85 yds.).

1½ Mile Trotting Handicap.—1, B. Haddinot's (Cadoxton) Visitor (165 yds.) 2, W. L. Griffith's (Pentre) Welsh Prince (165 yds.) 3, Mr. W. David's (Aberdare) Tom. Objections were lodged against the first two horses, on the ground that Visitor did not win its heat.

Four Miles Bicycle Handicap—Evan Jones (30 yds.) and Alf Osborne (40 yds.), dead heat 3, C. Kingslake (350 yds.). Jones and Osborne ran a second time, Osborne winning a hard race.

120 Yards Open Handicap.— In this event there were as many as 26 entries. — 1st J. Baynham, Llwynypia (6 yds.); 2. T. Rees, Cymmer Bridge (15 yds.); 3. J. Bees, Porth (16¼ yds.). A variety entertainment was also provided, the feats of the Leonza Sisters on the flying trapeze being highly applauded.

September Sports at the People's Park (Pontypridd Chronicle 11th September 1891)

During the morning of Mabon's Day, 7th September 1891, the weather was beautifully fine. It brought thousands of visitors into the town and also had a buoyant effect upon the spirits of Messrs Poole and James the enterprising lessees of the People's Park, whose previous ventures had been persistently frowned upon by the clerk of the weather. Towards noon, however, the sky became overcast and shortly afterwards rain began to fall, in a provoking drizzle.

But we are glad to say this untoward circumstance did not interfere materially with the attendance at the People's Park and there was a large concourse of spectators on

the ground to witness the various athletic events. The judges were Mr. F. Morris (Pontypridd Bicycle Works), Mr. E. Llewellyn, Mr. Firbank King, while Mr. Alfred C. Beere made an energetic secretary. During the afternoon the splendid Ferndale Brass Band played a choice selection of music under the able conductorship of Mr. W. R. Howe. The events were as follows: -

Quarter Mile Open Handicap (twice round the bicycle track). First in each heat to run in final. First prize £6, 2nd £2, third £1.

First heat, T. Harry, Pontypridd (20 yards); **Second heat** James Ross (20 yards); **Third heat,** T. Evans, Tonypany (30 yards). In the **final** J. James Ross and Evans of Tonypany ran a dead heat, Tom Harry taking third place. The first two decided to divide the prize between them.

2 Mile Novices Bicycle Handicap First prize £3, second, £1, third 10s. **First heat,** G. Kingslake (70 yards) 1; Wm Jones (scratch) 2; **Second heat,** D. J. Evans (85 yards) 1; and Robert Jones (65 yards) 2. In the **final heat** five competed, the fifth being T. Morley (85 yards), who had arrived too late to contest in the preliminary heats. The **final** resulted as follows: - 1st William Jones 2nd G. Kingslake 3rd T. Morley.

1½ Mile Trotting handicap. First prize £10 second, £3, third £2. 1st. B. Hoddinot's (Cadoxton) "Visitor" (165 yards). 2. W. L. Griffiths' (Pentre) "Welsh Prince" (165 yards) 3. M. W. David's (Aberdare) "Tom" (425 yards). Objections were lodged against the first two.

Four mile bicycle handicap. First prize £6, second £2, third £1. Evan Jones (30 yards) and Alf. Osborne 1(40 yards) ran a dead heat and C. Kingslake (250 yards) secured third place. In the final trial between Jones and Osborne a pretty contest ensued; both men exhibiting fine form.

Towards the conclusion of the race Osborne put on a spurt and amid cheers passed his opponent and maintained the lead. Jones followed well in his wake and on the last lap it seemed uncertain who would win. Osborne, however, succeeded in getting in a few inches in front of his rival.

130 yards open handicap. First prize £8, second £3, third £1. **First heat,** J. Baynham, Llwynypia (6 yards); **Second heat,** J. Rees, Porth (16 yards); **Third heat,** J. James, Ross (12 yards). **Fourth heat,** E. George, Porth (12 yards). **Fifth heat,** J. Rees, Cymmer Bridge (15 yards). **Sixth heat,** B. Williams, Cymmer Bridge (8 yards). **Seventh heat,** A. Morgan, Pontypridd (50 yards).

This contest was decided on the magnificent straight track recently constructed across the centre of the ground.

The **final heat** resulted as follows 1st J. Baynham, 2. T. Rees, 3. J. Rees. In the evening the Leonza sisters gave a sensational flying trapeze performance in the centre of the ground. We must compliment the promoters upon the arrangements which were admirable and well carried out.

October sports

Monday, Oct. 5th 1891 at the People's Park saw this favourite resort visited by thousands of people, and the utmost order prevailed during the day. The weather was bracing, but towards evening rather chilly. The patrons of the Switchback Railway, one of the most exhilarating forms of amusement, were not a few, while that athletic part of the programme, Wrestling, Pedestrianism and Cycling, appeared to greatly interest the crowd. But the great centre of attraction was the Brass Band Competition. Messrs Poole and James deserved the praise of all unprejudiced people for providing such a superior class of amusements as have been done in the People's Park. Hitherto the weather has hereto been invariably against them, but on this Monday it was variable.

As a sort of preliminary to the day's proceedings, there was a marching contest, the competing bands starting from the Old Bridge to the People's Park, passing the adjudicator on route. In this contest the First G.A.V. Band, Morrision, took the prize. At the park eight bands competed for the prize of £20, £10 and £5; viz, Llanelli Town Band (conductor, Mr. James Samuel); Aberaman Brass Band (cond. Mr. James Prestwood); 1stG.A.V. Band, Morrision (cond. Mr. J. Hanney); Cymmer Colliery Band, (cond. Mr. R. Martyn); Pentre Rifle Band (cond. Mr. J. Blaney); Newtown Brass Band (cond. Mr. W. C. Phillips); Mountain Ash Brass Band (cond. Mr. H. Baker) and Ferndale Brass Band (cond. Mr. W. R. Howe).

The test selection was chosen for "Mauritania," and the competition was under the rules of the South Wales & Monmouthshire Brass Band Association. The adjudicator, Mr. J. Jackson, (Leeds Force), awarded the first prize to the Morrision Town Band; the second to Newtown, and the third to Ferndale. Mr. Jackson, in giving his adjudication expressed himself as highly pleased with the competition, which was an extremely close one, and regretted that he had not have a prize to give to Mountain Ash, who had run hard for third place.

After the brass band contest, athletic sports were held, and in the evening a grand display of fireworks took place, concluding with a special design, illustrating The Old Bridge, Pontypridd. The events were as follows: -

One Mile Foot Race - First prize, £5; 2nd £1; 3rd, 10s. 1st. 2nd Deadheat, W. J. Davies; G. Stephenson, (Cardiff); 3rd, G. Gould, (Pontypridd).

Two Miles Bicycle Race: - First prize, £6; 2nd, £1 10s.; 3rd, 10s.; Dead heat, C. Kingslake and G. Jones; 3rd, Lewis Williams. Mr. Morris, Bicycle Works, acted as adjudicator in the latter.

November Sports at the People's Park
2nd November 1891

The attraction at People's Park, Pontypridd, on Saturday October 31st and Monday, 2nd November 1891 consisted of a series of athletic sports, Messrs. Poole and James, the enterprising lessees, as usual providing a magnificent programme. A feature of the sports was that fourth prizes were given in all the events, this affording no little satisfaction to the competitors. The Ferndale Brass Band, led by Mr. W. R. Howe, occupied the orchestra during the day, and played a choice selection of music.

Bearing in mind the number of counter-attractions in the district, the attendance was exceedingly large, thus showing that the park retains its popularity among the toilers of the valley. The handicapping was undertaken by the committee, while M. A. Nicholas, of the Horse and Groom, acted as starter; and the judging was entrusted to Messrs W. Morris, C. W. Poole, E. Llewellyn, and Firbank King. Mr. A. C. Beere discharged the secretarial duties in the urbane and energetic manner characteristic of him. The following were the events: -

Boys Race (under 14) – Tradesmen's prizes – 1 D. Jones; 2 G. Fuzzle; 3 H. Green; 4 S. Pearce.

Two Miles Novices Bicycle Race – Prizes supplied by Messrs. Morris Bro – 1. T. Morley, Treforest (80 yards); 2. W. Jones, Coedpenmaen, (scratch); 3. B. Llewellyn, Aberaman (scratch); C. Kingslake, Newtown, (20 yards).

130 Yards Open Handicap – First heat: 1. H. Mellow, Pontypridd (22 yards); 2. W. J. Davies, Pontypridd (11½ yards). **Second heat** – M. Elley, Pontypridd (22 yards), 2. A Morgan, Pontypridd (20 yards). **Final heat** – 1. W. J. Davies; 2. H. Mellow; 3. M. Elley.

Fives Miles Open Bicycle Handicap (pneumatic tyre) – 1. Howell Richards, Treharris (230 yards); 2. William Jones, Coedpenmaen (230 yards); 3. Evan Jones, Coedpenmaen (scratch); 4. Tom Morley, Treforest (380 yards). An agent of Kendal & Dent of London, timed the race with one of the firm's chronometers and declared the distance to have been covered in 15 minutes and 5 seconds.

Two mile Trotting Handicap – First heat: 1. A. Llewellyn, Ynysybwl, Little Lilly (340 yards); 2 D. Llewellyn Ynysybwl, Ruby (90 yards). **Second heat:** 1. E. Collins, Mardy, Gypsy (270 yards); 2. H. Williams, Llantrisant, Flora (55 yards).

A badger at Christmas

A newspaper at Christmas carried the following report: "We have it on good authority that Mr. Poole, Welsh Harp Hotel, has just captured a badger in the People's Park, and that it is on view at the hotel, not long after a fox had been reportedly caught at the same place. It is obvious that the People's Park, which is regarded as one of the best pleasure-grounds in south Wales, is also a splendid sporting property."

The verdict of the year

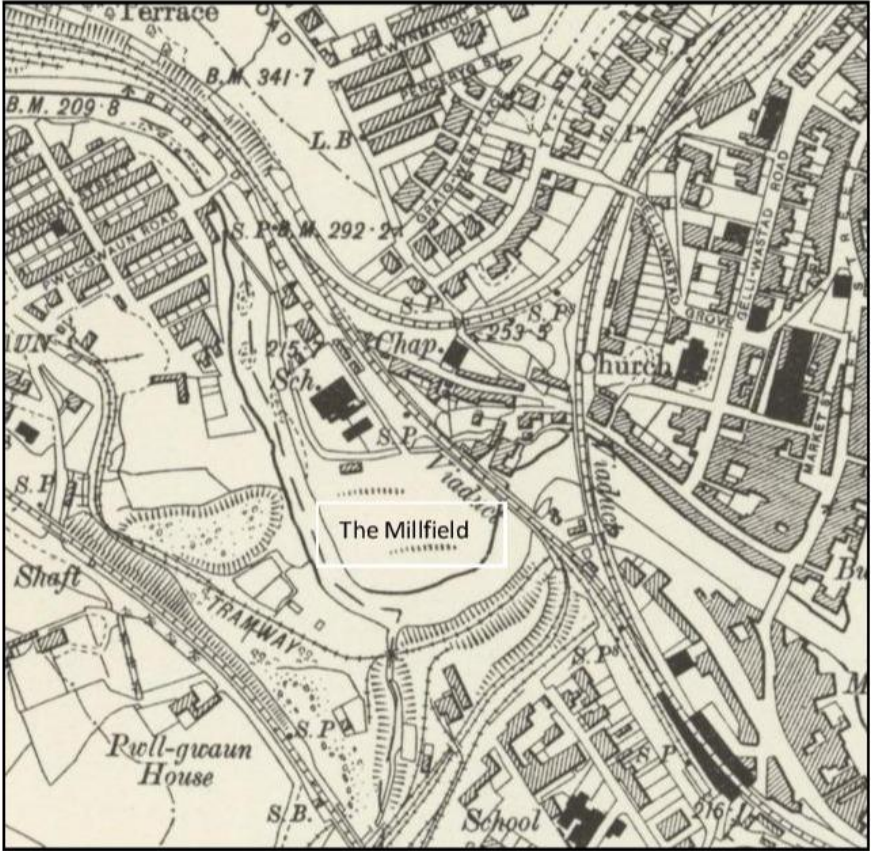
The Pontypridd District Herald of Jan. 2nd 1892 in its editorial looked back on 1891 and made the following observations: -

"The year 1891 will be remembered in the annals of the town as marking the birth of two distinct places of public resort. One, the New Clarence Theatre, the other the People's Park. The theatre marks a distinct epoch in the development of the town, in as much as previous theatrical establishments were but temporary sojourns in the town, and of course found wanting in that perfection of detail and comfort so essential to the completeness of historic arrangements and only to be expected in a building especially constructed on thespian lines. It is a gratifying fact that the Royal Clarence Theatre, in the hands of W. Smithson is rapidly gaining the confidence of all classes, and clearly meets a want in the social life of the people.

The People's Park, notwithstanding a considerable amount of prejudice raised at first, due probably to the belief that a periodic sinc. of iniquity was being established among us, is making steady headway, and has to a very great extent in the hands of Messrs Poole and James disabused the minds of the 'unce-guid' of the terrible consequences that were expected to follow the venture. Like many other things 'it is the first step that counts.' And when prejudice minds are disillusioned, things are not as bad after all as they seemed.

No-one living in the town twenty years ago would have ventured to forecast the year 1891 as that in which the town would support two theatre's, the Clarence and Victoria (Noakes), one circus (Francis - behind the Butchers Arms) and one attractive public ground. Of course we are progressive."

The first year of the People's Park had come to an end, but its future seemed unsure. Little did people know that throughout the following decades the Millfield or People's Park would welcome many competitors and spectators to the ground; become the home of the Pontypridd Rugby Football Club and also host games played by the Pontypridd Cricket Club; and be the terminus for the tramways and ultimately become the Local Council yard.



Map of the Millfield that extended beneath the viaduct

Chapter two

1892

Farewell dinner at the Welsh Harp Hotel

The change of ownership of the People's Park over the early part of 1892 was not explained, but the *South Wales Star* of April 1st 1892 gave an explanation of why he had opened it and why he had sold it: - On Thursday evening, the 24th ult., a dinner in honour of Mr. Charles Poole, who is giving up the hotel business, took place at the above hotel, when upwards of 60 gentlemen partook of an excellent repast by the worthy host. Mr. John Thomas, auctioneer, occupied the chair, the vice-chair being taken by Mr. R. Phillips. A telegram was read by the chairman from the incoming tenant, stating that owing to an accident he was prevented from being present with them and wishing all present a most pleasant evening. After the usual loyal and other toasts, the chairman proposed the toast of the evening, the health of their esteemed friend and host, Mr. Charles Poole, who was leaving the hotel, but not Pontypridd. He referred to Mr. Poole as remarkable for his straightforward and businesslike actions, and complimented him on the support he had met with during his occupancy, wishing him every success in his capacity of showman and caterer for the people's amusement. The health was drunk with musical honours.

Mr. Poole, who, on rising to respond, was cheered most enthusiastically, said he thanked all present for the honour they had done him in being there that evening. It gave him great pleasure to see that he was not forgotten in Pontypridd. He referred to his vocation as a showman, that in travelling up the valley on Mabon's Day he saw thousands wandering about with no place of outdoor amusement to go to, and thinking it over as to the best means to give them the recreation they required, and, meeting with his friend, Mr. James, who entered into his plans with much spirit, he could see that good, sterling amusement for the people would command success, and thereupon commenced the speculation by opening the Mill Field as the "People's Park." Although they met with much opposition, and having also the elements against them, yet continued their efforts to please, and still meant to do so until they had made it a gigantic success.

Referring to his leaving the Welsh Harp, he said the only reason he was giving it up was that his other business suffered materially while he was away, and that he had made up his mind to stick to the amusement of the people in future, finding there was plenty of scope round Pontypridd to warrant their giving the people good interest for their money, and to receive their general support and commendation. Several songs were sung during the evening, the song by Mr. James (in Welsh) completely taking the audience by storm, and well merited the encore demanded,

as also the duet in Welsh by Messrs Morgan and James, who was also encored. The singing of "God Save the Queen" brought a most enjoyable evening to a close, all present wishing the worthy host and hostess every success and health.

These early months of 1892 saw no reports of the Mabon's Day athletic events. Either the new owners were slow on the takeover or were a bit lax in sending reports or advertisements to the local newspapers. It was April 1892 when the first report appeared: -

Easter Fair

(South Wales Daily News 19th April 1892)

The annual Easter fair was held at Pontypridd on Monday, and was visited during the day by thousands from the Rhondda and other valleys. Market-square was completely taken possession of by penny shows, Aunt Sally's*, merry-go-rounds, swings, and stalls of various kinds, but the principal thoroughfares, in accordance with the decision of the Local Board, were kept tolerably clear by the police. Fortunately, no accident occurred to mar the enjoyment of the populace. The switchback railway in the Mill field was largely patronised during the day.

* Aunt Sally is a traditional game usually played in pub gardens and fairgrounds, in which players throw sticks or battens at a ball, known as a 'dolly', balanced on top of a stick; traditionally, a model of an old woman's head was sometimes used.

The new company revealed

However, by the spring of 1892 the management of the People's Park had changed hands. The 'Free Press' of 23 April commented: - "As will be seen in our advertising columns, Athletic Sports, consisting of foot, bicycle and trotting races will be held at the People's Park next Mabon's Day. Over £80 will be offered for competition, and should attract a great number of competitors. The undertaking has now been taken over by a number of influential gentlemen, and registered under the name: "The Pontypridd People's Park and recreation Co. Ltd." All information in respected of the sports etc. can be had from the Secretary, Mr. E. Parry Thomas, 2 Berw Rd, Pontypridd."

People's Park Pontypridd

(Pontypridd Chronicle May 6th 1892)

On Monday, 2nd May 1892 (Mabon's Day), an interesting programme of athletic sports was gone through at the People's Park which is now under entirely new management. There was a fair attendance notwithstanding the threatening nature of the weather. The Park was well patronised, it being estimated that between 1,800 and 2,000 were admitted. The switchback and alpine railways were kept going

throughout the day The judges were: - Messrs Edmund Williams, John Thomas, Thomas Edwards, and W. Morris, bicycle works; starter, Mr. W. J. Concannon treasurer, Mr. R. L. Phillips, Colliers Arms, Pontypridd and secretary, Mr. E. Parry Thomas, Time-keeper, Mr. Thos. Pacey, of the well-known firm of Skarrat & Co., watch manufacturers, Worcester. The events were as follows:-

120 yards, Novice Race, Handicap, 1st prize £3, 2nd £1, 3rd 10/. First in each heat to run in second round, and first and second in second round to run in final: **First heat**, W. Howells, Pontypridd (Scratch); **second heat**, Hugh Jones, Pontypridd (six yards); **third heat**, W. Rowlands, Pontypridd (Scratch); second heat, Hugh Jones, Pontypridd (six yards); **third heat**, W. Rowlands, Pontypridd (5 yards); **fourth heat**, Rees Davies, Coedpenmaen (4 yards); **fifth heat**, J. Rees, Porth (scratch); **sixth heat**, E. J. Evans, Tylorstown (5 yards); **seventh heat**, Thomas Rees, Porth (scratch); **eighth heat**, J. Richards, Pontypridd (2 yards). **Final**: W. Howells, Pontypridd, 1st; Hugh - Jones, Pontypridd, 2nd; Thomas Rees, Porth, 3rd. W. Howells's sprinting prowess surprised everybody, and he will probably render a good account of himself at future sports. Time 13 seconds.

Bicycle Race, Two Miles Novice Handicap, 1st prize, silver cup 2nd, silver watch 3rd, electric bell. First and second to run in final. **First heat**: Wm. Jones, Coedpenmaen (scratch), 1st; Dd. Pritchard, Treharris (30 yards), 2nd; **Second heat**, 1st D. J. Evans, Norton Bridge (120 yards), 2nd; Charles Kingslake, Newtown (30 yards), 2nd. **Final**: Wm. Jones, 1st; Charles Kingslake, 2nd; and David Pritchard, 3rd. This was a very pretty race and was followed with much interest. Time, 6 minutes 57 seconds.

130 Yards Open Handicap. First prize £10, 2nd £1, 3rd £1. First in each heat to run in second round. First and second in second round to run in final. **First heat**, H. Mellow, Pontypridd (10 yards); **second heat**, Albert Morgan, Pontypridd (14 yards); **third heat**, D. Thomas, Rhydyfelen (7½ yards); **fourth heat**, S. Richards, Treharris (9 yards); **fifth heat**, W. Howells, Pontypridd (7½ yards); **sixth heat**, A. Blatchford, Quakers' Yard (5 yards). The **final** of this contest was looked forward to with much interest. Howells made a grand show and would most assuredly have won first place had not an onlooker got in his way along the track. As it was he won second place, Blatchford gaining first by a mere fluke. Richards had third prize. Time 13 1-5 seconds.

One and a Half Miles Trotting Handicap. 1st prize £10, 2nd £3, 3rd £1. **First heat**, Mr. Hy. Williams's (Llantrisant), "Flora" (50 yards); **second heat**, Mr. J. Davies' (Cwmaman), "Little Daisy" (140 yards); **third heat**, Mr. H. T. Morgan's (Aberdare), "Young Comer" (50 yards); **fourth heat**, Mr. Hy. Williams's (Llantrisant), "Kate" (150 yards); fifth heat, Mr. Griffith Jenkins's (Llantrisant),

"Bess" (80 yards). **Final:** "Bess," 1st; "Flora," 2nd; "Young Comer," 3rd. Bess exhibited superior form and won easily. Time, 4 minutes 47 seconds.

440 Yards Open Handicap. 1st prize £5, 2nd £2, 3rd £1. First and second in each heat to run in final. **First heat,** John Carey, Mountain Ash (scratch) 1st; Dd. Thomas, Rhydyfelen (10 yards) 2nd. **second heat,** A. Blatchford, Quakers' Yard (10 yards), 1st; P. Collins, Merthyr (23 yards), 2nd. **Final,** Carey 1st, Thomas 2nd, Blatchford 3rd. The time was 1 minute 11 1.5 seconds, but in explanation of this it should be stated that the race was run after dark.

Three Miles Open Handicap Bicycle Race. 1st prize £6, 2nd £2, 3rd £1. First and second in each heat to run in final. **First heat,** Alfred Lewis, Aberaman (scratch), 1st, H. T. Richards, Treharris (90 yards) 2nd; **second heat,** Wm. Jones, Coedpenmaen (150 yards), 1st, Thomas James, Mountain Ash (30 yards), 2nd. **Final,** Alfred Lewis 1st, Thomas James 2nd, H. T. Richards 3rd. Time, 6 minutes 181 seconds. The sports concluded about 9 o'clock.

The spring of 1892 saw an innovation by the new owners at the People's Park with the introduction of boxing, a sport that was slowly moving from illegal barefist fighting on the mountainside to properly organised events at indoor venues, such as the Victoria Inn in the high street.

Tom James v Jack Raymond People's Park 18th May 1892

This fight took place at the People's Park, which had started to emerge as an increasingly popular venue for glove fighting. The match caused a great deal of excitement in the town, with the police gradually beginning to show a great tolerance towards local venues being used for the purpose of boxing. The crowd was amongst the largest seen, being somewhere in the region of 1,500 strong. Both men were well known as fighting men in the town, although neither had done much to mark themselves out from the herd. Raymond had first come to the attention of the local fight crowd after an early and quite effortless victory over Jack Doad at Pontypridd's Victoria Hall. Raymond appeared to have taken his training for the match with Tom James lightly, choosing to stay at Pontypridd to do the training under the eye of local fighter and trainer 'Bungey' Hill. Training hadn't gone exactly as wished under Bungey as Raymond seemed quite fleshy, carrying at least half a stone of flab.

There was a formidable crew in Raymond's corner, consisting of William Samuels (barefist fighter), a promising Cardiff lad named Patsy Perkins who had recently returned to Wales from London, and Pontypridd fighter Tom Davies. Tom James appeared to have recovered particularly well from his defeat at the hands of Ynyshir mountain fighter Sam Butcher, and a hard training camp under the

watchful eye of trainer Oliver Hornett at Weston-Super Mare had ensured that the Aberaman man was trained to a hair and as fit as a fiddle. His corner was well stocked with Shoni Engineer (another barefist fighter), trainer Oliver Hornett and his once great rival, Sam Butcher assisting him.

Raymond's beefiness did not seem to put the local punters off betting on their man, and Raymond emerged as the favourite to take the honours, with odds of 2 to 1 being offered on his victory. At the start of the first round, James went tearing into the fray, throwing a fast left hand that caught the Pontypriddian flush on the jaw. Raymond lashed out but his punch went astray. In a blink the fight went to close range and with a fast exchange of punches ended in a huge right hand from Raymond that was skilfully avoided by James, who stopped Raymond's assault dead with a matching pair of fierce slashing right hands that halted his antagonist in his tracks. Although boxing with reckless abandon, it was clear that James was forcing his way to a definite points lead, continuing to dodge Raymond's blows while throwing near deadly shots at Raymond's jaw before switching to the body. By the end of the round, Raymond had been twice forced onto the ropes and it looked as though Tom James would have the match entirely his own way.

At the start of the second, Raymond appeared particularly distressed and it seemed as if the Pontypridd man would struggle to stay on his feet for very much longer. Acting on the advice of Sam Butcher and Shoni Engineer, Tom James hustled his opponent towards the ropes, landing stinging lefts and rights en route. Raymond in his exhaustion dropped his hands, and before he knew where he was, James was punching him in the face. The Pontypriddian took fright, but the beating that he had endured had taken a mighty toll. Following him about the ring, it took nothing more than the work of a second and one smashing straight punch to lay Jack Raymond flat out on the canvas, and the match was given to Tom James. It was the kind of victory that Tom James needed to feel like he was back on top.

The builder's strike at Pontypridd
(South Wales Daily News 27th May 1892)

There is still no change to report in the condition of affairs here, and a settlement of the long drawn-out dispute appears to be as far off as ever. Out of 300 masons who came out on strike the number in receipt of strike pay has, the men allege, now dwindled down to a little under 20, the remainder having found employment outside the district. The society carpenters who came out numbered 45, and of these, we are informed, less than a score are now maintained out of the Union funds. At a lodge meeting of the carpenters, held on Wednesday night at the Sportsman Hotel, a letter was read from Mr. P. R. James offering the use of the People's Park for holding a public demonstration, and the offer was gratefully accepted, and a letter of thanks was ordered to be sent to Mr. James.

Sports at the People's Park, Pontypridd.

(South Wales Star 10th June 1892)

On Saturday and Monday the usual monthly sports were held at the People's Park, Pontypridd, but, owing to the threatening aspect of the weather on the first day, when the heats were run, there were but a few spectators present. On Monday, however, the weather being all that could be desired, the number of persons who visited the park was very large. Messrs. W. M. Morris, Edward Williams, John Thomas, Thomas Jones, and J. Davies were the judges. The committee acted as handicappers, and Mr. T. Barnhouse as starter. The treasurer was Mr. R. L. Phillips, and the secretary, whose work was most admirably discharged, was Mr. E. Parry Thomas.

The following is the result of the races: -

Two miles Bicycle Handicap, first heat, 1, Evan Jones, Coedpenmaen (80 yards) 2, Alf. Lewis, Aberaman (scratch), 3, Wm. Jones..Coedpenmaen (150 yards). Second heat, 1 Charles Kingslake, Pontypridd (200 yards) 2, Alf. Osborne, Norton Bridge (80 yds.) Tom James, Mountain Ash (25 yards). Final heat, first prize, £5, Tom James second prize, 30s. C. Kingslake third prize, 10s.

130 yards Open Handicap. 1st prize, £10; 2nd. £2 3rd, £1; 20 entered. First heat, A Blatchford, Quaker's Yard (8 yards) Wilson Elley. Pontypridd (9 yards). Second heat, H. Mellow, Pontypridd (15 yards) W. H. Middle, Tonypany (11; yards). Third heat, Hugh Jones, Pontypridd C. Shelton, Treharris Fourth heat, W. Howells, Pontypridd (11 yards) B. Skym, Cilfynydd (15 yards). Fifth heat, D. Thomas, Rhydfelen (12 yards) and T. Evans, Tonypany (10 yards). Final heat, 1, Hugh Jones 2, W. Howells 3, C. Shelton.

Glove fight for £100 at Pontypridd People's Park

T. R. Edwards v Tom Morgan 19th June 1892

Disgraceful arrangements (Evening Express 20th June 1892)

There was a large crowd of spectators at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday night 19th June 1892, to witness the encounter between T. R. Edwards, of Aberaman, and Tom Morgan, of Treharris, for £50 a-side. Neither of them had any previous record to recommend them beyond a few rough-and-tumble fights in the district. This was their first encounter in the ring. Edwards was trained at Weston by Oliver Hollett, while Morgan, who had gone further afield, had taken his 'breathers' at the Grove, Handsworth, Birmingham, where he was looked after by Jack Edmunds and Anthony Diamond. Both the contestants weighed within a few ounces of the 8 stone required. Edwards was seconded by Tom James, of Aberaman, T. S. Jones, and Shoni Engineer. Mr. Watson, of the 'Sporting Life' was referee.

The arrangements made were of a most disgraceful character, and necessitated the referee, principals, and seconds, being in the ring during the fight, while the encounter was seriously interfered with by the public hanging onto the ropes and mounting the platform. Under such conditions it is hardly likely that another fight would be held at Pontypridd. On facing each other the men soon got about their work. Morgan, despite the advantage held by his opponent in the matter of height and reach, early showed his superiority from a scientific point of view. Edwards, however, had the best of the fighting from the first round, and odds at this time were freely laid upon his chance.

Rounds two and three were, however, more in favour of Morgan, who seemed to go a bit stronger, and more often got home with his left. In the fifth round Edwards came up a little fresher, and in the opening stages had a trifle best of the fighting. Morgan, however, soon game to the front again, and at the finish of this round honours were easy. In the sixth round Morgan again commenced to take the lead, and, repeatedly getting home with both hands, had got his opponent on the ropes at the finish of the round. At the commencement of the seventh and last round Edwards was very groggy, and after a feeble effort with his left, Morgan replied with a regular rib-bender, the latter, forcing his man into the corner, cross with his right, and catching Edwards behind the ear, he went to the boards, and, not rising in the stipulated time, the fight was awarded to Morgan.

Pigeon shooting at Pontypridd July 14th 1892

The members of the Cardiff and Rhondda Gun Clubs met on Wednesday to compete for Ellicott's Cup and medal at the People's Park; Pontypridd. A great deal of interest was centred in the event, as the cup became the absolute property of the winner, so keen shooting took place, as will be seen by the appended results. The cup, with an optional 10s sweep, brought 18 shooters to the mark. The stipulations were seven birds at 27 yards rise. Three of the 18 killed up the seven, viz., Mr. Kidd and Mr. House, Cardiff, and Mr. John Davies, Rhondda. On the eighth round Mr. House missed, two being now left in the field. Excitement he came intense when the Rhondda man missed his ninth bird, leaving Mr. Kidd to kill to win. Curiously enough Mr. Kidd missed his ninth bird also.

This put the men on even terms again, but the Rhondda man failed to kill his eleventh bird, and Mr. Kidd was left the victor, taking the cup and first prize in the sweep, Mr. John Davies (Rhondda) winning the medal as second prize, and Mr. John House (Cardiff) taking second place. After the cup came a sweep for a £25 gun, put up by the Rhondda Club. After Mr. Brooks (Cardiff) and Mr. W. Day (Cardiff) had killed 16 birds each, a price was offered for the gun, which was accepted, and the two gentlemen named divided the spoil.

A sweepstake followed, which was divided between Messrs Kidd and House (Cardiff) and J. Evans (Rhondda). Great credit is due to Mr. D. Jones, Blue Anchor, Cardiff, and Mr. W. Lewis, Royal Oak, Cardiff, for the excellent way in which they carried out the arrangements, and also for putting up the cup for competition. Mr. Thomas, Pontypridd, was referee, and Mr. S. T. Jones, Cardiff, scorer. A good supply of birds was furnished by Mr. T. Flook, of Cardiff.

Sunday school demonstration (Thursday July 28th 1892)

The various Church of England Sunday Schools in the town held their annual demonstration on Thursday, when the members, children and adults, marched in procession through the principal streets, headed by the Church Army Band of Aberdare. The schools taking part were St. Catherine's, St. Matthew's (Coedpenmaen), Pwllgwaun, and the Graig Mission. Tea was subsequently served in the Parish-room, after which the members adjourned to the People's Park where a most enjoyable evening was spent.

Stables for rent

At the end of July 1892 the local board received a letter from the secretary of the Pontypridd People's Park to the effect that he was prepared to rent the stables of the owners of the park to the board at £40 per annum. The chairman mentioned that the board had a scheme which would make the renting of the stables unnecessary, and the matter was allowed to drop.

LONG CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIP OF SOUTH WALES (South Wales Daily News 23rd August 1892)

A bicycle contest for the long distance championship of south Wales is being run this week at the People's Park, Pontypridd, and excited considerable interest in cycling circles. The conditions of the race stipulated that there should be 24 hours run of 4 hours per day, commencing on Monday and finishing at 7 o'clock on Saturday evening next. The premiums offered consisted of the prize of £10 and a gold medal; a second prize of £3; and a fourth of £2, with an additional prize of £1 each day for longest distances.

First day's record

There were a large number of entries, and these were reduced by the committee to eight, of whom, however, five only appeared on the track to start. They were: - Tom James, Aberaman; Alf Osborne, Pontypridd; W. Jones, Pontypridd; H. T. Richards, Treharris; and George Tupper, Pontypridd. The track was measured seven laps to the mile. For the first few laps, the competitors ran side by side, but

soon Osborne and James took up the lead, and gradually increased it up to the finish. At the end of 25 miles, Osborne left James behind, and at the firing of the pistol, he led by five miles. Tupper, at an early stage had the misfortune to hurt his knee, and was in consequence forced to retire from the contest after completing 23 miles and three laps. The score for the day was:-

A. Osborne	74 miles	1 lap
Tom James	69 “	1 lap
W. James	64 “	6 laps
H. T. Richards	63	2 laps

Mr. T. Pacey, King’s Head, kept time with a chronometer lent by Messrs Skarratt and Co. of Worcester, and his “timing” of the leader at the completion of ten miles is given below:

10 miles in 0 hours	29 min.	3 seconds
20 miles in 0 “	59 “	43 “
30 “ 1 “	33 “	0 “
40 “ 2 “	7 “	25 “
50 “ 2 “	45 “	45 “
60 “ 3 “	14 “	55 “
70 “ 3 “	46 “	47 “
74 & 1 lap	4 hours.	

In other words Osborne accomplished 20 miles in first 59mins 43 seconds, and 37 miles 4 laps at the end of the second hour; 55 miles and 5 laps at the end of the third; and 74 miles 1 lap at the end of the fourth. The lap scoring arrangements were admirably carried out by Mr. W. M. Morris, of the Pontypridd Cycle Works, and Mr. E. Parry Thomas, Sportsman Hotel, efficiently discharged the secretarial duties.

Second day’s record

The contest at the People’s Park, for the long distance bicycle championship of south Wales was resumed on Tuesday, when the same runners again appeared on the track, with the addition of a new runner in the person of Richard Morgan. Alf Osborne, although not in so good a form as on the previous day, when he led by five miles, still easily maintained the lead, and at the end of the day’s race was again the winner, beating the second man, Richards, by five miles and three laps. Richards, who came in last on Monday, improved his position considerably on Tuesday, coming in second on the day’s achievement. Tom James, second best on the first day, did very badly, covering 18 miles less, and taking fourth place for the day. It should be explained, however, that was largely due his misfortune in breaking the tyres of his machine, and being compelled to wait 17 minutes for

another machine to be obtained. Tupper, who was injured on Monday, and retired after covering 23 miles 3 laps, again put in an appearance, and placed another 53 miles to the credit of his account. Osborne's time for the day was taken as follows:

-

10 miles in 0 hours 31 mins 25 seconds.

20	“	in	1	“	2	“	30	“
30	“	in	1	“	35	“	55	“
40	“	in	2	“	12	“	30	“
50	“	in	2	“	50	“	5	“
60	“	in	3	“	26	“	4	“

The results of the running on Tuesday are as follows: -

A. Osborne	63 miles 4 laps
H. T. Richards	58 “ 1 “
George Tupper	53 “ 4 “
Tom James	51 “ 6 “
W. Jones	49 “ 1 “
R. Morgan	43 “ 6 “

Total score for the two days now stands as follows: -

A. Osborne	137 miles 5 laps
H. T. Richards	121 “ 3 “
Tom James	121 “ 0 “
W. Jones	114 “ 4 “
George Tupper	77 “ 0 “
R. Morgan	48 “ 6 “

In consequence of a severe shower of rain on Tuesday the contest was terminated 23 minutes short of the completion of the prescribed hours.

Third day's record.

James beats Osborne

The 24 hours' bicycle race for the long distance championship of south Wales resumed on Wednesday, in the presence of a largely increased crowd of spectators, at the People's Park. Richard Morgan, who ran on Tuesday, and George Tupper, who broke down on Monday and entered the lists again on Tuesday, were both absent yesterday, so that the day's running was confined to Alf. Osborne, Tom James, W. Jones, and Howell T. Richards. Morgan's absence was said to be due to the breakdown of his machine, while Tupper was suffering from the effects of Monday's accident. Osborne, who has led throughout, was on Wednesday

subjected to several reversals. For two hours after the start he and James rode well together, but Osborne unfortunately tumbled off, thus giving James an opportunity to run forward by fully a lap - a lead which he steadfastly maintained until the close of the day. James showed much better form than on the previous day, and his backers are sanguine he will yet out distance Osborne before the close of the contest. The race on Wednesday was varied by two 'rests' - one for thirty-five minutes, between the second and third hour, and another of sixteen minutes' duration between the third and fourth hour. The following shows the leader's speed for the day, Osborne being slightly in front for the first twenty-five miles, when James took up the running, and passed: -

10 miles in 0 hours 34 minutes 0 seconds
 20 miles in 1 " 6 " 40 "
 30 miles in 1 39 " 10
 35 miles (James leading) in 2 hours 32 minutes 30 seconds
 40 miles in 2 hours 43 minutes 4 seconds
 60 miles in 3 " 49 " 50 "

The following record shows the distance covered during the day by each rider: -

James	57 miles	6 laps
Osborne	57 "	4 "
Richards	52 "	1 "
Jones	45 "	4 "

Bringing the total for the three days to the following figures: -

Osborne	195 miles	2 laps
James	176 "	5 "
Richards	173 "	4 "
Jones	160 "	1 "

Comparisons with Tuesday's record shows that while James has gained five miles 6 laps, Osborne has lost exactly 6 miles. Richards also lost 6 miles and Jones four miles and one lap. The prize for the greatest distance covered during Wednesday was taken by James, while Osborne is still the favourite for first place in the long distance championship.

Fourth day's running (Thursday)

The 24 hours' bicycle race for the long distance championship of South Wales resumed on Thursday at the People's Park when Alf. Osborne, Pontypridd; Tom James Aberaman; W. Jones, Pontypridd; and H. T. Richards, Treharris, again

appeared on the track. George Tupper and Morgan, who ran on the previous days, were absent. For the first 25 miles Jones led, at one time by as much as a lap, but after a spell of 17 minutes for refreshments Osborne and James gained considerable ground, and soon left Jones far behind. During the 59th mile Jones had the misfortune to damage his cogwheel, and had to retire for the day, while Richards also fell out after adding 51 miles 1 lap to his score. From then to the finish, Osborne and James kept steadily together, but at the call of time James gave a spurt and came in leading by a couple of yards. The day's record was then announced by Mr. W. Morris, of the Cycle works, Pontypridd, who is arranging the lap scoring: -

Tom James	63 miles	6 laps
Alf. Osborne	“	“ “ “
H. T. Richards	51	“ 1 “
W. Jones	50	“ 0

Mr. T. Pacey kept time with Skarratt & Co's chronometer. The total distances covered by the competitors during the 16 hours over which the contest has now extended, are as follows: -

Alf Osborne	259 miles	1 laps
Tom James	242	“ 4 “
H. T. Richards	224	“ 5 “
W. Jones	210	“ 1 “

Fifth day's running (Friday)

The 24 hours' bicycle race for the long distance championship of South Wales resumed on Thursday at the people's Park on Friday. The contestants were Alf. Osborne, Pontypridd; Tom James, Aberaman; W. Jones, Coedpenmaen; and Howell Richards, Treharris. Mr. Pacey, the timekeeper, announced the day's record as follows: -

Tom James	57 miles	0 laps
Alf Osborne	57	“ 0 “
W. Jones	39	“ 1 “
H. Richards	43	“ 3 “

The total distances covered by the competitors during the hours over which the contest has now extended are as follows: -

Alf. Osborne	326 miles
Tom James	299 “

H. T. Richards	267	“
W. Jones	249	“

Sixth day's running – The result (Saturday)

Owing to the inclemency of the weather, it was decided by the committee on Saturday afternoon, about an hour before the time specified to resume the final contest, to postpone the proceedings, and telegrams were despatched to the competitors requesting them not to put in an appearance on the ground that day. However, during the afternoon Tom James, Mountain ash, who had covered a distance of 299 miles on Friday evening, and was 27 miles behind Alf. Osborne, arrived on his bicycle in the enclosure of the People's Park, and intimated that he had made up his mind to run, notwithstanding the unfavourable conditions of the track and the torrents of rain descending at times. Mr. Pacey and several members of the committee explained to James that Osborne was 27 miles ahead of him he would stand no chance whatever of winning. It was therefore agreed that Alf. Osborne should be declared the winner for the 1st prize for the Long distance Championship of South Wales; Tom James the 2nd prize; H. Richards, 3rd prize; and W. Jones, the fourth prize.

The winner of the medal

Alf Osborne was then sent for and the terms of the agreement having been explained to him, he unhesitatingly agreed to them, and therefore, declared the winner of the medal given by Mr. Morris, Cycle Works, Pontypridd. Osborne is 21 years of age, 5 feet 6 inches in height, and works at a quarry at Pontypridd.

The present season is the third in which he has been engaged in bicycle contests, and during the previous season he won about £130 altogether in various competitions. He was trained this season by Evan Rowlands, Pontypridd, in the People's Park, and his trainer states that Osborne is quite prepared to beat the record of 80 miles covered in four hours either on the Harlequins' or Newport ground, provided a substantial sum be guaranteed by responsible gentlemen in connection with the enclosure.

Osborne rode a "Beeston Humber;" James a "Raleigh;" and James a "Beeston Humber," all the machines having pneumatic tyres. The medal for the long distance championship was presented by Mr. Morris himself at the King's Hotel, Pontypridd, on Thursday evening. Cyclists from Pontypridd and adjacent districts had been invited to attend.

Sports at Pontypridd

On Monday, 5th September 1892 a very successful Athletics Sports were held at the People's Park, in fine weather and in the presence of a large number of spectators. The judges were Messrs. W. M. Morris, Edward Williams, John Thomas, and Thomas Jones; handicappers, the committee; starter, Mr. George Ham; treasurer, Mr. R. L Phillips; and secretary, Mr. E. Parry Thomas. The following are the results: -

Two miles Novice Bicycle Race: - 1st. D. J. Evans (40 yards); 2nd. John Davies (100 yards); 3rd. George Tapper (30 yards).

120 Yards Open Handicap: - 1st Jack Miles, Treforest (4 yards); 2nd George Evans, Porth (2½ yards); 3rd. John Rees, Porth (10 yards).

440 yards Open Handicap: - 1st. B. Williams, Porth (10 yards); 2nd. George Evans, Porth (15 yards); 3rd. F. F. Gardner, Pontypridd (18 yards).

One and a Half Miles Trotting Handicap: - 1st. E. Williams, Blaenheuwisg, "Lille May" (50 yards); 2nd. A. Watkins, Merthyr, "Young Corner" (20 yards); 3rd. E. Davies, Cwmaman, "Little Daisy" (90 yards).

Chapter three

1893

Site for Eisteddfod

The year 1893 would be a poor year for sports in Pontypridd and the Great Western Colliery disaster on 11th April, when 63 men and boys were killed in an underground explosion, severely hit the People's Park, and sports only started being reported the following month. July 1893 would see the National Eisteddfod held at Pontypridd and at one point Coedpenmaen Common or the People's Park was considered as the site for it to be held. However, the following story in January that shows that the People's Park already had deep financial problems: -

Creditors meeting. - On Thursday last at the Official Receivers office, Merthyr, a meeting was held of Philip Robin James, theatrical agent, 2, Park Street, Temperance Town, Cardiff, formerly residing at Albert House, Pontypridd. The gross liabilities were estimated at £998 3s 6d, the deficiency explained being £580. Debtor alleged the cause of his failure to be losing about £1,700 through catering for the public in connection with the People's Park, Pontypridd, the Boston Minstrels, and Paul Jones's Opera Company.

People Park cheaper than Ynysangharad

Pontypridd Chronicle 17th February 1893

The following letter appearing in the local newspaper question where the National Eisteddfod marquee should be placed in July: - To the editor. Sir,—I find that the committees are very undecided in this matter and about as far off as ever. Although Mr. Leyshon mentioned at the (Council) meeting on Monday last that the committee had been unanimous in selecting Ynysangharad, I find this is really incorrect, as instead of their being unanimous, it was 5 out of 16 members present who voted, the other remaining neutral rather than vote for the site which would undoubtedly be the most expensive they could obtain. The cost of a road to Ynysangharad will be at least £150 and another £50 for appropriating the Cottage Garden near the Old Maltsters to make a suitable entrance. Then there is £70 for rent, and about £200 for hoarding which Mr. Lenox demands. These items together with hire of turnstiles, &c, will make a total of just £500 over and above the cost of pavilion and say nothing about the cost of a proposed bridge. The other scheme is to erect the pavilion at the People's Park and this will be much more advantageous to the eisteddfod as the Park Company have offered the free and full use of the Park turnstiles, and also to pay the eisteddfod £750 for the pavilion after they have done with it - so that Pontypridd may then possess a permanent building capable of holding 20,000 people for mass meetings and other purposes. The only bone of contention is the approaches, but they can be vastly improved with very

little trouble as the roads are well hardened now as well as the grounds, and would not become as sloppy after rain as the Ynysangharad Field would be. This scheme would relieve the committee of all trouble afterwards in removing and clearing away - as I hear the architect estimates that it with cost at least £250 to pull down the building at Ynysangharad after it is done with. Therefore, if the finances can be reduced by £500 by going to the People's Park. I contend it is only fair in justice to the guarantors that this site should be accepted at once. **Yours, a guarantor.** Eventually the council decided to hold the event at Ynysangharad.

Cycle Contests and Sports at Pontypridd.

May Day festivities

The first annual May Day Show and procession for Pontypridd, Rhondda Valley, and district was held on Monday, May 1st, and attracted considerable attention. The movement had been very heartily taken up in the district, and, thanks to the efforts of the committee and the secretary, Mr. E. Parry Thomas, the show was a decided success. The procession assembled at the People's Park at noon, and paraded the principal thoroughfares of the town, headed by the Penrhiw and the Ynysybwll brass bands. The streets en route were crowded, and a handsome collection, amounting to about £15, was made in aid of the Great Western Relief Fund. The mounted marshals were Messrs E. Treharne, J. S. Davies, Thomas Jones, R. L. Phillips, R. W. Evans, John Thomas, and Superintendent Jones; while Messrs Thomas Forrest, W. M. Morris, Wm. Morgan, W. C. W. Groves acted as stewards. In addition to the ordinary exhibits in shows of this character, the procession included members of the local lodges of the Operative Stonemasons and the Amalgamated Joiners and Carpenters, the latter being preceded by a van bearing a very accurate representation of the frame and sheaves of the Hetty Pit of the Great Western Colliery. Progress of cycling during the past 40 years was well illustrated by Messrs Morris Brothers, who sent a conveyance showing the various roadsters in use from the year 1855 to the present day. Other novel turnouts were those of the Gasworks Company, showing gas appliances and fixtures the Pontypridd Coach building Company, Banfield and Company, mineral water manufacturers, and others.

The following were the awards, the judges being Messrs Thomas Thomas, Cowbridge; Capt. Lindsay, Ystrad Mynach; D. Rees, Ferndale; R. J. Matthias, Pontypridd; and S. G. Evans, Ynysybwll:— **Colliery horse or Mare 2**, Richard Treharne. Glyncoch Mills, Pontypridd. **Horse, harness, and cart, van, or merchants, contractors, and hauliers** (prize given by Dr. Morgan, Hafod)—1, David Griffiths, contractor, Pontypridd, and the Glamorganshire Canal Company, Pontypridd 2, Nicholas Showark, of the firm of W. Thomas and Co., builders, and Henry Green, T.V.R., Pontypridd. **Horse, harness, and cart or wagons belonging to tradesmen**—1, Griffiths Evans, grocer, Pontypridd 2, D,

Griffiths, undertaker, Pontypridd. **Horse, harness, and dray, float, or wagon, brewers only** - 1, William Greenwood, of the Newbridge Rhondda Brewery 2, J. J. Evans, Brewery, Pontypridd. **Horse, harness and brake plying for hire** - 1, Edward Powis, Pontypridd 2, John Walters, Graig-terrace, Pontypridd. Milk vendors' turnout - A. H. Sims, Pontypridd 2, John Williams, Bridge-street, Pontypridd. **Horse, harness, and trap** - 1, John Trenchard, Clarence Hotel, Pontypridd 2, John Rosser, Ystrad Hotel, Ystrad. **Pony, trap, and harness not exceeding 13.2 hands** - 1, Sam Evans, Penygraig 2, Daff Williams, butcher, Penygraig. **Pair of horses and brake, suitable for hiring for pleasure purposes**, W. Powis, Pontypridd 2, John Wilkes, cab proprietor, Pontypridd. **Horse, not less than 14.2 hands, to be ridden, speed and action to be considered** - 1, Wm. Williams, Market-square, Pontypridd 2, W. Powis, Pontypridd. **Pony or cob under 14 hands, to be ridden** (given by Mr J. D. Williams, Tonypandy) - 1, Daff Williams, butcher, Penygraig 2, H. Davies, Greenfield Hotel, Ystrad 3, Sam Evans, Penygraig. **Most novel turnout, representing any local industry** - 1, Pontypridd Gasworks Co., per Mr. C. H. Henderson, and Pontypridd Coach Building Co., Ltd., Pontypridd 2, John Jones, for A. S. C. and joiners, Pontypridd, and Morris Bros., Pontypridd, representing progress of cycling- for the past 40 years. Prizes divided. **Donkey and cart** - Otto Tungnickel, Pontypridd. Col. Grover was the president and Mr. D. Leyshon the vice-president of the show.

In the afternoon sports were held when a goodly crowd attended. **1½ Mile novice bicycle handicap**, 1st prize £2, and £1, 3rd 10s. First heat, 1, T. Price, Cwmbach 2, B. Llewellyn, Aberaman. Second heat -1, Evan Games, Cilfynydd 2, T. Thomas, Pontypridd, **120yds Final** — 1, E. Games 2, T. Thomas; 3, B. Llewellyn. **Two mile open safety handicap**. First heat, A. Osborne, Norton Bridge, 90yds T. Potter, Aberaman, 95yds, and W. James, Coedpenmaen, 150yds. Second heat, Alf Lewis, Aberaman, scratch; C. Kingslake, Pontypridd, 95yds; and D. Evans, Pontypridd, 160yds. **Final**—1, Alf Osborne 2, W. James; 3, T. Potter. The following teams entered for the **Football tournament**—Victoria Lions, scratch, captain Harry Williams Pontypridd Seconds, 4 points, Captain, P. Devereaux; Butchers Boys, 6pts, Captain J. Holloway; Glyntaff Rovers, 10pts, captain, George Gould; Wattstown Juniors, 12 points; captain, C. Bevan and Aberdare Harlequins, 16pts; captain, W. Williams, After a hard tussle the first prize was awarded to the Victoria Lions, and the second to the Pontypridd Juniors.

Forrester's Fete and Gala Sports at Pontypridd.

The 26th annual fete, gala, and sports in connection with the Foresters of the Pontypridd district was held on Whit-Monday May 22nd inst; 1893 at the People's Park, Pontypridd, and attracted many thousands of spectators. In the morning, the members of the various Courts, arrayed in their regalia, marched in procession through the principal streets of the town, preceded by the Penrhiw Brass

Band. At the sports Mr. G. Ham officiated as starter, and Messrs Firbank King, and J. F. McClune as judges, the secretarial duties being, as usual, discharged by Mr. A. Parsons. In the bicycle contests the judging was entrusted to Mr. W. M. Morris, of the Cycle Works. The following were the principal events: -

Boys' Race (twice round the course) – 1st, W. E. Forman, Pontypridd, 10yds. 2, George Alder- man, 45yds. 3, A Morgan, 45yds. **120 Yards Handicap (local)** - 1, J. Hackett, Pontypridd, 10½yds, 2, L. Wride, Pontypridd, 12yds. 3, D. Baker, Pontypridd, (9½yds. **1½ Miles' Bicycle Handicap**—1, T. James, Aberaman, 14yds. 2, A Osborne, 45yds. 3, Alf. Lewis, scratch. Osborne, however, having passed Lewis in the last lap on the inside, was disqualified. **120 Yards Open Handicap** - 1, J. Dike, Hopkinstown, 14½yds 2, J. Hackett, Pontypridd, 15½yds.; 3, J. Mills, Pontypridd, 11½yds. **Three Miles Bicycle Race** - 1, T. James, Aberaman, 30yds 2, A. Osborne, 90yds 3, J Potter, 190yds. **440 Yards Handicap** - 1, J Hackett, Pontypridd, 27yds. 2, T. Evans, Pandy, 10yds. 3, G Cosslett, Pontypridd, 30yds. **Football Race**-Pontypridd Juniors. **One Mile Handicap** - 1, M. Perkins. Porth, 100yds 2, J Hackett, 115yds 3, Charlie Powell, Crickhowell, scratch. In the evening a magnificent display of fireworks was given by Messrs W. and J. Wilder.

Glove fight at Pontypridd South Wales Echo 20th June 1893

The glove fight between T. R. Edwards, of Aberaman, and T. Morgan, of Treharris, for £50 a-side, came off on last night at the People's Park, Pontypridd, in the presence of a large crowd, it was the first occasion on which the men had met in the ring, and both scaled within a few ounces of the required 8 stone. Tom James, T. S. Jones, and "Shoni Engineer" acted as seconds to Edwards, while Morgan was supported by Anthony Diamond, Jack Edwards, and Edmonds. Little time was lost once the men stepped into the ring, and they set about their work in real earnest. Morgan displayed far better scientific powers than his opponent in the first round, but the advantage held in the matter of height and reach enabled Edwards to get in several hot uns. Odds freely laid on Edwards Morgan showed up much better in the next two rounds, and got his left home effectively.

The fifth and sixth round saw Morgan again take the lead, time after time getting home with both arms, and driving his opponent to the ropes, when the sixth round finished. Edwards looked very groggy when he stood up for the seventh and last round. Morgan immediately availed himself of his opportunity for after getting in a swinging blow on the ribs, he forced his man into the corner, and catching Edwards under the ear sent him to the boards. Edwards failed to rise in the stipulated time, and the fight was accordingly awarded to Morgan. The arrangements were very bad, and during the time the fight was in progress the referee, principals, and

seconds were in the ring, while the public were frequently hanging to the ropes and ascending the platform.

Glove fight at Pontypridd

Monday 3rd July 1893

A glove contest for a purse of £50 came off in a large presence of spectators at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on the above evening, the combatants being two young fellows name Tom Israel, of Pontypridd, and William Evans, Pandy. Mr. Edward Jones was referee. In the first round Israel was knocked down once and Evans twice, but in the second round Israel followed his man all round the ring, and gave him a severe thrashing, Evans not coming out to time. The award was given in favour of Israel, but Evans' backers claimed two fouls, and these not being conceded, a scene of considerable rowdyism ensued.

Church treat

Pontypridd Chronicle July 28th 1893

On Thursday last the members of the St. Catherine's Church Sunday School to the number of about 600 had their annual treat. They were accompanied by the Vicar, the Rev. H. J. Williams, and the Rev W. G. Morgan, curate, while the teachers marshalled the company as they paraded through the streets, headed by the Pontypridd Volunteer Band. Tea was provided at the parish rooms where full justice was done to the good things at the disposal of the youngsters. After tea a start was made to the People's Park where they were treated with nuts and sweets, the gift of Mr. A. E. Belcher. Various games were indulged in until dusk, when a procession was formed and they all marched from the Park to St. Catherine's-street and thence to their various homes.

Strike of Chainmakers at Pontypridd.

The chainmakers lately in the employ of Messrs Brown, Lenox and Co., at Pontypridd, and who are now on strike, on Saturday held an open-air demonstration to enlist the sympathy of the public on their behalf. The strikers, preceded by the Penrhiw Brass Band, marched through the principal thoroughfares a subsequently held two meetings, one at the People's Park, and the other near the Maltsters' Arms. The original intention of meeting on the Tumble and in Tabernacle square had to be abandoned owing to police interference. Mr. Edward Morgan, president of the Pontypridd Trades Council occupied the chair at both meetings, and addresses were delivered by Messrs Tom England, Cardiff; James Harrison, Barry; J. Catheray, G. Gaze, Isaac Lisle, E. Plummer, and others. Mr. Bloomer, one of the chainmakers concerned, explained the attitude adopted by the workmen. They objected, he said, to the conditions which the employers sought to impose upon them, and especially the suggested new system of time-checking,

which, in the case of piece-workers, was, he declared, infamous. Fifty-four men were now on strike. Their trade as chainmakers involved hard and arduous toil, and they became so hot and perspired so much that "spells" of an hour or so became frequently necessary. The new system, if adopted, would prevent them from going out of the works to their meals as hitherto, or even to leave the works at any time without giving sufficient reason for so doing, but the men were determined to fight against this. (Cheers.)—A resolution approving of the action of the chainmakers was then put and carried unanimously.

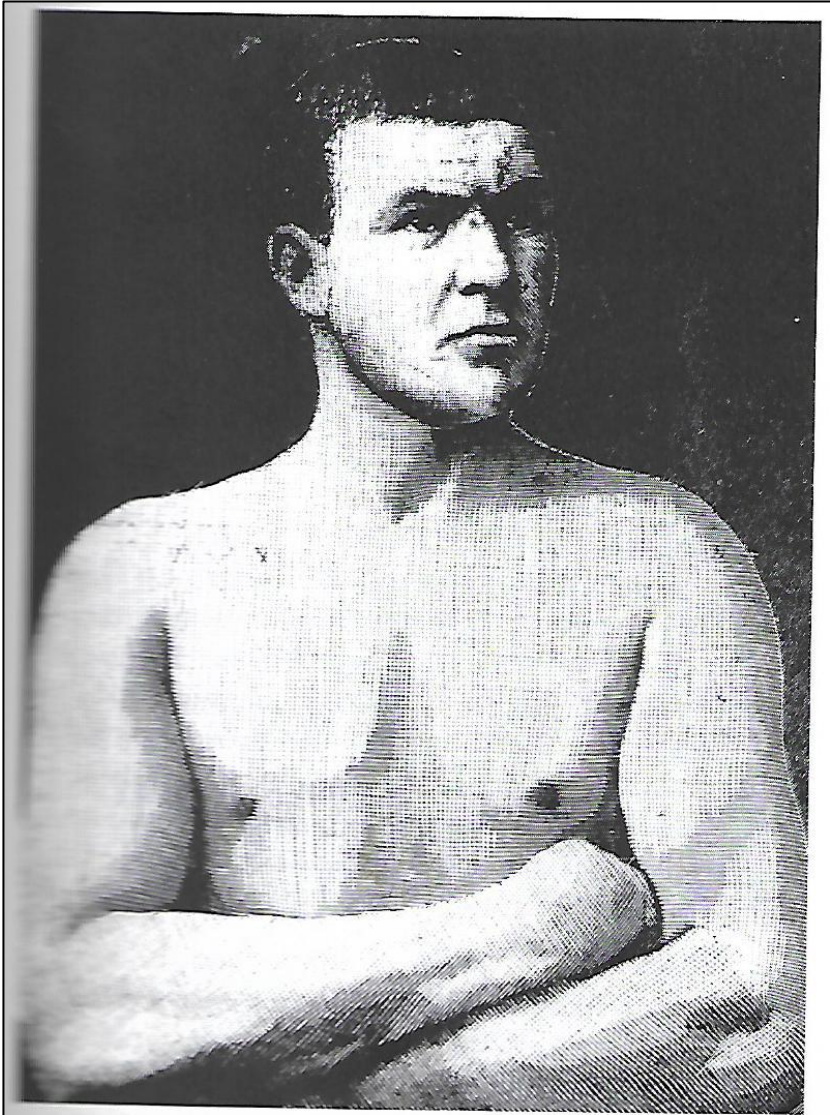
Dai St. John v Tom James
People's Park 6th September 1893

A rematch between Dai St. John, heavyweight champion of Wales and Tom James (Aberaman) took place at the People's Park on 6th September 1893 for £30 a-side. As Tom James stood six foot high and usually weighed about 13 stone and was roughly the same age as St. John, he was as good an opponent as was likely to be found to have half a chance of standing up against the Resolven giant, despite being defeated by St. John at the start of the year. For this reason the prospect of another fight between these two had 'battle of the giants' written all over it, and was eagerly awaited by local fight fans. Dai was always nearer fifteen stone than fourteen and appeared to almost reach into the clouds, being six foot 3 inches tall and people would stop in the street and gaze in wonder at his size, as most Welshmen at this time were short in stature.

The locals at Pontypridd had taken the big man from Resolven to their hearts. With such a large local following, the match was a guaranteed earner. There was some disappointment that no indoor venue had been secured for the match, although the Park did have the advantage that vast numbers of spectators could be accommodated with greater ease. Tom James had taken matters a great deal more seriously than he had in their previous encounter, and both men appeared to be in perfect condition.

Dai had trained under the watchful eyes of Sam Butcher. Morgan Crowther had also offered his expertise, helping Dai prepare at the seaside town of Porthcawl. The decision to use Crowther, the past master of endurance fighting, paid off handsomely. The Resolven man weighed in at a chiselled 14 stones. Tom James was also prepared for a hard fight having relocated to Weston-Super-Mare for his training and had put his faith in the well known trainer Oliver Hornett and was in better shape than ever before, being 13 stone and in hard condition.

Dai sprung into action, leading off with his left as he attempted to stamp his authority on the fight from the opening round. Tom James refused to be drawn and stopped Dai's left and sent in a rib bender that checked the giant's pace. Dai quickly discovered that this was not the Tom James of old. As the end of the round



Dai. St. John – The Resolven Giant

approached, Dai took the fight to his game opponent, using his superior strength and power to drive the Aberaman man about the ring, landing a number of shots on the face and body, enabling him to take the first round.

If Dai had the upper hand, it didn't last for long. The second round saw James renew his assault. His superior short arm work paid off, and he landed a crashing right cross that detonated at the point of Dai's jaw. The giant staggered across the ring and for a few moments appeared dangerously close to collapse. Tom James was slow to seize the extraordinary opportunity that had been placed before him. Against all odds St. John somehow managed to recover well enough to put up a cautious defence and last out a round that had looked for a moment as if it could well be his last.

By the third round, the physical exertion of the fight had taken its toll, with both men having been greatly weakened by their efforts. Exchanges were wild, and Tom James was the first to get home a punch of any real merit, landing heavily on Dai St. John's mouth.

Dai appeared groggy and out of sorts throughout the round although James' inexperience went against him and he failed to capitalize on the situation. The great strength of the giant was slowly beginning to ebb, and as time went on it looked as though James would outwork the larger man. James landed two hard punches on the neck in the fourth round before getting clean away from the giant, and ended the round visibly livelier than his rival.

The Resolven giant refused to give in, and in the fifth round he brought all his terrifying power into play, forcing the fight. Dai bulldozed his opponent and tried to open up the Aberaman man with his great left hand. In the middle of the round he finally saw his opening, and landed an uppercut that lifted Tom James clear off his feet, and sent him crashing back into a heap in the corner of the ring. James valiantly scrambled to his feet, but in an instant, St. John set about him with renewed vigour with both hands and forced his opponent across the ring. Finally James was sent into the ropes and the round ended with Dai raining punches down on his rapidly buckling adversary.

The fight ended in the sixth round after Dai knocked James deep into a corner. Trapped, half beaten and confused, there was no way to avoid the punches that kept coming and before long James was smashed into submission by Dai St. John.

Running match at Pontypridd
(South Wales Daily News 5th December 1893)

A 120 yards running match, for £ 20 a-side, took place on, Monday at the People's Park, Pontypridd, between Rees Davies, of Coedpenmaen, Pontypridd,

and David Jones, of Merthyr. Both men were in the pink of condition, and from two to three hundred spectators assembled. Davies, the local man, led all the way and won by a yard.

The year 1893 seemed to see the end of athletics at the People's Park and perhaps the leaseholders decided it wasn't viable any more, but somehow through the years apart from the annual police inspection only the occasional boxing match was held there. The Taff Vale Park at Treforest was also drawing away all the athletic and charity events and only when events clashed would the People's Park be used.

1894

Pigeon-shooting at Pontypridd
(South Wales Daily News 7 February)

A meeting of the crack shots of the Rhondda Valley with a strong contingent from Cardiff, took place at the People's Park, on Monday, the chief contest being for the handsome cup which was won on Boxing Day at Trebanog, by Mr. W. Ellicott, of Cardiff, who, being desirous of testing the skill of local lovers of the trigger, put up the cup for re-competition. The conditions were five birds each, live traps, gun club rules and handicap distances. There were 27 entries, and a very close fight for supremacy. At the end of the fifth round no less than 11 clean scores were booked, six for Cardiff, five for the Rhondda, the tie shooting thus proving intensely interesting, a curious coincidence being that Purcell and Ellicott, as at Trebanog, were left to finish at the 12th round, the last representative of the Rhondda (Mr. Day) proving himself a worthy opponent to the two Cardiff professionals. An exceptionally fast blue twister from the right corner trap beat Ellicott at the 14th round, leaving Purcell winner of the trophy.

Police inspection
(South Wales Daily News 20th September 1894)

The annual inspection of the police of the Pontypridd Union was held on Tuesday at the People's Park, the examining officer being Captain Perry, H. M. Inspector of Constabulary. Ninety-seven officers and men turned out on parade, including Deputy Chief Constable Evan Jones, Inspector Jones (Porth), Inspector Menhennick (Pentre), 10 sergeants and 64 constables, and they were put through the drills by Captain L. Lindsay, the chief Constable. The inspector congratulated the men upon their general efficiency and smart appearance, and subsequently examined the district books at the police-station, which were found to be admirably kept.

1895

Glove fight at Pontypridd

(South Wales Echo 17th September 1895)

A glove fight for £15 a-side was decided on Monday at the People's Park, Pontypridd, between Daniel Evans, of Newtown, and Llew. Herbert of the Graig. Four ounce gloves were used, the contest being conducted in a 16 feet ring, under Queensberry rules. A Cardiff sportsman acted as referee, the timekeeper being David Howell, of Treforest. Evan is 24 years of age, weighs 8st. 2lb. and stands 5ft, 4½ins. high. He was seconded by Sam Boucher and Ted Jones, and has been under training for the last two months at Weston-super-Mare. He has fought twice before— two years ago with Redmond Coleman at Merthyr, when he was defeated after five rounds. Five months ago he also tried conclusions with David Evans at Pontypridd, whom he defeated after a short and sharp tussle in four rounds. Herbert, who was seconded by Dai St. John and Tiny Hemmings is well-known in the ring. He is 28 years of age, stands 5ft. 3in., and weighs 8st. 6lbs. Six years ago he fought 26 rounds on Penycodcae in the old style with Sam Davies. For Monday's event he was trained at Llantwit Major by Dai St. John.

The contest excited considerable interest in the district, but a prohibitive fee being levied upon spectators, the attendance was limited. Both men appeared to be in perfect condition and well matched, though the betting from the start was slightly in favour of Evans. After mutual greetings, the combatants set too without further formalities. In the first round Herbert appeared to force the fight and being the stronger man succeeded several times in throwing his opponent across the ropes. Evans, however, fought well, and deliberately and repeatedly got in effective blows full on Herbert's nose, the latter on one occasion being forced to kiss the dust.

Before the call of time Evans had by far the best lead, and the round all through was slightly in his favour. In the second round Herbert sparred wildly, and Evans showed indications of weakness, but fought on gamely, the round being very evenly contested. The third round was of a scrambling description, both men appearing weak. Evans again led, and drew first blood, inflicting a nasty cut on Herbert's right cheek. Betting, 5 to 3 on Evans. Both men started slowly on the fourth round, but subsequently, after a fierce interchange of hostilities, Evans knocked his opponent out with a blow with the right, and Herbert failing to respond to the timekeeper's call at the end of 10 seconds, the fight was awarded to Evans.

1896

Police inspection

(South Wales Daily News 12th September 1896)

The annual inspection of police in the Pontypridd Division, which includes the Rhondda Valleys, took place on the Mill Field, Pontypridd, on Thursday afternoon, before Captain Parry, the Government inspector. Out of a total of 99 men in the division, there were 92 on parade, including Inspectors Evans, Gill and Menhennick. Captain Lindsay, chief constable, and Superintendent Jones, deputy-chief constable, were also present. The men presented a smart appearance, and went through their drill with such precision and efficiency as to elicit warm approbation from the inspector. The inspector observed that he was pleased to find that the police in the division were taking such active interest in ambulance work for the benefit of the public, and referred to the fact that the first prize offered by the County Council in the ambulance competition had come to Pontypridd. He subsequently inspected the books and the Police Station. Captain Parry subsequently drove to Ynysybwl and other Police Stations.

The following two years saw very little occurring at the People's Park or nothing was being reported. But Gypsy caravans and their occupants camped at the park were constantly causing a lot of trouble locally.

A Pontypridd youth's dishonesty - charge of false pretences.

At the Pontypridd Police Court on Tuesday Charles T. Baker, a Pontypridd youth, described as a collier, was charged with stealing a purse containing £1 13s 6d, the property of Mary Edwards, widow, Hopkinstown, and also with obtaining a large quantity of meat from Mr. Goronwy, butcher, Pontypridd, by false pretences. With reference to the first case, it appears that last Saturday morning the prisoner took some meat to the widow's house, but after his departure the purse, which lay on the table, was missed.

When arrested by P.C. Badger the prisoner admitted the offence, and said he had bought some jewellery with the money. In the second case the prisoner who was employed occasionally during the strike by Mr. Goronwy, went to the latter's shop on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and represented himself as having been sent by Mrs Goronwy from their shop at Hopkinstown to that at Pontypridd for a quantity of meat valued between £3 and £4. Having obtained it he sold it to several gipsies, who occupy the People's Park, Pontypridd, at a very small price, one of them receiving a leg of lamb for 1s. The defendant admitted the offence. In respect of the first charge he was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment with hard labour, whilst in respect of the other he was committed to take his trial at the next Assizes.

Pontypridd police stoned - a midnight scene in Mill Street.

(Pontypridd Chronicle 25th November 1898)

Late on Wednesday night A. Ford, Thomas Mochlin, and James Ratherty, three gipsies camping on the People's Park, Pontypridd, turned into the Welsh Harp Inn nearby. They became very rowdy, and began to fight with each other. The landlord did his best to get them to quit, but they stubbornly refused. P.C. Kavanagh was called in and, as they refused to leave at his request, he made an effort to put them out. In trying to do so Ratherty struck him in the chest. P.C.'s Martin and Welsby then came to his assistance, and they put them out by force. When outside Ford threw stones at the police and with the two others ran down the lane to the People's Park. Here they threw showers of stones at the police, one of the stones striking P.C. Welsby in the face. The constables drew their staves, and cleared them, and afterwards arrested them. At Porth Police Court on Thursday they were fined 15s each for the assault, and a further 15s each for being drunk and disorderly.

The Glamorgan Free Press of 17th December 1898 reported: - At a meeting of the Pontypridd Local Council Dr. Howard Davies complained of the sanitation of the People's Park. There were 39 tents there and only two toilets. It was decided to write to Mr. Solomon Andrews, the owner of the field (and owner of the Pontypridd tramways), asking him to provide better sanitary conveniences.

After many years

(Glamorgan Free Press 14 January 1899)

Levi Scarrott, a gipsy from the People's Park, Pontypridd, was charged with assaulting P.C. James, Treherbert, with a stick at Cilfynydd six years ago. P.C. James stated that prisoner was in charge of a van in Cilfynydd, on the 23rd January, 1893, blocking up the road. When he spoke to him he became very abusive, and struck him with a stick, because he caught hold of the horses' head to turn it out of the way of other vehicles. A crowd collected, and prisoner made his escape, and had not been seen in the district before his arrest at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday last. At the time of the assault prisoner was slightly intoxicated. Replying to the Bench prisoner denied having used any stick. He was ordered to pay a fine of 12s, or be imprisoned for a week.

The same newspaper on 11 February 1899 reported: Martin Fury, a notorious Pontypridd black-guard, was again committed to prison for 14 days for causing a great disturbance at the Red Lion public-house on Saturday night last. Fury said the police in the town were very bad to him. The Stipendiary told him to go to another town if that was the case.

The Glamorgan Free Press 25th March 1899 reported: - At a Pontypridd Council meeting the five cases of typhoid at the People's Park were now practically

convalescent, and the instructions given by the Medical Officer had been carried out. At present there was no further out-break of the disease reported.

Gypsies and Hawkers at Pontypridd disorderly scenes

(The Cardiff Times April 1899)

The Millfield, which is also known as the People's Park, Pontypridd, has for a long time been occupied by a number of gypsies and hawkers, who have pitched their tents in caravans all round the ground. The field is private property leased by Mr. Solomon Andrews, Cardiff, and complaints have continually been made of the conduct of some the occupiers. Several of them have appeared before the local bench of magistrates, but the most notorious family is that of the Furys. Last Wednesday the two sons, big, burly, dark visage young men – were sent to Cardiff gaol for drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and a sequel to their convictions was heard before the Stipendiary and other magistrates on Wednesday.

The defendants were Martin Fury and his wife who appeared to be well known in the gypsy world who were summonsed for being drunk and disorderly on the night their two sons went to prison. Police Sergeant D. Davies said that about 11 o'clock that night the defendants were very drunk and disorderly with a crowd round them. They were challenging people to fight; and as they were so violent it took witness and five constables to take them to the Millfield. Martin Fury had a black eye, and a man near the Collier's Arms complained that Fury had given him a black eye. The judge fined Martin Fury 5 shillings; but dismissed the summons against his wife, remarking that they were probably upset by the fact that their sons were sent to gaol. Note: Martin Fury was a known gypsy barefist fighter, his biggest success was when he defeated the renown Jack Hearn. Fury lived with his family in a tent on the Millfield.

Sounds of revelry at night

At Pontypridd Police Court on Tuesday Martin Fury, one of the gypsies who live in tents on Mill Field, Pontypridd, was again summonsed for being drunk and disorderly. Mr. Thomas Phillips defended. Three constables stated that they found defendant, another man, and three women of ill-fame sitting on the ground near Mill Street about midnight on the 25th ultimo drinking from a jar of beer. They made the night hideous with their noises, and several persons complained to the police. When the three women were taken into custody Fury threw stones at the constables, but neither were struck. Mr. Phillips contended that the place where the party formed a kind of Hotel de Marl was private property, and asked the Bench to impose a fine, as it would not improve Fury's conduct if he were sent again to gaol. The Bench, however, sent him to prison for another term of 14 days.

The gipsies' camp - Shocking sanitary conditions - Injunction applied for
(Glamorgan Free Press 20th May 1899)

At Tuesday's meeting of the Pontypridd District Council, Mr. H. T. Richards, J.P., presiding, Inspector Rowlands reported that the nuisance still existed at the Mill Street, or commonly known as the Gipsies' Camp. Mr. Solomon Andrews, the owner of the field, wrote: - "I find on enquiry that a great many people are living on the land belonging to Taff Vale Railway Company, and that no W.C.'s are provided by the Company for their use, and no doubt they make use of those provided for my tenants. I am quite willing to provide the same proportion that the Taff Vale Railway does, but am not willing to provide for their tenants. After you have arranged the number with them will you please write to me?"

Dr. Howard Davies reported that he had visited and inspected the Millfield that day. He found that there were at present 20 families occupying vans and tents in the field. The total number of persons living in those vans was 90. The length of time the different dwellers had rented the park varied from three years to a few weeks. At present the rental paid to Mr. Solomon Andrews or his representative was in the aggregate £5 12s per four weeks. Mr. Williams, the Mill, secured a gross rental for two vans under the railway arch of 10s for four weeks.

The Taff Vale Railway Company received a rental for one van of 12s 6d per year. There was but one water tap on the field laid on by the Pontypridd Works Company. There were no slop drains, and there were but two W.C.'s for all the people and one of these was in a filthy condition. The slop and other refuse were thrown over the field. Pools and puddles abounded in the field, and these harboured refuse and human excrement was found here and there over the field and along the bank of the river.

There had been numerous cases of fever reported from this field of late, and one child suffering from typhoid fever was now being nursed at the Workhouse. He (Dr. Davies) considered the field to be a nuisance and detrimental to the health of the inhabitants residing upon the Millfield and the neighbourhood generally. Mr. Gowan: - "I think we should apply for an injunction and get them removed. I move we apply for an injunction." Mr. Roberts seconded, and the motion was carried.

People's Park, Pontypridd
(South Wales Daily News June 12th 1899)

There are parks and parks! Cardiffians would not like Roath Park or Cathays Park, neither would Swansea people like to hear Victoria Park or Brynmill Park spoken of in the same breath as the People's Park, Pontypridd - at least, not if they are acquainted with the latter place of recreation. People's Park, the name sounds well enough —as if it were a place at once healthful and salubrious, kept by the people

and for the people's pleasure. But the medical officer of the county recently visited this spot, and in his quarterly report relates some startling facts concerning this lung of the Metropolis of the Walsh valleys. He says: -

"I consider the People's Park the most insanitary place in this district. On the day of my visit I counted 29 tents and vans on this area. A public sewer runs through the field, but there are only two W.C.'s provided. There are no drains of any description and the ashes and other house refuse are strewn about the place, and especially on the river bank. The ground is sodden with slop water and other filth. I was informed that there were about 20 families living in tents and vans on this field at the time of my visit. This would represent about 100 persons or possibly more. On making inquiries at one of the tents as to the number that slept in it, a boy informed me that it was only seven.' It had a cubic space of about 12ft. by 8ft. by 6ft., and was used as a workshop, a living and a sleeping room." What, we should like to know, has the Pontypridd Council got to say in defence of such a condition of things in the very midst of a densely-populated area?

Insanitary spot at Pontypridd – Action by the District Council
(South Wales Daily News June 14th 1899)

In Monday's issue of the South Wales Daily News publicity was given to the remarks contained in the county medical officer's report respecting the insanitary condition of Mill Field (which is also known as the People's Park"), Pontypridd. At Tuesday's meeting of the District Council the clerk read the county medical officer's report. Dr. Williams stated that the field was the most insanitary part of the whole district. On the day of his visit he found on the field vans occupied by twenty families, and he estimated the population to be 100. One of the vans was used as a dwelling-place and workshop. The clerk said a writ would be issued at once to restrain Mr. Solomon Andrews, the owner of the field, for using or permitting the ground to be used in such a manner as to cause a nuisance and be injurious to health. On the motion of Mr. James Roberts, seconded by Mr. R. L. Phillips, it was agreed that legal proceedings be taken. Mr F. G. Edwards remarked that by the publication of the report of the county medical officer in the South Wales Daily News prominence was given to the fact that such a nuisance was allowed to exist. People might assume that the ground was public property, and under the control of the Council, and further that the Council were doing very little to put an end to the nuisance. That was not so, and it had already been reported that the Council would apply for an injunction to stop the nuisance, and he thought the Council should be put right in the eyes of the public. Mr. James Roberts said it would appear from the paragraph that the County Council were the first to take action in the matter, but that was not correct.

The county medical officer had been called in by the District Council's officials so as to strengthen the hands of the latter in any action which might be taken. He

thought they should also take action with respect to the vans under the bridge leading to the field, the land there being owned by the Taff Vale Railway Company. Dr. Howard Davies said that in all such matters they had taken urgent measures. Sanitary Inspector Rowlands reported that people in the vans were leaving the field daily. He had been informed by Mr. May, the caretaker of the park - (a voice "Mill Field, please," followed by laughter)—that all the tenants of Mr. Andrews on the field had been given notice to leave. He found that the occupiers of one van were the tenants of the Taff Vale Railway Company, while those in three others were tenants of Mr. David Williams, the Mill. It was also decided to take proceedings with reference to those vans.

Chapter 4

1900

Death on the football field

(South Wales Daily News 12th December 1900)

A sad fatality occurred during the progress of a football practice game at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday afternoon. A youth named Lewis Thomas (18), of Bridge Cottage, Pwllgwaun, who was employed as a shackler at the Great Western Colliery, expired on the field. It appears he was running to meet the ball, which had been kicked towards him, and as he reached over it fell and the ball struck him on the legs. He turned round, and was in the act of picking it up when he fell. His comrades ran towards him and found that he was dead. His body was removed to his late residence. Dr. Dahne was called in and pronounced life extinct. It is supposed that he suffered from heart disease.

The town rugby team take the People's Park as their home ground

Football (rugby) was to become an important addition to the People's Park. When the Pontypridd RFC fell out with the Athletic syndicate at the Taff Vale Park, where they had played for many years and could not get permission from Gordon Lenox to play at the Ynysangharad gardens, the only alternative was to play at the People's Park. The Evening news reported: -

1901

Another deadlock – Further differences

(Evening Express 29th August 1901)

Unfortunately, the recent dispute between the club and the Pontypridd Football Club has again cropped up, and everything now goes to show that there will be no football playing on the Taff Vale Park this season. Both parties, it will be remembered, met at a round-table conference some time ago, and verbally agreed on terms. When, however, the agreement was submitted to the football committee for signature they refused to do so, alleging that the clauses contained were not on a par with those previously verbally agreed on. They also submitted another agreement to the athletic club, which they (the footballers) would agree to. This the athletic club will not consider, alleging that the first agreement sent is what was first of all agreed on, and, moreover, that they have the chairman's notes to substantiate same. Matters are now at a deadlock between the committees, but the football committee will meet tomorrow evening to consider the future programme. Altogether the position is an unfortunate one and at present does not point to a successful season.

Pontypridd Football Club and Pontypridd Athletic Syndicate

(Evening Express 2nd September 1901)

To the editor of the Evening Express – Sir, My attention has been drawn to a report which appeared in your addition of Friday evening last under the above heading. The Pontypridd Athletic Syndicate had endeavoured to cripple, or, perhaps, I may say more correctly, has tried to give football in this town a death blow. I am pleased, however, to say that the townspeople are determined to show this syndicate that this object will not be attained. Efforts have been made to get a suitable field, and I am glad to say that these efforts have been crowned with success. The first practice match will take place on the Millfield Saturday next, as previously arranged. As such reports are likely to do my club harm, I will be glad if you would insert this letter in your next edition. Thanking you in anticipation, I am & Co. **Tom Phillips, Hon. Secretary, Pontypridd Football Club. August 31st 1901.**

Benefit day at People's Park

(Evening Express 2 September 1901)

I am glad to learn that Pontypridd intends doing something to compensate Mrs. W. J. Evans, whose husband; met with a serious accident when riding at Cardiff some months ago, and who has not been able to follow his employment ever since. There is this to be said of Evans, he was always an honest rider. One could always rely on his riding, which was the means of breaking up many little amateur cliques. A very energetic committee are now promoting a football tournament and cycle races for the benefit of his wife, which will be held at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Saturday afternoon, September 14. A letter addressed to the secretary. White Hart Hotel, Pontypridd, would fetch all the particulars.

Pontypridd Football Club – New ground chosen

(Evening Express 5th September 1901)

There was a special meeting of the members of the Pontypridd Football Club last evening to consider the dispute under which the Athletic Club and to select another ground. Mr. T. Phillips, secretary, explained that the trouble arose through the club refusing to pay £2 10s. to the Athletic Club for drainage to the Taff Vale Park ground, and that terms would not be discussed until the amount was paid. This was eventually done, and after a deputation had waited upon the syndicate a draft agreement was prepared for acceptance by the football club.

This agreement, among other things, provided that the ground was to be let for a rental of £20 from September 1 to April 30 next, payable on the 1st of each month; that if any damage was done to the ground or the cycle track it must be made good by the football club at their expense to the satisfaction of the syndicate within

fourteen days; that it could only be used on two specified nights a week for the purposes of training; that no matches could be played on the ground other than those already submitted as per schedule, except with the consent of the Athletic Club, such consent not to be unreasonably withheld—(laughter)—and that if the rent was not paid on the first day of each month or the football club did not duly perform the agreement, the Athletic Club would have the power to expel and remove all persons from the ground and to terminate the agreement (laughter). The secretary proceeded to say that the committee of the club suggested the following amendments:- That the rent be paid in two instalments of £10 each, on the 31st of December and the 30th of April next; that the club would make good any damage to the satisfaction of an arbitrator to be mutually agreed upon; that the ground be open for training upon any two nights weekly; that matches which might be again arranged be played., except upon dates upon which sports might be arranged by the syndicate. Mr. T. E. Lewis, secretary of the Athletic Club replied that it would be impossible for them to sign the agreement, and that they would have to stop the work of levelling the ground.

A resolution was unanimously passed condemning the “unsportsmanlike action” of the Athletic Club, and approving of the action of the committee. The secretary stated that Messrs. Solomon Andrews and Sons would rent them the People's Park for £40 per annum, and that it was in very way suitable for football, except that it would involve considerable expense in laying it out. It was unanimously decided to rent the (People's) park.

So, after eleven good years, the Pontypridd Rugby Club had left Taff Vale Park and would have to make a new home at Millfield on the People's Park. The committee had taken a brave decision to preserve their independence. The 1901-02 season saw Pontypridd start as reigning Glamorgan League champions, but there was a great deal of simmering discontent within the club by the players as some had not receiving championship medals. Only games played on the People's Park are reported here. A local newspaper reported: -

Pontypridd prospects

For the first time in the history the Pontypridd club started the season as holders of the Glamorgan League Cup, and amongst local clubs it is more than only an empty distinction. One of the Rhondda clubs - Llwynypia - had held it more than once consecutively, but whether Pontypriddians will do the same thing remained to be seen. There was of course, no reason why they shouldn't, but if they did, they would need to be a rattling good side, for the standard of the competition promised to be as high as ever. However, in spite of an unfortunate drawback, there was a prospect that the club will hold its own.

Since the close of the previous season circumstances arose which culminated a short time ago in very unpleasant relations to prevail between the club and the local Athletic Syndicate which had leased Taff Vale Park, which had been the rendezvous of footballers for many years. A cycle track had been laid there, and as the two clubs could not agree on terms whereby the ground could be used for football, matters came to such an impasse that the football club committee threw up the sponge in absolute disgust, and secured the Mill Field, also known as the People's Park, for the coming season. This was greatly deplored by all true lovers of sport and without entering into the merits or demerits of the dispute, one was forced to admit that it could have easily been decided to the satisfaction of all concerned had both parties shown a little more conciliatory spirit, and not kept their "backs up" so stiffly. The result was that the Taff Vale Park, the scene of many exciting contests and one admirably suited for the game, was temporarily closed for it, and one could only hope that football and the fortunes of the team would not suffer on the new ground, which was the only one available in the town. It was certainly well adapted for playing, and the club was laying out some money to make it more presentable.

And now to the prospects of the team. Nearly all last season's players were available, and some new blood would be introduced. The captaincy has been entrusted to that finally built forward of a most promising type, Dave Roberts, while the vice-captaincy has gone to that sterling threequarter, familiarly known as "Shamsee" Moore, who contributed largely to the teams achievements in winning the league championship last season. W. G. Usher and J. Dawson would take their accustomed place in the rear line, and Wayne Morgan - who was now a full-blooded "limb of the law" - was not likely to throw in his lot with his old comrades. J. Rees and Morris, the Cilfynydd lads who did well last year, would do service at halfback, and in W. J. Jones, a plucky youngster who rendered yeoman service during the last season, and averted defeat in more than one stirring engagement by his fearless tackling and skilful play, the team would find a very reliable goalkeeper. Rowley Thomas, John Walter James, Mat Phillips, and other veterans will be found in the front rank, which on the whole promises to be very strong. The team had a capital gymnasium at the headquarters, the White Hart Hotel, George Parfitt, the club's treasurer, and landlord of the said Inn, did all that he could to further the interests of the club.

Trial match - Disappointing start to season

A trial match was played at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Sept. 7th 1901, when a number of new players turned out, and altogether it was an interesting game, though a bit scrambled. The 'new blood' included several police constables, but none of the new recruits were seen to particular advantage. A week later the new season got off to a disappointing start when the visitors, Canton, failed to turn up for the opening fixture. There then followed two away defeats, one a heavy one at

Devonport and then a 8 – 0 Glamorgan league defeat at Treherbert.

Caerphilly faced after a long gap

Pontypridd and Caerphilly met for the first time in years in ideal weather and before a large crowd on the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Oct. 12th 1901. It was an hour after the advertised kick-off time that Caerphilly started from the town end, Sam Llewellyn, the home half, returning well. Shamsee Moore following up gained a good slice of ground. He was brought down by Butler, who returned the ball to halfway. The visiting forwards following up, and kept play in the home 25 until Norton all but scored. After this the home forwards pressed, and Usher made another pretty effort, which resulted in his securing an unconverted try. After this Caerphilly pressed, and a scrummage on the home line saw Bailey pick up and save the situation. Before halftime Butler made a mark opposite the posts, but no goal resulted, leaving the home side leading by three points to nil at halftime. In the second half Caerphilly did a good deal of gruelling work and Joe Norton scored an unconverted try. Pontypridd afterwards conceded another minor, but from a scrum the ball was passed to Usher who with a really pretty run secured a second Pontypridd try, which Moore converted. Final score: - **Pontypridd 8 pts Caerphilly 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, Bert Warlow; threequarters, W. G. Usher, Davies, Shamsee Moore, Alf Lewis; halves, J. Bailey and Sam Llewellyn; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), Jack Ryan, T. Bunn, Matt Phillips, Tom Bryant, J. W. James, P.C. Trigg, P.C. Francis.

Treorky defeated in friendly

The match between Pontypridd and Treorky at the People's Park on Oct. 19th 1901 not being a league match, interest was not so marked as otherwise would have been the case. Neither team was fully represented, Pontypridd being without the services of Shamsee Moore, J. W. James, W. G. Usher, and their halves.

At halftime neither side had scored. For some minutes after the restart Treorky had the best of matters, but the homesters, mainly through Alun Morgan, relieved the pressure, and the forwards, taking up the attack, pressed Treorky sorely. Jack Warlow made a good run, and his brother, Bert, who received the pass, got over the line, but was recalled for some irregularity. The pressure was, however kept on, and after a minor had been scored, Francis burst through a bunch of opponents, and scored in the extreme corner, Dawson failing to convert. Then, Alun Morgan passed to Dawson, who attempted a drop at goal, but the ball failed to rise, and struck a goal-post. Rowlands, however, dashed up and grounded, the visiting pack making no attempt to stop him. Play was now getting more vigorous, and the home

forwards worked with a will to make it hot for the Rhonddaïtes. Towards the end E. Jones made a splendid effort to score for Treorky, but he foolishly essayed to drop a goal when a pass to Lewis would have enabled them to score. Pontypridd continued to have the better of matters until the end. Final score: **Pontypridd 8 pts Treorky 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, Bert Warlow; threequarters, J. Dawson, Alun Morgan, Alf Lewis, T. Lake; halves, Jack Warlow + W. Rowlands; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), Matt Phillips, R. Thomas, T. Bunn, Tom Bryant, Jack Ryan, P.C. Francis, P.C. Trigg.

Professionalism raises its head

October 1901 saw the newspapers reporting that Jack Dawson, the Pontypridd threequarter, had been offered money to play for Treherbert. This was brought before the Welsh Union and ended thus: - The Welsh Union have concluded the investigation into the alleged breach of amateurism by the Treherbert club. The Union took action in this matter because of published statements attributed to Mr. Tom Phillips, secretary of the Pontypridd club, suggesting that the Treherbert secretary had offered monetary inducement to Mr. J. Dawson, a Pontypridd centre-threequarter, to play for Treherbert.

The case is a peculiar one, for Dawson, who has played regularly for Pontypridd, lives in Cardiff, and played at the opening of the season for Treherbert in a match against Swansea at St. Helens. Dawson then played for Pontypridd without a transfer from Treherbert, and stated that he had no idea it was necessary, as he believed the club were disbanded. There were several letters between the Treherbert secretary and Dawson, but in none of these (as claimed) was there anything really incriminating and, although the Pontypridd secretary was reported to have a letter offering terms, no such letter can be traced. The Union met at Cardiff last Thursday, and the members have apparently ignored the transfer question, and their decisions are:

- § That there is not sufficient evidence to show that the Treherbert club have committed any breach of the professional law.
- § That Dawson, having made statements to the Pontypridd secretary about offers of payment for playing football, which this meeting believes to be false be suspended for the rest of the season.

Dawson missed

The Pontypridd v Llwynypia league match at the People's Park on Nov. 2nd 1901 was the most important game in the district on the day. The Rhonddaïtes were a

greatly improved lot, and soon as the combination of the new men improved the team would be more like its old self. A splendid fight was witnessed, and while it resulted in a draw, the Rhondda men must regard themselves as being very unlucky in averting a defeat at the hands of the cup holders. The latter were in exceptionally fine form, and their display on the whole showed a great deal of improvement upon that of last year. They have lost a splendid centre in Dawson, but if they maintain their present form there is every indication that they will have a good chance of retaining the league championship for another season. Though the Taff Vale Park had been lost to the club, it was gratifying to find such a big crowd around the enclosure, but it would have been better if steps were taken to level the ground, as it was a bit lumpy and rough in several places.

Whilst the homesters did the greater part of the aggressive work it was neutralised by the sterling defence of their opponents. A number of rosy chances to score were thrown away by the cup holders, chiefly through erratic judgement and a little selfishness at critical moments on the part of the backs. Llwynypia's try was actually presented by the home fullback, and if he is to continue guarding Pontypridd's citadel, he must remain well behind instead of being close to the quartet. This was his big fault; if it had not been it is quite possible that his side would have been victorious. Berris, formerly of Ystrad Stars, looked like making a good wing for the visitors, while S. Lewis, one of Llwynypia's centres is a coloured man of excellent physique, and shaped up well. Final score: **Pontypridd 3 pts Llwynypia 3 pts.**

Pontypridd: Back, Alf Lewis; threequarters, Shamsee Moore, W. G. Usher, Alun Morgan, Sam Llewellyn; halves, Bert + Jack Warlow; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), Jack Ryan, F. Bunn, Matt Phillips, P.C. Trigg, Rowley Thomas, J. W. James. The Glamorgan Free Press reported: -

"Dawson's absence was a serious loss to the home quartet, and had a good man been available instead of Sammy Llewellyn - the old halfback, who was a complete frost, and should promptly be put to one side - the rear line would have done infinitely better. Under the circumstances Llewellyn might just as well have been absent, for his presence was more of a drawback than anything else. The other three put in a great amount of work, Shamsee Moore tackling, kicking, and running well. Alun Morgan, after a long periodic absence from active play, could still play a fine game, and for dash and "go" his display could hardly have been excelled. If the team can secure his services permanently he will prove a worthy substitute to the punished Dawson, and a decided acquisition. Usher was also in capital form, and the three frequently figured conspicuously. Their passing could still be improved, and when attacking, a little coolness and judgement would prove advantageous to their side. Owing to the absence of the regular custodian the rear line had to be re-arranged, Alf Lewis going back to fullback from the wing and Sam Llewellyn coming in at half. Another absentee was P.C. Francis, who will

probably transfer his services at forward to Treorky, where he has been removed from Clydach Vale"

Cross-bar denies County Police

The Glamorgan Police played their first match of the season when they visited the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Nov. 4th 1901. Bryce commenced operations for the police, and after several scrummages in neutral ground the police half-backs beat the home couple, and Alexander, throwing far out, Bob Jones ran close to the line where he was grassed. The civilians were sorely pressed for some time, but relief was secured, and the ball sent to Francis, who dodged a couple of men and found touch by Pontypridd's quarter flag.

Cummings again figured prominently in clearing the scrummages, and had a golden opportunity to score. Alun Morgan and Matt Phillips shone in an irresistible rush to the police territory, and Dave Roberts, picking up by the line, lost the ball and a certain try. Phillips, the old Llwynypia threequarter, made a smart catch for the police and raced for the line, but Shamsee Moore followed, and pulled him down within inches of the line. Moore then made a fine run and threw to Usher. The latter was collared as he was making a strong burst, but transferred back to Moore, who scored an unconverted try. H.T. score: - Pontypridd 3 pts Glamorgan Police 0.

Play became lively after Jack McKenzie had re-started, the police reaching the home 25 with a vigorous rush, but Moore drove them back with a smart kick, but after the next scrumage Bryce broke away with a gallop along the touch-line, Thomas grassed him by the corner flag, but the international throwing out, Trigg picked up and had no difficulty in scoring. The try was not improved upon. The police attacked vigorously at the close, Bryce being very conspicuous, once crossing and planting the ball behind the goal. The points were disallowed on the ground that he had been in touch, and in the midst of a stiff forward tussle in front of the goal, one of the police made a flying shot at goal, the ball, however, struck the cross-bar and bounced back into play just as time was called. Final score: **Pontypridd 3 pts Glamorgan Police 3 pts.**

Pontypridd: Back, W. Thomas; threequarters, Shamsee Moore, W. G. Usher, Alun Morgan, Lake; halves, Sam Llewellyn + Ernest Jones; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), Jack Ryan, Matt Phillips, Jack McKenzie, Tom Bryant, J. W. James, Kelland, Sampson.

Glamorgan Police: Back, Francis (Pontypridd), threequarters, Ben Phillips (Pontyclun) B. Jones (Llwynypia), F. Smith (Canton), T. Case (Ystrad); halves, Alexander (Llwynypia), Cummings (Penrhiwceiber); forwards, Bryce & Vickary (Aberavon), Bolton (Penygraig) D. H. Davies (Neath), Thomas (Gelli), Ralphs

(Tondu), J. Rees & Trigg (Pontypridd).

Vigorous friendly against Penygraig

The Pontypridd v Penygraig friendly that was played at the People's Park on Nov. 16th 1901 was played with a great deal of vigour, but was below expectations, and devoid of the sterling incidents that the spectators badly wanted on such a cold frosty afternoon. "Jack Frost" indeed, was so much in evidence that the pressmen standing on the grass without the slightest shelter could hardly write any notes on the match. Both teams were much below par, their display being much inferior to what they have more than once given this season. It was a regular "day off" for them, and no end of chances, especially amongst the backs, were thrown away, mainly through wild, erratic transfers, several excellent rounds of passing being spoilt in that way. Not a single point was scored, and whilst the draw fairly indicates the relative merits of the teams, Penygraig on the whole gave the better display.

The Pontypridd pack did not scrummage as well as usual, their heeling out being a bit off, and if they hope to hold their own in the league encounters, they will have to wake up. A few of them showed up in the open, including Dave Roberts, the vice-captain, P.C. Francis, and Bunn. A feature of the latter's play was his splendid tackling. Of the Pontypridd threequarters Arthur Williams was the most conspicuous, but he was too keenly watched to prove really dangerous, though a couple of bursts along the touchline almost resulted in scores. Alun Morgan played a great game for his side, Usher and Moore being frequently off, and Alf Lewis played a sound defensive game on the wing. On the whole, however, the display of both quartets was rather disappointing. Final score: - **Pontypridd 0 Penygraig 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, Willie Thomas; threequarters, Usher, Moore, Alun Morgan, Alf Lewis; halves, Jack & Bert Warlow; forwards, Dave Roberts, J. James, P.C. Francis, P.C. Trigg, Tom Bryant, Matt Phillips, Jack Ryan, F. Bunn.

Veteran's return against Bridgewater

Bridgewater Albion, the crack Somerset side visited Pontypridd for the first time (reported one local newspaper) on Nov. 23rd 1901, and a smart game ended in a draw. The visitors were a smart lot especially behind, but they were unfortunate in being without their regular wingmen and two of their heaviest forwards, who were doing service with their county side against Gloucester. As it was, they held their own well, and repeatedly gave a great deal of trouble to their opponents. Their forwards were a bit light, but smart, and their threequarters were very active. The homesters, however, tackled well, and presented an exceptionally sound defence, but they were caught napping a bit when the Albion scored their only try.

The Pontypridd men were quite equal to their opponents, and time and again showed superior tactics. Shamsee Moore, the captain, was unable to turn out in the centre, but his place was admirably filled by Willie Roberts, the old halfback, who a few seasons before rendered brilliant service to the team. Willie had not forgotten his old tricks, and in both aggressive and defensive work he was one of the most conspicuous on the field. Alun Morgan was simply ubiquitous, kicking, running, and tackling well, and Alf Lewis scored a very good try. Final score: **Pontypridd 3 pts Bridgewater Albion 3 pts.**

Pontypridd: Back , Willie Thomas; threequarters, W. G. Usher, Alun Morgan, Willie Roberts, Alf Lewis; halves, Jack & Bert Warlow; forwards, Tom Bryant, Rowley Thomas, Jack Ryan, Fred Kelland, Matt Phillips, F. Bunn, P.C. Trigg, Ted Vaughan.

On November 27th 1901 Pontypridd beat Canton 3-0 at home in a poorly reported game and a week later were defeated 11-0 at Newport.

Hard fought victory over Aberavon

The league match between Pontypridd and Aberavon at the People's Park on Dec. 7th 1901 was played in very wet weather, the rain that had fallen during the last few days had made the ground very muddy, and a scientific display was out of the question. Both teams having done well the previous Saturday, the result was in doubt. The attendance was not up to the average, and this was accounted for by the fact of the international trial match at Treherbert. Aberavon suffered considerably through absentees, no fewer than eight men being unable to turn out.

It was a hard fought game, played with keen determination from beginning to end. Pontypridd had the better of matters, but the forwards did not heel out as cleverly as they have done. Bouts of passing were initiated by both sides, but were not effective, the condition of the ball probably accounting for this. The only score arrived just before halftime, when Usher charged down a kick by the fullback, and picking up, returned the shot, and Jones had no difficulty in scoring. Aberavon played up gamely towards the end, and in the latter portion pressed their opponents. Dan Jones was the salvation of Aberavon and time and time again was responsible for good saving work. Final score: **Pontypridd 3 pts Aberavon 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, Willie Thomas; threequarters, Alf Lewis, W. G. Usher, Bert Warlow, A.N.Other; halves, Charlie Usher + Fred Lewis; forwards, Dave Roberts, J. W. James, P.C. Francis, Fred Bunn, Matt Phillips, Jack Ryan, Ted Vaughan, P.C. Trigg.

Poor start to Christmas programme

Pontypridd started a stiff Christmas programme against Cwmcarn on the People's Park on Christmas Eve 1901, but only managed a draw. There were, however, circumstances for this apparently poor result, as the team, fore and aft, had to be completely re-organised, and the match was played in the vilest football weather anyone could imagine. The homesters were minus several of their usual forwards, but in fairness to the substitutes it must be stated that they played admirably. There were two very prominent features in this match, and those were the displays of Wayne Morgan (London Welsh) and J. Ryan, a halfback from the Cardiff district. The vast improvement shown by Morgan was a revelation to the home supporters who had witnessed the match. He beat the opposing backs, and burst through in a style rarely, if ever, seen in a second class match, and if this can be taken as a criterion of his ability, he is undoubtedly worth his place in any team in the four countries. The new half, Ryan, will prove a decided acquisition to the Pontypriddians. He is as sharp as a needle, and is always in the thick of the fight. He and Charlie Usher might hit it off beautifully for the rest of the season. Final score: - **Pontypridd 0 Cwmcarn 0.**

Hartlepool old boys inflict New Years Day defeat

The Pontypridd football team were evidently believers in a good grueling if it was judged by the number of fixtures that they had fulfilled during the Christmas week. After those four fixtures they played Hartlepool Old Boys on Wednesday, Jan. 1st 1902, at the People's Park, when the visitors ran out victorious by six points to five.

The score fairly indicated the relative merits of the opposing sides. The most striking feature of the visitor's exhibition were the clever and accurate manner in which they fielded the ball and found touch. The homesters, although defeated, gave a very good all round display, but for nippiness and keen following up, they had the worse in comparison with the visitors. Shamsee Moore's try was a splendid one, he having doubled and beaten man after man in quite the approved style. Walton for Pontypridd was rather inferior to the visiting back this week, poor tackling being directly responsible for one of the tries that the Old Boys Scored. Jack Ryan and Charlie Usher gave a good performance at half, while Roberts, W. E. Rees, P.C. Francis, and Phillips were most conspicuous in the front rank. Final score: - **Pontypridd 5 pts Hartlepool old boys 6 pts.**

After the match at the White Hart Hotel, the secretary of the visitors, who presided, was so delighted at the singing by Mr. Evans, Vaughan Arms, Hafod, that he spoke in the highest terms, and requested him at the end of the proceedings to sing the national anthem.

League defeat by Treherbert

It was threequarters of an hour late when Treherbert kicked off from the town end when they visited Pontypridd on Jan. 18th 1902, and for some 15 minutes they kept the homesters penned, White being very prominent in preventing them scoring. Eventually Phillip Thomas brought relief with a capital run, which carried play to the visitors 25, where he transferred to Arthur Lewis, who was pushed into touch. Pontypridd had the advantage of the ensuing scrum, and after some pressing Treherbert conceded a minor. After this Pontypridd had the better of matters, and after some hard pressing Phil Thomas, the home centre, got possession, and after a brilliant run, beat the visiting custodian, who up to then had been playing well, and scored Pontypridd's first try. After this Treherbert pressed for some time, but again the home forwards brought off some capital rushes, and the threequarters followed up well. Thomas punted over, and scored Ponty's second try. In less than five minutes, after some smart work, Kirkhouse scored for Treherbert, the homesters failing to concede a minor at the right moment. H.T. score: - **Pontypridd 6 pts Treherbert 3 pts.**

On restarting Treherbert opened with a grand attack on the home citadel. The homesters defended well, but eventually Dai Jones, seizing an opportunity, made capital run, and went over for Treherbert's second try; which was majorised. Again Treherbert pressed and just as one of their forwards was dribbling over, Lewis relieved with a kick up the field. After this it was anybody's game, both sides gaining the ascendancy in turn, but no further scoring took place, and Treherbert ended up victors by two points. Final score: - **Pontypridd 6 pts Treherbert 8 pts.**

The following Pontypridd team was selected for this league match, but some did not actually play: - Back, W. J. Jones; threequarters, Alun Morgan, W. G. Usher, A. Lewis, Jack Warlow; halves, Jack Ryan & Charlie Usher; forwards, J. W. James, Rowley Thomas, Mat Phillips, Francis, Trigg, Ted Vaughan, Fred Kelland, Dave Roberts (C).

Sports and Pastimes

The football match between the Constitutional and District Clubs, which, for several weeks has been the principal topic of conversation in local athletic circles, came off on Saturday last, January 25th 1902 at the People's Park (which was kindly lent by the Pontypridd Football Club Committee for the occasion). Great enthusiasm has been shown by the players and supporters of both teams, but the District Club team were fancied rather more than their rivals. The Conservatives wore Royal Blue jerseys, and their opponents sported scarlet jerseys, with a velvet model of the Old Bridge attached to the breast. The Penrhiw and, Maritime Brass Band very generously played the rival teams from the dressing quarters (the White Hart) to the field of play. The District club players made a brave show with a red

flag held up in front of the brake in which they rode. A fairly large number of spectators lined the ropes when the teams fielded. A goodly sprinkling of ladies appeared on the enclosure side, among whom I noticed three of the local nursing ladies. Mr. Wilson set the ball in motion for the Conservatives, and when the interval arrived after half an hours' ding dong play, both sides had a clean scoring sheet, but far from clean jerseys, as the ground, through the recent heavy rains was in a sodden state.

After the interval, Mr. Morris, the Chairman of the District Club, kicked off for the Scarlets, who in this half, as well as in the initial one, had all the best of the game, and ultimately, ran out winners by two tries to nil. A distressing incident was the severe knock out which Tally Jenkins unfortunately received, and which rendered him very groggy for the remainder of the game. For the Conservatives the brunt of the fight was borne by the forwards, who were admirably led by J. W. James (captain), Rowley Thomas, Edwin Thomas and Mat Phillips. The District forwards were such a good all round Job that they were easily able to set their backs in motion, where Alun Morgan and Walt. Davies proved tower of strength to their side. J. Whiles by being played on the wing did not shine in the first half, but after the accident to T. Jenkins the captain, J. Hope, removed Whiles to half, where his trickiness and strength proved of great value to his side, he scoring one try, and having a large share in the scoring of the other one.

When the final whistle sounded, the Penrhiw and Maritime Band, which had, during the game, given several splendid selections, headed the procession back to head quarters playing the Conquering hero. At six o'clock a smoker was held, over which Mr. F. E. Davies presided. I fully intended giving particulars regarding the pecuniary results, but the whole of the tickets not having come in, it will have to stand over until next week. Roughly speaking, I believe the Nursing Association will benefit to the extent of about £18 to £20. Mr G. T. Morgan, who had kindly consented to officiate in the Charity Match, found himself at the last moment quite unable to discharge his duties through illness. Mr. W. Summers (schoolmaster), Hopkinstown, upon being approached at once consented to take charge of the whistle, which he did in a very satisfactory manner. The Pontypridd Thursdays were at home to Aberdare Thursdays last week at the People's Park. The visitors were rather late in arriving, but a start was ultimately made about 4 o'clock. A hard and fast game was played, chiefly confined to the forwards. Aberdare proved victorious on the stroke of time by scoring a try, which was not converted. For the homesters W. Lake and M. Benjamin played a sound defensive game. Behind the scrumage, and F. Davies and M. Davies led the forwards in fine style.

Pontypridd's substantial success

A good humoured crowd favoured the meeting of Pontypridd and Bridgend at the People's Park, Pontypridd on Feb. 15th 1902. Earlier in the day, and during the

previous day or two, there had been a good deal of doubt as to whether this match would come off, the frost being responsible to a very great extent. However, 'Old Sol' was somewhat more prominent than usual, and by mid-day, when captain Dave Roberts paid a visit to the Park, it was found to be in good condition - in fact, in better condition than the Penygraig ground was the previous Saturday, so all doubts as to the match not being played were put to one side. Since the first meeting in November, Bridgend, of the two, had improved their position, while Pontypridd had gone down the ladder. This gave a great deal of inspiration to the visitors, who it was generally thought, would come off victorious.

Bridgend arrived late, and the kick-off was delayed an hour. In the first ten minutes, play was of a medium character, neither side doing anything of note. Matters were completely even in the scrums, the homesters being penalised for offside tactics. After this Bridgend pressed for a while, and kept Pontypridd to their own territory. A sturdy defence was put in, but eventually Ted Lake conceded a minor. In the subsequent play Pontypridd gained the upper hand. Cule broke away, but after a pretty run the university man was pushed into touch. Keeping up the attack the wing again got possession from a scrum, and after a really pretty run scored under the posts. The try was majorised. Again Pontypridd pressed, and Hill, the visiting winger, more than once saved his side from awkward positions. But before halftime Bridgend worked their way downfield, and looked all over like scoring. An indiscreet kick by one of the home forwards gave Watkins a mark right before the posts, but the kick failed. H.T. score: Pontypridd 5 pts Bridgend 0.

Early in the second half Pontypridd assumed the aggressive tactics, in which Lyles (Pontypridd) and Hill (Bridgend) were injured. Lyles returned in a short while, but Hill remained on the injury list. Continuing to press, Sam Llewellyn passed to his quartet, and Usher scored another try, which Lake converted. Ten points to the bad Bridgend seemed to lose bearings, for after this Pontypridd continued to press, and had hard lines in not scoring. Once, Bridgend got to halfway, but in a scramble for possession, Usher broke away, and another pretty run led to his scoring the third try, which was not converted. After this Lewis was laid Hors-De-Combat, and for a time had to retire. Final score: **Pontypridd 13 pts Bridgend 0.**

Pontypridd : Back, Ted Lake; threequarters, W. G. Usher, P.C. Francis, J. Whiles, T. Cule (Cardiff University); halves, Sam Llewellyn + Charlie Usher; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), Mat Phillips, J. Onions, W. Lyles, F. Bunn, F. Kelland, Dewi Eli.

A most peculiar game

Pontypridd's home match against Mountain Ash on March 1st 1902 was the most peculiar game one reporter had ever witnessed. Some writers have a peculiar knack of attempting to explain away overwhelming defeats. After writing this far he may be accused of attempting the same thing regarding this particular match, he was

bound to make excuses, and good one's too, for the tall score piled up against the Pontypriddians. At halftime the score stood Pontypridd one try, and that a very clever one, Mountain Ash, a field goal. If I mistake not, the goal stands to the credit of the visiting international, Osborne. It was the softest three points ever seen scored. In fact, the visitors ought to have been penalised three points. In a loose forward rush, Osborne kicked the ball about thirty yards, and it rose over the posts. It was terribly poor judgement to kick the ball so hard. Another time Sam Llewellyn received from the scrum and punted. The ball rebounded from one of the visitors, who simply had to dart in. To sum up, Pontypridd had almost as much of the game as Mountain Ash had, and with equal luck the score would have read one try each. W. G. Usher, contrary to his recent county form, played well, one dash in particular, being very fine. Charlie Usher, the half, is improving in every game, and will be heard more of in the future. J. W. James, Vaughan, and Roberts, were the pick of the home forwards. Final score: - **Pontypridd 3 Mountain Ash 17.**

'Idris' in the local newspaper of the same date commented: - 'I wonder which team in the district is considered the premier team, Cilfynydd or Pontypridd? J. Ryan applied for his transfer from Cilfynydd and was very properly refused. After having the benefit of a few weeks insurance it seems rather unsportsmanlike that he should wish to desert the old ship.'

Pontypridd: Back, T. S. Lake; threequarters, W. G. Usher, Alun Morgan, Cule, Tom John; halves, Sam Llewellyn and Charlie Usher; forwards, David Roberts (C), J. W. James, Mat Phillips, J. Ryan, Fred Bunn, Fred Kelland, Dewi Eli, E. Vaughan, Trigg, P.C. Francis.

Another home defeat

When Treorky visited Pontypridd on March 8th 1902 they were looked upon as likely winners, as they had shown better form of late than the cup holders. Pontypridd turned out a strong pack, but as usual there were changes in the threequarter line, which included Whitney, a Cardiff St. Albans player, and Rice Davies of the local Rangers. The first half saw no score, W. G. Usher and Rowley Thomas being conspicuous for Pontypridd with good tackling. Treorky had the advantage of the wind in the second half and immediately assumed the aggressive tactics. A couple of foolish kicks by the homesters led to Ted Jones receiving the ball and he romped across the line. Schofield failed with the conversion. The homesters made a spurt after this and Whitney figured prominently. A few minutes later, while Pontypridd was pressing, Ramsey intercepted a pass, and after covering some ground passed to Ted Jones, who scored in the corner. Final score: **Pontypridd 0 Treorky 6 pts.**

Pontypridd : Back, Ted Lake; threequarters, W. G. Usher. Alun Morgan, Cule, W. Whitney; halves, Sam Llewellyn + Charlie Usher; forwards, Dave Roberts (C), J.

W. James, Mat Phillips, Rowley Thomas, Fred Bunn, Fred Kelland, Dewi Eli, Ted Vaughan. Reserves G. Stevens + J. Owen.

Pill Harriers the superior team

The match between Pontypridd and Pill Harriers on the People's Park on April 1st 1902 was played before another meagre attendance and on a muddy ground. Neither side was fully represented. The homesters kicked off against a drizzling rain, and after some desultory play in mid-field, got the ball from a scramble and outpacing his pursuers scored behind the Pontypridd posts. Buckley converted. The Harriers confined their opponents to their own 25 for some time, the backs being very active.

The homesters were soon again pressing, Ryan making a corkscrew run, threw to Sam Llewellyn, who crossed, but the try was not allowed because the pass was forward. Ted Lake, Pontypridd, was then injured and retired, and another scrummage on the home line ended in Seer scoring an unconverted try. Pontypridd for the first time now reached the Harriers quarter line, where W. G. Usher following up smartly, collared Haley, but nothing resulted. H.T. Score: Pontypridd 0 Pill Harriers 8.

Soon after the resumption W. G. Usher figured with a smart dribble, where Haley just saved in time. The Harriers soon got to the home goal, and smart work by the forwards nearly ended in a try. The Monmouthshire men again assumed aggressive measures, and eventually Seer scored an unconverted try. Following a kick by Ryan, Seer again crossed, Buckley converting.

J. W. James, the home skipper, after this figured with a smart dribble to the Harriers goal, where Kelland picked up, but was collared by Llewellyn. Splendid combination by the visitors backs, and a fine bout of passing put the cup holders (who were now well beaten by a superior team), on the defensive, and from a scrummage Harvey missed a field goal by inches. **Final score: - Pontypridd 0 Pill Harriers 16 pts.**

Easter review

'Idris' in the Pontypridd Observer gave this review of Pontypridd's Easter fixtures: -

What a comparison there is between the ending of this years and last year's football season in Pontypridd. Last year saw the Glamorgan League Cup coming here to stay for twelve months, but at this seasons ending we have not got a team that would do credit to a good junior team. In fact, it is the opinion of a great many that the Pontypridd United, who are in the semi-final for the local medal competition, would whack the firsts. The premiers did well at Bridgewater to lose

by only a goal, as they did by beating Machen on Easter Monday by three tries to one.

On Tuesday morning, however, they caught a severe chill, that smart Monmouthshire organisation, Pill Harriers, beating them by two goals and two tries to nil. Football, at least, with the premiers, is in such a rotten state in the town, that next year we should either not have a team at all, or if we do, the best men from the junior clubs should be chosen. A Pontypridd committee man told me the other day that it was no use picking juniors. He affirms that they will not turn out. I cannot altogether swallow that. Of course, if they were only made a convenience of, and only asked them to play when others did not feel inclined to turn out, then small blame to them for refusing. The truth is that some of the old players have been too much pampered.'

Rhydyfelin secretary called into action

On Monday, April 21st 1902 Pontypridd and Penygraig played a league fixture at the People's Park. To say the least, it was curious to observe the combination of the two teams. There was scarcely any old players amongst the thirty engaged in the play. Penygraig had pressed into service players from Llwynypia, Abercynon, and Cilfynydd, while Pontypridd played the Cynon halves, the Rhydyfelen secretary, that old war-horse Ben Lewis, and members from the different local teams. A very good game was witnessed, which resulted in a win for Penygraig by 1 goal and 2 tries, to a try. The players who caught the eye for Pontypridd were Ben Lewis and the Jones brothers at half. Provided the Jones brothers play as they did here, they would provide a distinct acquisition to any league team. They were tricky and resourceful, and combined together well. Final score: - **Pontypridd 3 pts Penygraig 11 pts.**

Referee threatened at Pontypridd

Pontypridd played their last match of the season, when their opponents at the People's Park on April 26th 1902 were the Treherbert boys. The homesters had out a strong team, the quartet including D. L. Evans, of Cardiff reserves, who played wing to the centre of Mat Phillips. The score, Treherbert 2 tries, Pontypridd 1 goal, does not by any manner of means represent the relative merits of the two sides. The second try which Treherbert scored ought not to have been allowed. In criticising the game and its participants, it has been a rule to stick up for the knight of the whistle, and his perfect freedom of action on all occasions. The gentleman from Pontypool who officiated at the People's Park would, if he cannot act in a more capable manner than in this match, be well advised to always keep the other side of the touch-line. He will be more appreciated in that position than on the field of play.

To revert to the aforementioned second try. From the outset of the movement which culminated in this score there were at least three irregularities. The player who first received knocked on, and immediately it was again handed on, and before the try was scored it was passed forward. Let us take another instance. Sam Llewellyn, for Pontypridd, picked up and scored after running about 25 yards. When Llewellyn was almost on the point of grounding the leather, the Treherbert umpire suddenly bethought himself that the likely looking scorer had run into touch. Accordingly, up went the flag. This umpire is a decided acquisition to the Treherbert team. The referee's attention was called to the flag, but it took him nearly three minutes to decide what to do, which was palpable weakness. The final score should have read, as one Treherbert partisan observed: -Pontypridd 1 Goal, Treherbert 1 try.

Some of the Pontypridd spectators acted in a very childish and unsportsmanlike fashion by booing the referee, and crowded around him in a most threatening manner. Certain sections of the crowd will never learn to accept that the referee's decision is final, and without making a fuss. The Free Press reporter commented: - 'Your reporter may be accused by readers of these notes of note accepting them himself. This would hardly be fair, as he criticises the official off the field, and held his peace during the process of the match.' Final score: **Pontypridd 5 pts Treherbert 6 pts**. After the match the Glamorgan League Cup was presented to Treherbert at the White Hart Hotel. 'Idris' in the Glamorgan Free Press wrote: -

'While the Pontypridd v Treherbert match was in progress, I happened to run into an old Cilfynydd friend. I remarked to him that it was a pity that Pontypridd did not have the services of Jones, Rees, B. Thomas, and one or two others of the Cilfynydd team. He immediately became very indignant, and contended that Pontypridd had acted very shabbily towards Cilfynydd. As proof conclusive he instanced the action of the Pontypridd secretary Phillips, in reporting Cilfynydd to the Glamorgan Junior League Committee for playing Bunn without a written permit of verbal consent.' In the Glamorgan Free Press of May 17th 1902, 'Idris' put the matter straight, and wrote: -

I have been informed that Mr. Phillips did not report Cilfynydd. The secretary of Troedyrhiw (Cilfynydd's opponents) had written to the Pontypridd secretary to ascertain if Bunn had had a transfer. Mr. Phillips answer was in the negative, which was the only truthful one that he could make. Cilfynydd therefore unjustly blamed the wrong man. While on this subject I may as well state also, that some Pontypridd players, some of used to figure in the premier team, have long had sore grievance against. Somewhat about two years ago the Pontypridd secretary was asked to bring up a team to play Cilfynydd. He was guaranteed a sovereign for brake and hotel expenses. The teams played, but when the Pontypriddians broached the subject of the guarantee to the Cilfynydd committee man who had promised it, he coolly refused to keep his word, and the Pontypriddians were themselves forced to

defray the expenses, after taking the trouble to appear. '

Purchase of the Mill Field – April 23^d 1902

The district council bid fails through their own errors

At a meeting of the Pontypridd District Council on a Tuesday at the end of April 1902 Mr. W. Lewis said he had to report the conduct of one of the members appointed to make the purchase the Mill Field; it was a duty to the public. At a meeting of the council on April 22nd, it was decided to make the purchase, and a committee of three members were selected to bid for the property. At that sitting it was decided that the value was about £2,100. The three members who were to arrange the buying – Mr. F. G. Edwards (chairman), Mr. W. Lewis, and Mr. Hopkin Morgan – met, and it was decided between them that a solicitor should be present to bid for the property to put the Taff Vale Railway Company off the scent. Mr. Edwards was deputed to arrange for a solicitor, Mr. W. R. Davies, to be present. It was decided on the day of the sale the committee should meet at the New Inn at 2.30. Mr. Edwards, however, failed to turn up; the others were naturally anxious to know what had transpired as regards Mr. Davies. Mr. Edwards was not at his place of business, and it was ascertained he not instructed Mr. Davies. He (Mr. Lewis) and Mr. Morgan then had a consultation, as the sale was about to commence, with the result that these two had to do the bidding, and their objection was defeated.

The Taff Vale Railway Company acquired the field for £2,275, the highest bid from the council stopping at £1,250. At 4.30 in the afternoon Mr. Lewis and Mr. Morgan went to Mr. Edwards's place in Market Square, and were told by the assistants that he had left half-an-hour before. Mr. Edwards said it was the first intimation that he had that any such report was to be submitted. He regretted any action of his should give his fellow members cause to complain. He thought it would have been fairer to enquire why he was away. It was altogether impossible for him to be there. He did not object to the report, but should have preferred that they should have given him a chance for explanation, and then to report to the council. He felt sure the council knew him well enough to be sure he would not willingly do anything detrimental to its interests. He admitted the understanding, but it was considered advisable to delay seeing Mr. Davies until as late as possible before the sale. W

When he went to dinner that day he was struck down with one of those severe bilious attacks to which he was subject. He had intended to see Mr. Davies in time. It was not the first time he had suffered, and as several of the members knew, he had to be taken into his home before now by such sudden seizures. He hoped the council would attach any blame to him that his portion of the arrangement was not carried out. No-one felt it more than he did; but it was, however, problematic to whether they would have been the highest bidders in any case. He did not want to

shelter himself by that suggestion. If he had the opportunity of giving his explanation he felt sure the report would not have been submitted.

Mr. Hopkin Morgan said that he considered no-one to blame in regard to the Mill Field but Mr. Edwards. After some remarks by Mr. Roberts and Mr. Seaton, Mr. Edwards declined to take the whole onus on his shoulders; he would take the responsibility of not having seen Mr. Davies for the reason stated. He had been told some time since that the T.V.R. contemplated buying the Mill Field, and on the Thursday previous to the sale they there measuring it out. Mr. Beasley and Mr. Sibbering had been seen visiting it, and were in consultation at the field for 15 minutes before it was put up to auction.

He had been told by a gentleman on the street some days before the sale to the railway company's situation. Mr. Bramwell said that it was possible the T.V.R. did not get any information at all of the Council's intentions. Mr. William Jones moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Hopkin Morgan and Mr. W. Lewis in the matter of the Mill field sale acted to the entire satisfaction of the Council. This course was adopted unanimously. Let's hope this won't affect the local football teams. At the same time the Pontypridd Rugby Club's contract to use the field lapsed.

Please don't publish!

The Evening News of 26th April 1902 commented: - "Please don't publish Pontypridd's record for the season about closing." Such is our Pontypridd man's prayer. Since Dawson's suspension Pontypridd has been going from bad to worse. It was the beginning of the end. There is one thing that can be said of the much abused Pontypridd committee – they have stuck to the sinking ship all along. Looking at it from all standpoints, the committee have faced more difficulties to contend with than the majority of teams in Wales. The football team's lease for the People's Park expires next Wednesday.

Junior Cup Competition

The final for the medals and cup offered by the Pontypridd Football Club, between Pontypridd United and Pontypridd Wanderers, ended as a draw at the People's Park. It was replayed a week later, but even after ten minutes extra time, it was still a draw. A third match was played and ended in Pontypridd United winning by eight points to four.

The Tramroad sulkers (By Idris)

Sports and Pastimes

Those small-souled gentry, the tramroad skulkers, mustered; in strong force on the tips and tramroad last Saturday, May 10th 1902, to patronise the Pontypridd Football Club at a respectful distance when the last match of the season was being played at the People's Park between the Pontypridd United and the Pontypridd Wanderers, in the final for the local medal competition. Very few enthusiasts will be found to regret that the football has finished, but I am convinced that the whole of the "Free Press" readers will rejoice with me in extending to these gentlemen our most sincere sympathy. They will now have to procure other, and, I suppose, more expensive entertainment. What heart rending sacrifice it will be to them to have to part with a few coppers for their future enjoyment. Perhaps they will be bold enough to infest the cricket and tennis grounds on future Saturdays. If they do not put their hands down that the officials in connection with the above games will deal summarily with them. To a certain extent nature has helped the footballers in forming a screen around some parts of the grounds, the foliage on the trees preventing the tip people seeing from certain parts. We have heard a vast amount of conversation during the progress of the medal competition concerning the ages of players in the various teams. Some people contend that it would have been distinctly unfair if the Wanderers had won the coveted gold centred medals as they were a team of old crocks, but if one takes even a superficial survey of the players who comprise the various teams, it will be found I think, that there is not an average of one year per man difference many of them.

I overheard a day or so ago a heated discussion relative to the merits of the Rhydfelen Medal protest. One disputant contended that the Pontypridd committee could not be expected to attempt to prove the guilt at otherwise of the Wanderer's men, who were objected to because they were alleged to have played more than four times for the premiers. I am of the opinion that the committee do not keep a record of players who have turned out for them every week, so it would be next to impossible for them to say whether these players had appeared more than four times or not. The gentleman who so readily deposited the ten shillings to make the protest, affirms that if the Rhydfelen men had gone at once to Cardiff to examine the season's "Echoes," they would have been able to prove the Wanderers guilty. Rather a tall order to examine the season's papers. Rule six of the competition states that any team playing an ineligible member will be counted out of the competition. The accuser should prove the accused guilty. Rule seven states that no team can play more than twenty players in the contests. If the Wanderers had thought that the ones who were objected to had played more than four times they could easily have placed them by others, as they had forwarded the full number to the committee.

The Pontypridd Wanderers and the United, at the third time of asking, decided who should possess the gold-centred medals. I must state at once that in my opinion the better team lost, although at the same times, much sympathy cannot be felt for them as on at least three occasions absolutely certain tries were thrown away. On one occasion Dick Edwards had the line at his mercy, and had only to drop on the ball, but in the excitement of the moment in rushing up he, unfortunately for his side, kicked the ball dead accidentally. Shortly afterwards J. Thomas, of the Wanderers, who is one of the best local junior forwards, had precisely; the same chance, but bounced the ball with his knee out of bounds. In the second half whilst playing towards the Rhondda. River end, Gwilym Jones, the Wanderers' wing, raced up to the line, and if he had taken an instant to steady himself would undoubtedly, have scored. He, however, made a wild plunge, and the ball went to the dead ball line. The United made no such mistakes. The first try scored was gained by Fred Lewis, and was characteristic of that player. He intercepted a pass, and with nearly the whole of his opponents facing him kicked. He gets off the mark so quickly that he was actually the first to get the ball, and scored a sensational try. I certainly thought that Llew Morgan should have been with the ball at least the same time as he was.

The second try which the United scored was a thoroughly well merited one. The feather was swiftly heeled to Jones, of Abercynon, who, with a bunch of opponents to go through cleverly managed to wriggle over the line. No one seemed to lay serious hands on him. The dropped goal which, was scored by A. Rowlands, was a very pretty one, and, unlike most scores of the kind, was no fluke, and well deserved the four points it gained. From the Wanderers' point of view it was a great pity that Daren was unable to turn out through indisposition as with Edwards partnering him Ernie Jones did not have nearly so many chances to distinguish himself as on the two previous occasions. With the choice of E. Jones, at half, F. Lewis on the wing, D. Stephens at full-back, and several strong young forwards, Pontypridd ought next season to be able to raise a well balanced team.

'Idris,' the Pontypridd Chronicle sportswriter had commented in April: A deal of unpleasantness has been caused through the Wanderers and the United players. The District Club lent their scarlet jerseys to these teams, but it so happened that they were both engaged in the semi-final. The Wanderers were down to play first, and the United objected to play in the jerseys which would naturally be wet with perspiration. Ultimately the Wanderers turned out in green blue, white, and other coloured jerseys, while the United appeared in scarlet. A happy fate seems to hover around those scarlet jerseys. While the medal matches were in progress at the People's Park on Saturday last, an usual number of loafers were comfortably watching proceedings from the tramroad and tips. The Pontypridd team have been faring so badly of late, that these gentry have not deemed it worth their while to take up their usual point of vantage. I noticed one fellow appeared just before the matches started, and adjusted himself in a half sitting, half standing position

against the buttresses of the Taff bridge. He fell asleep, and remained in that condition throughout the game. A higher order of intelligence could not perhaps be expected from a man of his kind.

Results season 1901-02					
1901					
Sept	9th	Trail match			
	14th	Canton	Home	Post.	-
	21st	Devonport Albion	Away	Lost	0 - 21
	28th	Treorky	Away	Won	3 - 0
Oct	7th	Treherbert *	Away	Lost	0 - 8
	12th	Caerphilly	Home	Won	8 - 0
	19th	Treorky	Home	Won	8 - 0
Nov	26th	Gloucester	Away	Lost	8 - 16
	2nd	Llwynypia *	Away	Draw	3 - 3
	4th	Glamorgan Police	Home	Draw	3 - 3
	24th	Cwmcarn	Home	Draw	0 - 0
	25th	Bristol	Away	Lost	0 - 9
Dec	26th	Plymouth	Away	Lost	0 - 18
	28th	Swansea	Away	Lost	3 - 19
	7th	Aberavon	Home	Won	3 - 0
	14th	Mountain Ash	Away	Lost	3 - 10
	24th	Cwmcarn	Home	Draw	0 - 0
	25th	Bristol	Away	Lost	0 - 9
1902	26th	Plymouth	Away	Lost	0 - 18
Jan	1st	Hartlepool O. B.	Home	Lost	5 - 6
	4th	Whitchurch	Home	Post.	
	11th	Mountain Ash *	Away	Lost	0 - 15
Feb	18th	Treherbert	Home	Lost	6 - 8
	25th	Pill Harriers	Away	Lost	0 - 21
	8th	Penygraig *	Away	Lost	3 - 9
	15th	Bridgend	Home	Won	13 - 0
	17th	Maesteg	Away	Post.	-
Mar	24th	Llwynypia *	Away	Lost	3 - 11
	1st	Mountain Ash *	Home	Lost	3 - 17
	8th	Treorky*	Home	Lost	0 - 6
Apr	15th	Aberavon	Away	Lost	0 - 55
	22nd	Llanelly	Away	Post.	-
	28th	Bridgewater Albion	Away	Lost	0 - 5
	29th	Penygraig *	Home	Post.	-
	1st	Pill Harriers	Home	Lost	0 - 16
	6th	Treherbert	Away	Lost	0 - 19
	12th	Treorky*	Away	Post.	-
	19th	Mountain Ash *	Away	Lost	0 - 40
	21st	Penygraig	Home	Lost	3 - 11
	26th	Treherbert	Home	Lost	6 - 5
* = Glamorgan League. Seasons Record: Played 35, Won 7, Drawn 5, Lost 23. Result for League game v Treorky is missing. Captain: Shamsee Moore; Secretary: Tom Phillips; Patron: Godfrey L. Clarke; V. Captain: David Roberts; Treasurer : George Parfit; President : Dr. Howard Davies; Ground: People's Park; Headquarters : White Hart Hotel.					

Chapter 5

During 1902 rugby dominated the People's Park with the town team again forced to play on a field that was little more than a rough ground no matter how the club tried to improve it. The changing rooms might have been at the White Hart Hotel on the 'Tumble.' July 1902 saw the club members at the AGM being told that the forthcoming season would also be played at the same ground. Only the games played at the people's park are reported on the following pages.

Season 1902-03

The rugby club Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Pontypridd Football Club was held on Wednesday, July 23rd 1902, at the White Hart Hotel. The chair was occupied by Mr. Evan John and there was a splendid attendance. Mr. Godfrey Clarke was re-elected patron; Dr. Howard Davies, President; and Messrs D. E. Evans, T. R. Griffiths, R. L. Phillips, Duncan Lenox, Tom Morgan, and J. G. Jones, vice presidents. Mr. Tom Phillips declined to be re-elected secretary, but decided to keep the post until the season had begun. There were seventeen nominated as members of the committee, and after going to a vote the following were elected: -

Willie Roberts 66; Alun Morgan 60; Rowley Thomas 60, Llewellyn Wride 49; T. Bishop 44; Tom Bryant 43; Josh O'Neil (Coedpenmaen) 42; Evan Powell 41; and Jack Coslett 38.

Mr. John Walter James was elected captain, and selected Mr. Arthur Lewis as vice captain. The balance sheet showed a deficiency of £35-5s-0d. The total receipts amounted to £236-15s-10d, and the total expenditure was £400.

The ground question

The ground question was discussed, and a letter was read out from the Pontypridd Athletic Club stating that the Taff Vale Park was not available for football in the 1902-03 season. Some members of the old committee said that it was alleged that the Pontypridd Football Club would not be allowed the park as long as they remained members of the football committee. If this was so, they were prepared to move to one side immediately. Mr. Tom Phillips said that he had received a letter from the Taff Vale Railway Co. with regard to letting the People's Park (where the team played last season) and which the railway company had since purchased. It was explained that a gentleman in the town was negotiating for a ten year lease of the ground and that if this was finalised, the club could get the use of it for this period. It was decided to accept the terms offered by the Railway Co. for the use of

the People's Park for the coming season. A number of young men offered to sacrifice a day, and some two days a week to improve the grounds.

During the meeting complaints were made that the committee had only presented some of the players with Glamorgan League winner medals, and this had resulted in some of the players refusing to play for the club. In answer, it was explained that if the clubs finances had warranted it that all players would have received medals. It was decided that all players who played in the championship year would receive medals before the coming season commenced. It was also decided to consider at the next committee meeting the question of providing workmen season tickets at a cheap rate.

The fixture list was submitted and showed that matches had been arranged with Penarth, Devonport Albion, Llanelly, Cynon Stars, Gloucester, Bristol Dings, Hartlepool Barbarians, and all the Glamorgan League teams. Away fixtures had been arranged with Swansea and Newport, but a rule of the Glamorgan League prevented them from playing them if it was not accompanied with a return fixture. It was announced that during the temporary alterations to the White Hart Hotel in September, it was understood that the club would train at the Empire Theatre, kindly placed at their disposal by Mr. David Leyshon of the Graig Brewery. With this the meeting closed.

The season begins

Pontypridd opened the 1902-03 season with a practice match at the People's Park, when they had opposed them a scratch team selected from the clubs in the Pontypridd District. Most of last season's players put in an appearance. Long grass in the field hampered the play to a great extent, and before the interval the staying powers of the players was exhausted. Two new players were unearthed, and would prove of service to the Pontypridd club, viz; Jack Holland, forward, and W. Phillips, who acted as custodian for the visitors.

Pontypridd open with a win

Pontypridd opened the season in fine weather and before a fair crowd when Dinas Powys were the visitors on Sept. 13th 1902. The homesters were without W. G. Usher, the old centre, who, it was understood, has given up the game and Arthur Lewis, the threequarter, who injured his leg during the trial match. The team included several new players who figured prominently in some of the local junior matches last year, amongst them being Ernie Jones, the smart halfback; Fred Lewis, a threequarter possessing a rare turn of speed; J. T. Phillips, Fullback; and J. Holland. The visitors were without some of their best players who were playing in the Cardiff trial match, as were Bunn and Owen of Pontypridd. **Final Score: - Pontypridd 22 pts (2 Goals + 4 tries) Dinas Powis 0.**

Pontypridd: - Back, J. T. Phillips; Threequarters, A. N. Other, Arthur Lewis, Bert Warlow, Fred Lewis; Halves, Charlie Usher + Ernie Jones; Forwards, J. W. James (C), J. Warlow, Mat Phillips, Fred Kelland, Ted Vaughan, Charlie Whiles, J. Holland, S. Stephens, F. Bolton, W. Jones.

Old friends visit Pontypridd

When Roath visited Pontypridd on Sept. 20th 1902, it was the first time for some years for the teams to meet and was played at the People's Park before a fair crowd. The homesters were minus P.C. Francis and Matt Phillips. In the first ten minutes play honours were somewhat even, although Pontypridd did the most of the pressing. When it came to scrummaging, however, the home team were worse than beaten. Roath pressed, but a stubborn defence by the homesters changed the venue of play to mid-field, but here lost possession of the ball. Bolton, however, took up the attack, and nearly scored. Towards half-time, Hill, the visiting threequarter, made a shot for goal, but missed by some yards. H.T. 0 - 0.

In the second half Pontypridd opened well, and immediately pressed the visitors to their line. Walter James almost got over on one occasion, but was brought low by Coombes. From the ensuing scrum Ernie Jones picked up smartly, and the ball reached Bert Warlow, and the latter with a pretty run was over for the first Pontypridd try. Phillip's effort to majorise was a failure. Again Pontypridd pressed, the forwards now appearing to be more aggressive than in the earlier part of the game, but only succeeded in securing a goal. **Final score: - Pontypridd 10 pts Roath 0.**

Pontypridd: - Back, J. D. Phillips; threequarters, Bert Warlow, Fred Kelland, Arthur Lewis, Fred Lewis; halves, Ernie Jones + Charlie Usher; forwards, J. W. James (C), R. Bolton, J. Warlow, J. Holland, D. Samson, D. Trigg, B. Lewis, W. Jones.

Defeat by Treherbert in first league game

Much interest was centred in Treherbert's visit to Pontypridd on Oct. 11th 1902, chiefly owing to it being the first league match of the season. After the first few minutes Ernie Jones came into prominence for Pontypridd with smart work in the open. Pontypridd, from bad passing lost a lot of ground, but soon after Charlie Whiles made a smart burst, which let the home captain, Walter James, score a thoroughly deserved try. The attempt at goal was admirable, for, though from a difficult angle, the ball only just passed outside the posts. Pontypridd directly afterwards, by scrambling play in the centre, had a fine chance of an opening, but one of the backs got behind, and the chance was lost. The play of the homesters had by now slackened off considerably, while that of the visitors had

correspondingly improved. They made several warm attacks, but failed to get through. Usher then unluckily miss-kicked and Treherbert scored an unconverted try. H.T. score: - Pontypridd 3 Treherbert 3.

After the restart both teams seemed to find their level, and from a hot attack by Treherbert, Ernie Jones, splendidly received, and a bout of good passing by the homesters came to nothing. Treherbert again continued to press, but resolute tackling kept them out. Play continued furiously from one end to the other until Bunn scored cleverly for the visitors, the ball from the kick gliding just under the cross-bar. From a brilliant save the home custodian received a nasty kick to the head. Treherbert now scored tries in quick succession, neither of which was converted. **Final score: - Pontypridd 3 pts Treherbert 18 pts.**

Pontypridd: - Back, J. D. Phillips; threequarters, W. G. Usher, Bert Warlow, J. Moore, Arthur Lewis; Halves, Sammy Llewellyn + Ernie Jones; Forwards, J. W. James (C), F. Bunn, Fred Kelland, C. Elwyn, W. John, F. Stephens, C. Whiles, P. Morgan. The Evening Express commented: - A press-box has at last been provided at the Pontypridd Football Ground. "Hurrah!"

Early finish in Pontypridd victory

There was a splendid attendance when Bridgend visited Pontypridd for a match at the People's Park on Oct 18th 1902. Seeing that Bridgend had suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Penarth the previous Saturday, and the important changes made in the Pontypridd players, a victory was expected from the homesters. Owing to the late arrival of the Bridgend team through at accident to the Brake which conveyed them to Pontypridd, the kick-off was considerably delayed. Bridgend kicked off from the town end. A few kicks were exchanged, and play settled down near the Pontypridd line.

Suddenly Pontypridd went away with a rush, and changed the venue of play. Hayman and Griffiths made a futile attempt to stop the ugly rush towards their line. Picking up from a scramble, J. W. James passed to Usher, and the latter, after a brilliant corkscrew, scored for the homesters. The try was not converted. When later play was waged in mid-field Pontypridd were awarded penalty of offside play be the visitors halves, and J. Warlow landed a lovely goal. Soon, when about five yards from the line A. Jones, a Pontypridd man substituting for Bridgend, picked up, and crossed the line. The kick failed. H.T. Score: Pontypridd 6 Bridgend 3. Soon after the restart Pontypridd invaded Bridgend territory, and Shamsee Moore, giving a pass to Arthur Lewis, the latter notched a try, which was not improved upon. A few moments after W. J. Jones picked up and scored another unconverted try for the homesters. Darkness now set in, and the game was brought to a conclusion before time was actually due. **Final score: - Pontypridd 12 pts Bridgend 3 pts.**

Pontypridd: - Back, J. D. Phillips; threequarters, Bert Warlow, Shamsee Moore, W. G. Usher, Arthur Lewis; halves, J. Phillips + Ernie Jones; forwards. J. W. James (C), Rowley Thomas, W. Rees, F. Kelland, Ted Vaughan, Jack Warlow, Bill Jones, Ike Caple.

Bert Warlow 'Let Off'

Before visiting Pontypridd on Nov. 15th 1902 for a league match league match, Treorky had been very successful in other matches, although they had suffered a narrow defeat in Penygraig, whom Pontypridd had drawn with. At the last moment Pontypridd were obliged to make several changes in the team selected, thus weakening their ranks. The absentees included Rowley Thomas, C. Edmunds, and Idris Griffiths. In the first half the forwards on both sides played exceedingly well, and while Treorky attacked, Pontypridd were equally good on the defensive. While war was being waged close to the home line, Lewis received a smart pass from one of the visiting backs, and crossed with a try, which was not converted. Shortly after this the Treorky fullback was sent off the field for being in a fighting altitude and striking Jack Warlow who should also have been ordered to retire, but the referee would not do this. Treorky were leading 0-3 at half-time.

After the restart smart play as seen near the home goal-line. From a scrum Bebb received, and made a brilliant attempt to score, but just failed. Treorky, though playing with seven men in the forwards, held their own in the scrums, and kept up a series of attacks. Then the homesters had a turn and Usher, making a dashing run, scored, amid the cheering of the spectators.

Play got very hot, and the homesters had the better of matters for some time. Stubborn play was seen near the Treorky line, and, after a series of scrums, Bert Warlow, receiving from his brother Jack, got over with the second try for Pontypridd, but it was not converted. A minute before time Ted Jones equalised for Treorky. **Final score: - Pontypridd 6 pts Treorky 6 pts.**

Pontypridd: - Back, J. D. Phillips; threequarters, Arthur Lewis, Fred Lewis, Bert Warlow, W. G. Usher; halves, Jack Warlow and Ernie Jones; forwards, Charlie Whiles, Ted Vaughan, J. W. James (c), Ike Caple, M. Benjamin, J. Bunn, W. Rees, W. Jones.

Pontnewydd's first visit

Pontnewydd, a newly organised Monmouthshire team visited Pontypridd for the first time on Nov. 22nd 1902. The visitors played four of their second teamers, and the homesters were minus their halfback, Ernie Jones, who had broken a finger playing for the Pontypridd Thursday team.

J. W. James started for Pontypridd, and his kick took play to the visitors 25. Some smart play took place here, and Pontnewydd worked the ball well out of danger. Play later hovered around the visitor's line, where Fred Lewis, smartly picking up, dashed over with an unconverted try. From another scramble near the visitors line Charlie Usher crossed for the homesters second try, the kick failing. Stimulated by this success, Pontypridd played up surprisingly well, and kept Pontnewydd busily engaged in defending. The visitors then had a turn of attacking, but this was not sustained, and the homesters smartly changed the venue to the other end up to half-time. H.T. Pontypridd 6 Pontnewydd 0.

Pontypridd had evidently found the measure of their opponents, and kept them penned in their own quarters. Praiseworthy play on the part of the visitors enabled them to attack, but it was only short lived, for Rees Davies, receiving from Fred Lewis, passed to W. G. Usher, who from nearly halfway, raced away and scored a splendid try. Pontypridd now appeared satisfied with their lead, and apparently relaxed their efforts. Pontnewydd played up very gamely to the end, and twice had hard lines in not scoring. **Final score: - Pontypridd 9 pts Pontnewydd 0.**

Pontypridd gain revenge over Penarth

Pontypridd completely avenged the victory gained by the 'Seasiders' earlier in the season. Their play was a decided improvement on their erratic form seen of late. This was more particularly noticeable in the back division where a good deal of science was introduced, and where evidence was given that Pontypridd may yet be raised from the position they have been in, and give a good account of themselves for the rest of the season.

From the start of the game the Taff boys went to work right earnestly, and piled on the score in quick succession. Penarth, however, played pluckily throughout. Excellent good form was displayed by the home forwards, and the halves, Jack Warlow and Charlie Whiles, were seen to great advantage, constantly keeping their threequarter line in motion. Charlie Whiles and John James, the home skipper, and Police Sergeant W. E. Rees, were the best forwards for Pontypridd. The Pontypridd try scorers were Fred Lewis (2), J. W. James, and Fred Kelland (3). **Final Score: - Pontypridd 22 pts (2 Gls + 4 Tries) Penarth 0.**

Pontypridd : Fullback, J. D. Phillips; Threequarters, Bert Warlow, Arthur Lewis, Fred Lewis, Massey; halves, Jack Warlow + J. Wilde; forwards, J. W. James (C), Charlie Whiles, W. E. Rees, Fred Kelland, Ted Vaughan, S. Lewis, Ball, A.N. Other.

On December 25th 1902 - Pontypridd defeated Bristol Dings in an unreported home match 8-3. The Evening Express 27th December reported: - Police-sergeant Rees, the chief clerk at the Pontypridd Police Station, who is doing such yeoman

service to the Pontypridd Football Club, has been promoted to the rank of full sergeant.

Referee's fall gives Ponty victory

When Hartlepool Barbarians visited Pontypridd on Boxing Day 1902 both sides put out strong teams for this attractive holiday fixture at the People's Park. In the first half play was very even, forward rushes being the chief feature, and some pretty passing was also seen amongst the threequarter lines of both sides. From a forward rush near the visitor's line, Fred Kelland crossed over and got the first try for Pontypridd. A few minutes later the Barbarians rushed the ball from halfway, and Hogarth scored a lucky try. The game was even up to half-time. H.T. 3-3. In the second half the homesters had slightly the better of matters, when J. W. Jones, Cilfynydd, scored a try for Pontypridd, which was converted, thus giving the homesters a lead of five points. One of the visitors explained that little effort was made to stop the run which resulted in the Pontypridd score as they were expecting the referee to blow his whistle, but saw that he had met with an accident and was on the ground. **Final Score: - Pontypridd 8 pts Hartlepool Barbarians 3pts.**

The Western Mail commented: - The Pontypridd forwards were a heavier lot, but the visitors were equally as smart as them in the open. The passing of the home quartet was very faulty, and, consequently, several excellent chances were lost. Bert Thomas and J. W. Jones, Cilfynydd, assisted them. Jones's kicking being very serviceable, though his passing could have been improved upon.'

Play continues with a soccer ball!

When Maesteg visited the People's Park to play Pontypridd on Jan. 26th 1903, both sides were well represented. Play at the start was of a scrambling nature, but the visiting quartet was soon in evidence with some smart passing. A series of scrums took place in mid-field, and the Maesteg halfbacks fed their threequarters well, but owing to wild passing failed to score. Browning on one occasion picking up in mid-field made a fine run, but at the critical moment a pass by him resulted in a knock-on, and a fine chance to score was lost. The visitors up to this time had got the better of matters, but they failed to pierce the splendid defence offered by the 'Taffboys'. However, from a scrum near the Pontypridd line Edward Jones picked up and scored for Maesteg, leaving them leading 0-3 at half-time.

At the restart the homesters infused more dash into their play, and from a fine bout of passing in mid-field Fred Lewis got possession, and was collared only a few yards from the line. In the course of play the ball was kicked into the river, and unsuccessful attempts were made to recover it. Play had to be resumed with a soccer ball, and was mostly confined to the forwards. **Final Score: - Pontypridd 0 Maesteg 3 pts.**

A sea of mud!

The outcome of Pontypridd's home league match against Treorky on Feb. 2nd 1903 would not affect the championship owing to the not over bright prospects of the two teams. Both sides suffered from absentees, Pontypridd more especially so. Before Pontypridd kicked off, there was a heavy downpour of rain, which, together with the state of the ground, made matters very uncomfortable for the players.

The result of the first few minutes of play was a gain of 25 yards for Pontypridd. A mark was made here by a Treorky forward, who obtained some advantage for his side. Eventually the ball came out to the home fullback, who passed to W. J. Thomas. That player transferred to Lewis on the wing. Lewis made for the line, and, finding himself hard pressed, kicked. He was unfortunate in the race for possession, and after some exciting play close to the Pontypridd line, a minor was scored for the homesters. Soon after the drop-out, Fred Lewis headed a rush in which all the Pontypridd players took part, and brought the ball down to within a few yards of the Treorky line, and a similar rush on the part of the home men again changed the venue of play. Eventually, Lewis Lewis, of Treorky, was able to cross and score the first try, which was not converted. Before the interval the same player tackled the Pontypridd fullback, and obtaining the ball made for the line and scored the second try. This also went unconverted leaving the half-time score 6-0 to Treorky. Lewis Lewis again distinguished himself in the second half, and he was enabled, owing to a rush by the Treorky players, to add a third unconverted try. Soon after this he and Thomas had to leave the ground, and, playing with thirteen men, Treorky were unable to assert their superiority as in the first half. Very uninteresting play took place until the finish. **Final score: - Treorky 9 pts Pontypridd 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, C. Lewis; threequarters, Arthur Lewis (C), G. Lewis, Mat Phillips, J. Whiles; halves, J. Phillips and C. Whiles; forwards, G. Whiles, I. Caple, Cullen, D. John, W. Powis, T. Griffiths, F. Watkins, Ted Vaughan.

The Glamorgan Free Press reported: - Long before the interval the ground was a sea of mud and from a spectator's point of view the condition of the players became comical in the extreme. One could not help but thinking of Kipling's 'Muddled Oaf's. Naturally, there was no back play, and the home forwards adapted themselves to the state of matters better than Pontypridd, who were unable to keep their line out of danger. Treorky scored three tries and would have added more if a little more care and judgement had been exercised at the proper time. Lewis Lewis, who registered three tries, played a fine game, and Lewis of Pontypridd, as well as the halfbacks were prominent for some smart work in defence. Treorky played with only 13 men in the last stages of the game, two players leaving the field for some reason or other. In spite of this they still managed to hold their own against the Pontypridd team.

Spectators scream with laughter

Pontypridd's home game against Cynon Stars on Feb. 7th 1903, was played in miserable weather and neither side was fully represented. The Stars started operations, and soon went away with a dribble. Luckmore got possession and scored a try for the visitors. A few minutes later Pontypridd pressed and Fred Lewis got over, the place kick failing. Kelland, a little later scored Pontypridd's second try. Half-time score: - Pontypridd 6 Cynon Stars 6.

After the restart, played settled down for some time in the stars 25, where a series of scrums took place. The People's Park ground by now was a veritable quagmire. The Pontypridd quartet tried to get the ball away by starting a few bouts of passing, but were unable to do much. Play was entirely confined to the forwards, and at intervals the spectators screamed with laughter as the players got planted in the mud. One of the Pontypridd forwards rushed the ball nearly the whole length of the field, and one of the visitors actually kicked the ball over his own line, but no score resulted. **Final Score: - Pontypridd 6 pts Cynon Stars 3 pts**

Pontypridd gain some lost prestige

Pontypridd, this season, were without doubt, the greatest victims of Dame Fortune. On at least a dozen occasions they had been robbed of a good gate due to the poor weather. On Saturday, Feb. 21st 1903 the 'Tinplaters' were the dainty tit-bits, but a drizzling, drenching rain spoiled what would otherwise have been a good gate. Pontypridd, through a series of accidents were unable the previous season to fulfil their engagement at Stradey; consequently they had to appear twice this season at Llanelly. On both occasions they were mercilessly trounced, but hoped to in a good measure regain their lost prestige at the People's Park.

Pontypridd won the toss and kicked off against the wind. Owing to the slippery state of the ground R. Lewis mullied. A scrum was formed near to the visitor's line and Jack Whiles then executed a splendid dribble for Pontypridd, which almost resulted in a try. Immediately afterwards Pontypridd were penalise for offside tactics, but a charge by the homesters left the visitors in a worse position than before. The Taffsiders continued to press, but from a scrum near the Llanelly line the visitors grandly relieved. The Scarlets now had much the better of the argument. From a loose rush by the homesters one of the visitors diddled several opponents and again relieved. The homesters again assumed the aggressive, and from a scrum near the line Llanelly averted danger with a combined rush.

For an unintentional infringement of the offside rule, the visitors were penalised, and Massey had extremely hard lines in not registering three points. Pontypridd continued to reign in the ascendant, and from a well executed dribble, Fred Lewis scored and Massey converted. From the restart Pontypridd were penalised for legs-

up in the scrum, but no material advantage was gained by Llanelly. The homesters were soon again penalised for offside play. Soon, from a line-out Massey made a good but futile attempt at goal. The homesters through kicking too hard now exacted 5 minors in quick succession. From a loose kick by Llanelly Massey failed to field owing to the greasy state of the ground and ball. The visitors, however, through fumbling, failed to take advantage of a grand opportunity. H.T score: - Pontypridd 5 pts Llanelly 0. **Full-time score: - Pontypridd 5 pts Llanelly 7 pts.**

The Western Mail commented: 'Llanelly had a narrow escape from defeat, and were lucky to win by a penalty goal and dropped goal to a converted goal. The Pontypridd men are to be congratulated upon making such a good fight, and the result of the match ought to prove an incentive to those who have worked hard for some time to make the Pontypridd team an organisation worthy of so large and populous a centre.'

Fourteen man Pontypridd defeated

The Pontypridd v Aberavon match at the People's Park on March 7th 1903 was played before a good crowd. Pontypridd put out a strong team, and hoped to avenge the defeat at Aberavon some time ago. The visitors were somewhat weakened by the absence of two threequarters and two forwards.

Pontypridd started and after several exchanges Massey sent up behind the centre flag. From the line-out the home forwards rushed up with a bang towards the line, and being assisted by the backs, Aberavon's goal was jeopardised, Edwards conceding a minor just in time after a vigorous attack on the right wing. Aberavon then attacked, and from a mark Bryce nearly dropped a goal. Passing on the visitor's right gave trouble to Pontypridd, and Harris had a drop-kick charged down.

Then, Massey missing the ball as the forwards rushed upon him, left his goal in danger, and Lewis Thomas scored an unconverted try for Aberavon. Playing a vigorous aggressive game Aberavon continued to press until the Pontypridd halves and forwards dribbled in good style over halfway. From a scrum W. Thomas got possession from a scrum for the visitors, and going on the blind-side ran well for the line. He looked a scorer, but was smartly collared by Massey, the home custodian, however Toft picked up, but Fred Lewis halted him. After a kick by Usher, the ball dropped near the home line, and Thomas, dashing up, scored Aberavon's second try. Half-time score: - Pontypridd 3 pts Aberavon 6.

After the resumption Whiles had the homesters penalised, but the kick went wide, and for the next few minutes the visitors got into a fine aggressive mood and Stoye was twice collared by Usher when speeding for the line. The homesters were sorely pressed and although their defence was sound for a while, it was

eventually penetrated by Toft after a capital passing movement on the right. The attack was rewarded with vigour, but Arthur Lewis getting possession in neutral ground, kicked and collared the fullback by the quarter flag. A splendid dribble by Idris Phillips took play to the Aberavon quarters, where Arthur Lewis was unfortunate in losing the ball, which rolled into touch when the goal was at his mercy. The fullback then prevented Fred Lewis scoring after a fine run by turning the ball into touch. On the throw-out, Pontypridd outpaced the fullback in a rush, and Arthur Lewis scored a try which Massey converted. Aberavon attacked until the end and after Bryce had made a strong run, he threw to Francis, and the visiting centre scored Bryce, converting. **Final score: - Pontypridd 5 pts Aberavon 17.** The Western Mail commented: -

The visitors had the better team and well deserved their victory. Unfortunately for Pontypridd they lost the services of Rogers, their diminutive centre for the greater part of the game, and this naturally handicapped them.

Schoolboys' League – Pontypridd v Cardiff (Evening Express 21st March 1903)

The attraction at the People's Park was the match between teams representing the Cardiff and Pontypridd schools rugby league. The Pontypridd team turned out as follows: - Back, Archie Llewellyn (Wood Road); threequarter backs, W. Rees Capt. (Mill Street), Llewellyn Rees (Wood road), G. Loveridge (Mill Street), and Stanley Cobb (Wood Road); Halfbacks, Evan Howell (Hawthorn), Tom Hope, (Mill Street); Forwards, Eli Lewis (Lan Wood), R. Rogers (Mill Street), D. J. Davies (Wood Road), Leonard Davies (Mill Street), Henry Morley (Hawthorn) Tudor Griffiths (Mill Street), Edgar Stephens (Mill Street) and D. J. Jones (Hawthorn).

This was the first match for the Pontypridd boys to play since the formation of their league, Cardiff having kindly granted them home and away fixtures. The Cardiff boys were accompanied by R. T. Gabe, the Welsh international centre. The Cardiff boys kicked off, and for the first 10 minutes kept up a hot attack in the homesters' quarters. Then the venue of play was changed, and the Pontypridd boys took play to the visitors' line. From a scrum in mid-field – a pretty bit of passing by the Cardiff quartet was seen, and Lowe with a fine run gained a good slice of ground, taking play right up to the Pontypridd boys' line, and the homesters were forced to concede a minor. From a scrum in the homesters' territory Reardon received, and ran up to the Pontypridd line. Halftime score 0 – 0.

On the restart Cardiff scholars maintained their superiority and soon took play down to their opponents' quarter-line, where a series of scrums were formed, in which the visitors invariably gained possession. Play remained in the homesters' quarters for some time, with the visitors acting on the aggressive, until Rees

relieved with a fine kick. Cardiff again attacked and Reardon scored an unconverted try. Final score: - Pontypridd League 0 Cardiff League 3 pts (1 try).

Pontypridd Schools League - Mill Street v Cilfynydd.

This match was played at the People's Park on Monday afternoon March 23rd 1903 to decide the championship of the schools league competition. Mill Street were the favourites, being one point ahead of their opponents. The ground was in an awful state, and the youngsters found it impossible to handle the ball. In the first half Lovering, the captain of the Mill Street team, scored an unconverted try, and, this being the only point scored, his side now won the shield presented by the Pontypridd Athletic Club and the gold centred medals given by the Pontypridd Football club. The runners received medals from the league.

As little handling as possible

A good deal of interest was taken in Pontypridd's home league match against Mountain Ash on March 28th 1903, as the chances of the visitors to secure the cup and championship title for the season largely depended on the result. Mountain Ash were in the running for the cup, but Pontypridd occupied the lowest position in the table.

The visitors turned out at full strength, including the two Muxworthy's in the centre. On the home side there were several changes, W. E. Rees, the stalwart forward being absent, Locke, the fullback of the Merlin Stars Juniors, was given a chance as custodian, and Ernie Jones, after a long absence turned out at halfback instead of Whiles.

The weather was very favourable, but the ground was sodden by the heavy rains earlier in the week and the game was played under the most wretched conditions, the ground being a veritable quagmire. It was practically impossible to get a foothold, and the players wisely did little handling as they possibly could, and it was extremely difficult to hold the heavy slippery ball.

The forwards kept the ball amongst themselves, and the visiting pack being a heavier lot, had the advantage and scored four tries, although the home lot played spiritedly to the end. On the days form the visitors deserved their victory. **Final score: - Pontypridd 3 Mountain Ash 12.**

Pontypridd: Back, Locke; threequarters, Arthur Lewis, Fred Lewis, Bert Warlow, W. G. Usher; halves, Phillips & Ernie Jones; forwards, Fred Kelland, I. Caple, Jack Warlow, Ted Vaughan, D. John, E. Thomas, J. Harrison, Mat Phillips.

Charity match

On Good Friday, April 10th 1903 a charity match in aid of the Pontypridd Nursing Association was played at the People's Park between teams representing the Conservative and Liberal clubs. The attendance, which was a good one, included a sprinkling of the fair sex. Several well known Pontypridd footballers turned out for the respective teams. Mr. Ack Llewellyn, Welsh Football Union and ex-Pontypridd captain refereed. The Liberals were victorious by two tries to nil, Fred Lewis, the Pontypridd winger scoring both tries.

Another scoreless draw

As in the previous encounter earlier in the season, Pontypridd's game with Ebbw Vale at the People's Park on Easter Saturday, April 11th 1903, ended in a scoreless draw. The game, which was one of short duration, was very evenly contested. The homesters, however, were slightly superior in most departments. The visitors had the advantage of a good custodian, Young, who defended his line admirably against the onrushes of the Pontypridd forwards, who were heavier than the visiting pack. Mat Phillips and Fred Lewis were conspicuous in the home threequarter line. **Final score Pontypridd 0 Ebbw Vale 0.**

Pontypridd: Back, E. T. Rendall; threequarters, Fred Lewis, Mort, Phillips, Bert Warlow; halves, Idris Phillips & W. Coslett; forwards, Charlie Whiles (C), I. Caple, Ted Vaughan, E. Thomas, D. John, Jack Warlow, A. N. Other (2). That weekend Pontypridd started a short tour of the West Country.

Chairman of committee comes out of retirement

There were absentees in both sides when Penygraig visited Pontypridd for a 'friendly' on April 20th 1903 Mr. Tom Williams, Pontypridd, was the referee. During the first quarter of an hour the homesters made several strong attacks. Willie Roberts, the club chairman, who in years gone by had played so well for Pontypridd, once nearly put in L. Richards. Eventually, after a fine burst by Bert Warlow, Fred Lewis scored a capital try behind the goal, but Mat Phillip's kick just missed the mark. After a sharp attack on the home citadel the Rhondda team was given a penalty, but Simmond's kick went a few inches wide. The visitors were being sorely pressed when the interval was reached with Pontypridd leading 3-0.

Immediately after the restart Penygraig scored a somewhat 'soft' try. Rogers, the home custodian, was collared almost on his line, and Shugar, picking up, simply had to drop over. Arthur Williams, Penygraig, at this stage had the misfortune to twist his knee, and retired. Simmonds, of Penygraig, nearly dropped a goal, and then Willie Roberts figured with a tricky run and long throw to his wing, but Richards failed to do the needful. A vigorous onslaught followed, and Jack Warlow

put on the second try for Pontypridd. Fred Lewis then got away and in brilliant fashion scored. The game finishes in darkness. **Final score: - Pontypridd 9 pts Penygraig 0.**

Rhydyfelen rugby play at People's Park (Evening Express 2nd May 1903)

One of the largest crowds seen on the People's Park for some time attended to witness the struggle for supremacy between the Caerphilly United and Rhydyfelen on Monday in the Pontypridd Junior Cup competition. Soon after the game commenced it was quite evident that Caerphilly were by far the better team in every department. Although their threequarters failed to take advantage of many opportunities to add to the score, it must be admitted that they gave a good exhibition of the passing game. The deadly way in which they tackled was much admired by the spectators.

Last game of the season

Troedyrhiw visited Pontypridd on April 25th 1903 for the home teams last game of the season, but little interest was centred in the match, and the home men turned out several substitutes. In mid-field Fred Lewis initiated a round of passing, but Prosser failed to take the transfer when the line was practically at his mercy. Pontypridd again attacked, and led by Bradley, the forwards crossed the line and Fred Lewis was about to score but got out of bounds. The visitors then attacked and Bert Warlow saved. Fred Lewis figured in starting another onslaught, but Prosser did badly on the wing. Just before the interval Bert Warlow was dashing across, but missed the ball. In the second half Ted Vaughan scored a converted try, the only score of the match. **Final score: - Pontypridd 5 pts Troedyrhiw 0.**

A poor season - the causes

The Daily News carried this review on the day that the season ended: - The Pontypridd rugby team closed its season today and a glance at its record will at once show that the team has not been attended with much success. Indeed, this is about the worst record it has ever had, and presents a marked contrast to that of two years ago, when for the first and only time the club secured the Glamorgan League Cup and championship. A number of circumstances could be cited to largely account for its present position, and the chief of these has been the difficulty on several occasions to get players to play away from home. More than once journeys were made several men short and this was responsible for some of the defeats. There have been many changes in the team during the season, and the loyalty to the club has been sadly lacking on the part of some of the players. The officers consequently had to do the best they could under the adverse circumstances, but there is absolutely no reason why a really good team cannot be

found, as there is plenty of young material in the town and district. John Walter James started the season as captain, but after a time he gave up the position, which was afterwards taken by Arthur Lewis, who with his brother Fred have done some excellent work for the team. Both are wing threequarters and although might not be individually singled out as the 'shining lights' of the team, but their wonderful dash and speed have resulted in some very fine tries. Bert Warlow, too, has rendered yeoman service in the threequarter line.

The club figures rather badly, as it occupies the lowest position in the league table. Had the team shown the same form in previous matches as it did in the last match against Penygraig, its record would have been a much better one. The chairman of the committee is Willie Roberts, is a faithful supporter of the club in days of adversity as well as in success, and last Monday he turned out against Penygraig and gave a good account of himself, now and again showing glimpses of his old form which brought him to the front some seasons ago. It is a striking coincidence that the team scored just half of the points scored against it - 155 for, 310 against. Other records are as follows:

Results Pontypridd Football Club - season 1902-03

1902	6th	Trail Match			F	A
	13th	Dinas Powis	Home	Won	22	0
	20th	Roath	Home	Won	6	0
	27th	Devonport A.	Away	Lost	0	17
Oct	4th	Llanelly	Away	Lost	0	32
	11th	Treherbert *	Home	Lost	3	18
	18th	Bridgend	Home	Won	12	3
	23rd	Penygraig *	Home	Draw	0	0
Nov	1st	Ebbw Vale	Away	Draw	0	0
	8th	Penarth	Away	Lost	6	8
	15th	Treorky *	Home	Draw	6	6
	22nd	Pontnewydd	Home	Won	9	0
	24th	Maesteg *	Away	Lost	0	17
	29th	Aberavon *	Away	Lost	3	19
Dec	13th	Treherbert *	Away	Lost	0	11
	20th	Penarth	Home	Won	22	0
	25th	Bristol Dings	Home	Won	8	3
	26th	Hartlepool Barbarians	Home	Won	8	3
	27th	Llwynypia *	Away	Lost	3	9
1903						
Jan	3rd	Penygraig *	Away	Lost	0	13
	10th	Plymouth	Away	Lost	0	19
	24th	Llanelly	Away	Lost	0	25
	26th	Maesteg *	Home	Lost	0	3
	31st	Treorky *	Away	Lost	0	9
Feb	7th	Cynon Stars	Home	Won	6	3
	14th	Mountain A.	Away	Lost	0	8
	21st	Llanelly	Home	Lost	5	7
	28th	Bridgend	Away	Lost	0	3
Mar	7th	Aberavon *	Home	Lost	5	17
	14th	Bristol	Away	Lost	0	5
	20th	Llwynypia *	Home	Won	8	3
	21st	Gloucester	Away	Lost	0	14
	28th	Mountain A.	Home	Lost	3	12
Apr	4th	Penygraig	Away	Lost	0	13
	11th	Ebbw Vale	Home	Draw	0	0
	13th	Bath	Away	Lost	0	9
	18th	Exeter	Away	Lost	3	13

	20th	Penygraig	Home	Won	9	3
	25th	Troedyrhiw	Home	Won	5	0
<p>Seasons Record: Played 38, Won 11, Drawn 4, Lost 23. * = Glamorgan League. Captain: J. W. James / Arthur Lewis; President: Dr. D. E. Evans; Ground: People's Park; Vice-Capt: Arthur Lewis; Patron: - Godfrey L. Clarke; Headquarters: - White Hart Hotel; Secretary: Tom Phillips; Treasurer: George Parfitt.</p>						
<p>Goals (converted tries) for 11; Goals against 26; Tries for 34; Tries against 62. scorers: Fred Lewis 10, Arthur Lewis 7, Fred Kelland 5, J. W. James 5, Bert Warlow & Charlie Usher 4 each, W. G.. Usher 3, Jack Warlow 3, W. J. Jones, Ernie Jones, J. Holland, Mat Phillips, Ted Vaughan 1 try each. Conversions: H. C. Massey 6, Bert Warlow 2, Sam Llewellyn 2, W. J. Jones 2; Jack Warlow kicked a penalty.</p>						

Chapter 6

The Summer of 1903 saw little happen at the People's Park, the ever growing presence of Taff Vale Park taking the events that might have been held at the Millfield. However the Pontypridd Football (rugby) Club were again forced to use it for another season.

At the club AGM at the end of July 1903 the chairman asked whether they would run a team next season. In the face of that deficit the responsibility of a committee man would be a heavy one. He thought it would be very hard lines if they could not keep up a rugby team in Pontypridd. Gate money taken at the People's Park for the season amounted to £213-17s-4d.

Mr. Tom Phillips, the secretary, said he did not think it worthwhile running a team. Last year the players assisted the club more than ever before. He did not think there had been a more amateur team in the history of the club, it was purely amateur. Unfortunately the result of the sports day was only £2-3s-8d, and the prizes etc., came to £22. Whether they should have a team or not was for the supporters of the club to decide. He thought they should thank the directors of the Newbridge Rhondda Brewery for their splendid donation of a cup for the junior competition. It was a very successful competition. He believed they should also be thanked for their kindness to the club through their representative, Mr. D. Lewis. He proposed a vote of thanks to them all. Mr. George Parfitt seconded, and it was carried. Mr. David Lewis, replying for the brewery said he was obliged to the club for their vote of thanks; the gift was made purely in the interest of sport.

Mr. Frank Thomas said the question whether they should run a team in Pontypridd was a momentous one. After hearing the balance sheet read he hoped the committee would run the club for another year because last year there was extraordinary expenditure that would not occur again, such as putting up the hoarding, and also the expense of medals for the league. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying the club should proceed for another year. Mr. I. Goose proposed that they should run the club for another year, and this was carried.

The Evening Express of 25 July 1903 reported: - Pontypridd football enthusiasts have determined to try their luck once more next season, notwithstanding the fact, as the secretary put it at the annual meeting of the club on Monday that the prospects of success are anything but bright. This is mainly owing to the fact that the team will have to continue playing their matches at the Peoples' Park, which is not a suitable ground for football. A few weeks ago an application was made to the Pontypridd Athletic Syndicate for the use of the Taff Vale Park, but they

declined to let the field to the club either for football or sports. "Surely," said Mr. Frank Thomas, one of the club's best supporters, at Monday's meeting. "We have not come to the year 1903 to decide whether we will continue football at Pontypridd." Mr. Thomas thought that Pontypridd ought to be at the top of the ladder instead of at the bottom, and the audience agreed. Mr. Tom Phillips, the secretary of the club, who was heartily thanked for his good services last season, remarked that the club had been purely an amateur one, and he bemoaned the fact that sufficient interest was not taken in the sport at Pontypridd by those who were able to render support.

Jack Warlow, next year's captain, is one of Pontypridd's oldest players, and the election was a very popular one. He received more votes than all the others put together. The election of Freddy Lewis as vice-captain was also received with rounds of applause. Prior to the previous year, the secretary explained, Freddy was practically an unknown quantity, and, his inclusion in the Pontypridd firsts showed the benefit to be derived from fostering junior football. He had amply justified the selection by topping the score for the season. It was to be hoped that he would be found in the ranks of the county team this year. An amusing incident occurred when Freddy's brother—Arthur—was proposed for the vice-captaincy. Rising to his feet he declared that he would not stand. "Well, sit down, then," shouted someone amidst laughter.

The trial match

Pontypridd opened the season with a trial match against a District XV at the People's Park on September 5th 1903. Two teams were selected before this date, but it was two entirely different teams that played, and the senior club emerged victors by thirteen points to nil. The Pontypridd forwards, given some training, looked capable of giving a good account of themselves this season. They showed some very good footwork and packed well in the scrums. What they had to do however was pay a little more attention to the heeling out. The brothers Norton turned out for the first time, and made a very good show. Of the threequarters Ernie Jones and W. (Billy) Jones, were the best. Both showed a good turn of speed. Bertie Warlow and Arthur Lewis on the wings did very well. Sid James did exceedingly well at fullback, and ought to make a good custodian.

Very poor start for Pontypridd

The rugby season opened at Pontypridd on Sept. 12th 1903 with the home team opposed by the Grange Stars, who were also playing their first match. They were without their captain, and there were one or two changes in the home side, one of the absentees being Fred Lewis, who was competing in the 100 Yards Sprint

Championship for £100 at Taff Vale Park, while three players from the previous season, Ike Caple, E. W. Evans and Jack Coslett, all played in the Cardiff trial match. The weather was dull, but there was a fair gathering of spectators. The homesters included the brothers Norton, halfbacks of Caerphilly last year, and Sid James.

The visitors commenced operations, and after Bert Warlow had replied the Stars attacked vigorously, but failed to penetrate the defence. Then Pontypridd broke away, and for the next ten minutes held the whip hand. Sid James picked up and with a fine drop narrowly missed scoring. A moment later the Stars, with a rush, reached the home quarter line, and a nice round of passing culminated in R. Williams scoring the only try of the match, which was not converted. Pontypridd had made a poor start to the season in being beaten by a Cardiff junior team. **Final score: Pontypridd 0 Grange Stars 3 pts.**

Pontypridd : Back, D. Thomas; threequarters, Arthur Lewis, Bert Warlow, Ernie Jones, Sid James; halves, Moses and Jack Norton; forwards, Jack Warlow (C), Mat Phillips, Fred Kelland, W. Jones, S. Davies Ted Vaughan, T. Jenkins and Fred Harries.

Pontypridd's first win of season

There was a fairly large attendance at the People's Park on Sept. 19th 1903 to witness the visit of Roath. Pontypridd's defeat the previous Saturday in no way discouraged the homesters and they turned out with determination to wipe off the score. On the last occasion when Roath visited Pontypridd they were defeated 8-0. Several of the old Pontypridd players were selected to turn out, and they included Fred Lewis, who had undergone a course of training for the £100 handicap sprint at Taff Vale Park, and this was his first appearance of the season. Roath were minus four of their regular players who were chosen to play in the Cardiff v Cardiff District match.

The visitors started operations against the sun, and a scrummage was formed in the homesters territory. Pontypridd got the best of the argument and carried play to mid-field, where from a scrummage the homesters rushed up the field, but overran the ball, and E. Thomas touched down and saved the position. Shortly afterwards the visitors this time rushed down the field, but soon an excellent opportunity was given the home threequarters, who passed beautifully until near the goal-line, where Fred Kelland passed wide to Fred Lewis, but the ball found touch near the line. A series of kicks up and down the field ended in Jack Norton securing the ball, who made a fine run and scored but no goal was made. **Finals score: - Pontypridd 11 pts Roath 5 pts.**

Success against Bridgewater

Jack Warlow kicked off from the river end on the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Oct. 10th 1903, when Bridgewater Albion were the visitors, and the ball went into touch on the visitors 25. Bridgewater gradually worked their way to the home quarters, where for offside play they were awarded a free kick, and Pippin landed a beautiful goal. After the restart the homesters worked their way to the Albion 25, and from a scrum Fred Lewis had hard lines in not scoring, a minor being awarded. The Norton's got the ball away nicely from the next scrum, but a bad pass to Usher lost a chance. One of the visitors made his mark in the home 25, but the shot for goal was charged down. Some exchanges ended in favour of the Albion, but Pontypridd soon carried play to their opponent's line. Sid James failed with a kick at goal just on half-time, but W. G. Usher, picking up the ball on the Albion 25, scored a grand try, which was not converted. HT. 3 - 3.

On the restart play was for some time in the centre, where the Albion brought off a nice bout of passing, but not much ground was gained. Pontypridd were now warming to their work, and one of the Norton brothers put in a nice kick, which carried play to the visitors goal, where Pontypridd gained a minor. Pontypridd still penned the Albion in their own quarters, where the Norton's got the ball away from the next scrum, but a bad pass from Usher to Warlow lost a certain try. The splendid defence of the visitors kept Pontypridd out until Bridgewater dribbled down the field where they were awarded a minor. After the drop-out, Sid James, the home fullback, put in a nice kick, which he smartly followed up, and tackled his man before he could return. Play was still waged in the visitors 25, where one of the Norton's passed to Usher, and the latter doubling a few men, sent on to Bert Warlow, who ran over with an unconverted try. Pontypridd forced the pressure until the end. **Final score: - Pontypridd 6 pts Bridgewater Albion 3 pts.**

Pontypridd : Back, Sid James; threequarters, W. G. Usher, R. Bolton, Fred Lewis, Bert Warlow; halves, Moses & Jack Norton; forwards, Jack Warlow (C), H. Williams, James, Kelland, Bryant, Caple, Grubb, D. Jones.

'Forward' in the Western Mail commented: 'Pontypridd is again taking its place amongst Welsh clubs, and its success against Bridgewater was thoroughly deserved from every standpoint. At last Mr. Tom Phillips, the hard-working secretary, has got a lot around him who are likely to atone for the last few seasons disasters. At the last moment Whale was unable to play on the wing, and Bolton, a smart forward, took his place and played a good game although he was in the wrong position.

Usher was a particularly shining light of the home threequarters, his two runs resulting in a couple of tries being scored. Noah and Jack Norton, at half, were in

excellent form, and were altogether too good for their opposites. They initiated several rounds of passing which nearly brought further scores. Next Saturday Pontypridd plays its first league game against Maesteg at home, and their supporters, encouraged by their success of the last two Saturdays, are looking forward to gaining the first two points in the league.'

Maesteg defeated at People's Park

Pontypridd opened their league fixtures for the season against Maesteg and before a good crowd on the People's Park, Pontypridd, which was in splendid condition and a good game was expected.

Pontypridd started the game from the river end, and were soon awarded a free-kick, but the attempt at goal was a failure. Maesteg now worked their way well over the halfway line, where they brought off some nice bouts of passing. The visitors, however, were soon penned in their own quarters, but Harding relieved with a good kick to touch. A nice chance was then given to Usher, but that player failed to round his opponent, and put in a feeble kick. Pontypridd, however, were not to be denied, and another kick by Usher carried play well within the Maesteg quarters, where Pontypridd were awarded another free-kick, but again the kick failed. Maesteg were now playing a hot game and came away with a splendid dribble, but Warlow cleverly turned the ball into touch. HT. score 0-0.

Bert Warlow had a kick charged down near the start of the second half, and a scrum was formed near the home posts. The ball came out to Cash Llewellyn, who attempted a drop for goal, but failed, and Sam Hopkins fielding the ball, ran over the line, but the try was disallowed. Maesteg were now playing a nice open game, and brought off some nice bouts of passing, which enabled them to gain much ground. The homesters, however, tackled keenly, but eventually passing Maesteg on the right-wing almost ended lead to Lewis scoring for them, but he lost the ball on the line. Subsequent exchange of kicks ended in favour of Pontypridd. From a scrum on the centre line the Norton got the ball out nicely, and a round of passing saw Fred Lewis making a dash for the visitors line. From a scrum Jack Norton scored a try in the corner, which Caple failed to convert. From now until the end of the game Maesteg made determined efforts to equalise, but failed. **Final score: - Pontypridd 3 pts Maesteg 0.**

'Forward' in the Western Mail commented: - 'Notwithstanding expectations to the contrary, Pontypridd, fired with the success of the past few weeks proved victorious over Maesteg after a splendid game. With every disadvantage as to ground, many disappointments last season, and much carping criticism from ill-natured "friends", the club opened its season in debt, but given a continuation of good play and a reasonable amount of luck, Ponty bids fair to return to its former

position.

The teams were representative, and there was little to choose between the two packs, Maesteg having the advantage in weight. The game turned out to be keen and interesting, the passing on both sides being excellent. The visitors seemed the smarter in the open, but as the game drew to its close the home forwards proved too much for them in the scrums. Fred Lewis and W. G. Usher did some good work for the winning team, and the brothers Norton again proved themselves a powerful acquisition to the coalopolitans, and Sid James played some sound football at fullback. The league match with Llwynypia next Saturday is looked forward to with considerable interest, and although the "boys" from the Rhondda Fawr are popular throughout the valleys, there is a general feeling and hope that Pontypridd will continue their efforts to regain lost laurels.'

Gratifying win over Llwynypia

Pontypridd's home league match against Llwynypia at the People's Park was played in dull weather. Both sides were strongly represented. Like other matches played on this date there were wretched climatic conditions, rain falling heavily during the greater portion of the game.

During the opening stages play started well, and promised to be of an open character, but the ground soon became slippery, and the greasy state of the leather rendered effective handling very difficult. The game was not uninteresting, though now and again it degenerated into a scramble. This was the first meeting of the teams this season, and has both had improved considerably during recent matches, a close game was expected.

The spectators, who gathered in strong force, were by no means disappointed, and as far as the score went there was only difference of one point at the end. Pontypridd won, and the home team fully deserved its victory, for it was unmistakably superior. This was more especially manifested at half and at threequarter, and a comparison in these departments strongly favoured the winners. The halfbacks were smarter than the Llwynypia pair - one of whole regular halfbacks was missing - and Jack Warlow, the captain, who usually played in the forwards, made an excellent partner to Moses Norton in the absence of the latter's brother. He worked the scrum effectively, and Norton kept the rear line frequently going. The passing of the latter was not at all bad under the circumstances, but several times it failed lamentably at critical moments, largely owing to the greasiness of the leather.

Usher again did good work, his try being the result of a strong burst. E. J. Whale, formerly of Canton, was exceedingly useful on the wing, and had grit as well as a

fine turn of speed. He ran and handled the ball well, and his display gave great satisfaction. Bert Warlow played a sound game in the centre, but Fred Lewis on the wing did not figure much, though on one or two occasions he proved himself a dangerous customer.

Pontypridd now had a fast quartet, which was proving itself a strong link in the team. The forwards had a good gruelling, and whilst the Llwynypia pack held their own in the tight mauls, and brought off several strong rushes, they were not a bit better than the home lot, whole heeled to better advantage, often at times giving a decided advantage to the backs. Ben Evans was a safe custodian for Llwynypia, but his services were unfortunately lost through an injury during the last twenty minutes. Though the visitors were beaten they played pluckily until the end. **Final score: - Pontypridd 6 pts Llwynypia 5 pts.**

The Western Mail commented: - 'The continued success of the Pontypridd team is most gratifying to the supporters of the club. The fact is apparent that the Pontypridd boys, disheartened by bad luck, had, to a certain extent, lost heart, but the reinforcement of the brothers Norton has changed the aspect of things, and Llwynypia, good as they are, had to acknowledge defeat. There was not a single 'stick' amongst the home lot. The 'gate' is increasing every week, and new interest has been caused locally by the success of the plucky players who have brought Pontypridd out of the mire of the last few seasons.'

Llanelly keep faith

Pontypridd's home match against Llanelly on the People's Park on October 31st 1903 was played before a large number of spectators in a downpour of rain. Llanelly brought up a rather poor team, playing several substitutes.

Ben Davies started for Llanelly from the railway end, the ball going into touch. Pontypridd soon worked their way back to the centre, where scrums were fought out, from one of which M. Horton got away with a pretty run, but his pass was missed, and a good chance lost. The Scarlets gradually worked their way out of danger, but Bert Warlow came away with a nice dribble, which changed the venue of play. The visitors then attempted passing, but their efforts proved of no avail. Warlow put in a good kick, and Fred Lewis, following up in good style, got over with an unconverted try for the homesters. Soon after this Jack Warlow got over with another try, the kick at goal again failing. Pontypridd were now playing a warm game, and Llanelly had to put in all they knew to keep them out. H.T. score: - Pontypridd 6 Llanelly 0.

Within a few minutes of the restart, Jack Warlow crossed with another try, James failing to convert. Pontypridd now penned the Scarlets in their own ground,

where another minor fell to their lot. Ned Roberts then made a good run for Llanelly, but elected to kick, the ball falling into the hands of Bert Warlow, who found touch well over the halfway line. Whale, the home wing, was next conspicuous by a kick, which carried play back inside the visitor's quarters. The home team were then given a free-kick for offside play, but then Llanelly got down to the home line, where Harry Watkins had hard lines in not scoring. **Final score: - Pontypridd 9 pts (3 tries) Llanelly 0.**

The Western Mail Commented: - "Pontypridd continued their victorious career, and added another to the previous successes of the season. The opposing team, however, cannot be said to have been representative of Llanelly, no fewer than eight players out of fifteen being substitutes. Rumours were afloat early in the day that the match was likely to be abandoned, which would have meant a big financial loss to Pontypridd. Llanelly, however, in order not to break faith with the Pontypridd committee and public, showed grit in making the journey and fulfilled the fixture, although they felt they were fighting a losing battle to field a team. The weather was wretched, a fine rain following on the torrents of the early part of the week, turning the People's Park into a veritable bog, and the wonder is that no-one was injured. In the second-half, Pontypridd experienced a good deal of luck, of which they were not slow to take advantage of; but in any case there seemed to be only one possible finish, and the result was received with as much enthusiasm as could be expected from the dripping crowd; i.e.; three tries for the home team against a solitary minor for the visitors. Of the game generally there was little to be said. It was a win for Pontypridd, and, being anticipated under the circumstances of Llanelly's improvised team, the interest to a great extent was discounted. Again, the state of the ground precluded the possibility of really good football, although there cannot be the slightest doubt that the better team had won.

Pontypridd captain seals the victory

Pontypridd's home match against Tredegar at the People's Park, on Nov. 21st 1903, was played in a very strong wind. For some time after the kick-off play was of a rushing order, the ball being taken from one end of the field to the other quickly. The strong wind across the field interfered with correct passing. Whale, for Pontypridd, picked up smartly in the centre, and, after a short run, kicked over the Tredegar line, when he might have scored through passing. The visitor's relieved, and subsequent play remained in their half. A smart round of passing ended in Fred Lewis running nicely to the centre line, where a scrum took place. Sid James, the home fullback, put in some good returns, and Protheroe, the visiting back, proved very safe. Tredegar took play to the Pontypridd line, where Moses Norton relieved with a smart pick-up, and kicked to the centre. A round of passing by Pontypridd almost ended them scoring, but the score-sheet was blank

when the half-time whistle blew.

Fred Kelland resumed for the home team, and after a good returned Tredegar rushed to the home 25 by smart play, and penned Pontypridd for some time until Kelland relieved to near the centre. Here, a Tredegar forward was laid out for a few minutes. Pontypridd had to touch down, but directly after the drop-out they brought off a rush, and Whale, picking up, scored a smart try, which Mat Phillips did not convert due to the strong wind. Near the end, Jack Warlow, the Pontypridd Captain, scored for his team, and Jack Norton converted to give Pontypridd the victory. **Final score: - Pontypridd 8 pts Tredegar 0.**

Pontypridd : Back, Sid James; threequarters, J. Whale, Arthur Lewis, Fred Lewis, Mat Phillips; halves, Moses & Jack Norton; forwards, Jack Warlow (C), Charlie Whiles, Tom Bryant, Fred Kelland, G. C. Phillips, I. Caple, Walter Grubb, A. N. Other.

The Western Mail commented: - This game was as keen as could be wished for, play generally being of the loose rushing order. The Monmouthshire men proved themselves a tough lot, especially forward, in which department they seemed to hold a slight advantage. Their following up and dribbling were distinctly good, and their scrummaging had more method about it than that of the homesters. Here the slight advantage ended, for behind the scrumage Pontypridd were clearly superior. The brothers Norton were a long way ahead of the opposing halves, and gave their threequarters some excellent opportunities of playing the typical Welsh game. The latter brought off some capital rounds of passing, which more than once deserved a better ending. Fred Lewis and Whale were generally prominent in the threequarter line, a showed a fine turn of speed. The combination of the quarters, however, lacked the finish necessary to make them a consistent scoring quartet. Sid James, the home fullback, was particularly safe, and more than once got his side out of ticklish positions. On the Tredegar side, Protheroe at fullback was also very reliable, as were the threequarters. Their halves, however, compared unfavourably with the two Nortons. The score of eight points to nil just about represented the difference in favour of Pontypridd on the days play.

Local derby at People's Park

Pontypridd met Cilfynydd in a friendly fixture at the People's Park, Pontypridd, in wet weather on Monday, Nov. 23rd 1903. During the first half play was very even. After Cilfynydd had attacked, short runs and smart inter-passes between Fred Lewis and Bert Warlow, took play to the visitors quarters. A loose rush put the home goal in danger, but their defence was sound. Just before the interval D. Morris nearly scored for Cilfynydd, a minor being conceded by Pontypridd. The homesters played a pressing game after the restart, and although the backs were

sent going repeatedly, it was disappointing to see the ball go astray near the line. The Cilfynydd men defended their goal well, but their opponents would not be denied, for Carey, of Llwynypia, dropped a nice goal after Norton had made the opening. This was the only score of the match. **Final score: - Pontypridd 4 pts Cilfynydd 0.**

Fine victory over Aberavon

Rain fell in torrents for Pontypridd's home league match against Aberavon on the People's Park, on Dec. 12th 1903, where the ground was very heavy. The home team offered to make the match a friendly, and to play the league match later in the season, but this, however, was declined. The spectators numbered a few dozen when the start was made.

Pontypridd were soon attacking in earnest, and eventually Whale scored; the goal being missed by a few inches. Play was carried on for some time in the visitor's quarters, but a change was effected by Cecil Hill, who got away with a splendid dribble. He finished by kicking the ball across the line, but Warlow's speed saved the try and only a minor was conceded. Pontypridd again reached the visitor's quarter-line, but the visiting forwards, breaking up a scrummage, Vickary and Matthews gained ground by a capital dribble. The home back missed the ball with a flying kick, but Bert Warlow turned the ball into touch. The visiting backs then got into their stride, and Cecil Hill became very dangerous on the right wing. The pressure was momentarily relieved, but then the attack renewed. The homesters were penalised on the quarter line, and Tom Williams landed a splendid goal. The home forwards then reached the Aberavon goal with a rush, and Mat Phillips made a mark in a favourable position and W. J. Jones kicked for goal, but missed. At the interval the score was 3-3.

Following the restart a kick by the home custodian was charged down, and the ball was dribbled towards the home goal. Cecil Hill followed up smartly, and had he fielded the slippery ball a score might have resulted. A strong defence was presented, and then Freddie Lewis dribbled to mid-field, where the fullback turned the leather into touch. The home forwards rushed play and after Fred Lewis had punted a sharp struggle was seen on the verge of the line, which resulted in Norton scoring an unconverted try for the homesters. Soon, Fred Lewis figured in another attack, a minor being recorded. The home forwards again attacked vigorously, but a penalty relieved the situation. The visitors were kept in their quarter, and another scramble resulted in another minor being secured. Pontypridd attacked until the end but there was no further scoring. **Final score: - Pontypridd 6 pts (2 tries) Aberavon 3 pts (1 try).**

"This is sheer madness" was the expressive remark of a visiting spectator as he

saw the players scrambling in the mud. He was not far wrong, for the conditions were as wretched as could be imagined. Rain fell continuously, the ground was sodden, and looked more like a quagmire than anything else. The football was treacherous and anything like effective handling of the ball was impossible. The result was that play was confined almost entirely to the forwards, but throughout the game was uninteresting and of a scrambling nature. The conditions were absolutely unfit for a league match, and it would have been better if the teams had arranged a postponement before the start. The visitors said that they would only play if it were a league match but not if it were a friendly, and a postponement fell through on the point of expense.

Christmas Day at People's Park

The first league match of the season between Pontypridd and Aberdare took place at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Christmas Day 1903. Great interest was taken in the game and there was a large crowd present, but both teams suffered through absentees. The visitors attacked from the start, but Jack Norton brought relief with a good dribble, and Charlie Whales scored an unconverted try. After the drop-out Ernie Jones was conspicuous for some fine play for Pontypridd. Aberdare, however, soon retaliated, and D. Thomas, the sprinter, crossed with a try, which he also converted. Halftime score: Pontypridd 3 pts (1 Try) Aberdare 5 Pts.

After the restart the Aberdare backs brought off a nice bout of passing, but a bad transfer lost a good chance, Dai Thomas being pushed into touch near the corner flag. Fred Lewis was then next conspicuous with a short run and the home forwards changed the venue to the Aberdare quarters, where their progress was stopped by Alf Morgan. The home halves were playing a good game, and then Ernie Jones and Fred Lewis carried play to the visitor's quarters, and the home team maintained aggressive tactics, and penned their opponents in their own half. Jack Norton made an ineffective shot for goal, only a minor resulting. The end of the game was played in semi-darkness, and shortly before the final whistle Jack Norton dropped the winning goal for Pontypridd. **Final score: - Pontypridd 7 Pts (1 try + 1 dg) Aberdare 5 pts (1 Conv. try).**

1904

Pontypridd's home match against Treherbert on Jan. 16th 1904 ended in a goal-less draw. **Final score: - Pontypridd 0 Treherbert 0.**

Whales seals victory over Treorky

Ramsey kicked off for the visitors from the railway end when Treorky visited

Pontypridd on Jan. 23rd 1904. The home forwards heeled the ball nicely from the first scrum, but the threequarters made no headway, one of the centres being nicely tackled. Treorky were now given a free for 'legs up' and Bert Warlow crossed with a try which W. J. Jones failed to convert. The Treorky forwards got away from a scrum, but the home halves were too smart for their opponents, who were tackled before they could pass out. The visitors, however, woke up, and Evans scored a try in a favourable position, but no goal resulted. The home forwards then rushed within a few yards of the visitor's line. Play was then suspended for a short while through Attwood, Treorky, sustaining an injury, which necessitated his leaving the enclosure. Treorky were playing a pressing game, bringing off some good passes, which on one occasion nearly ended in Pearce scoring. Shortly after they secured a minor. From the drop-out the home team, led by Warlow, made their way down to the Treorky 25, where Arthur Lewis had hard lines in not scoring. HT score 3-3.

Fred Kelland restarted and for a time play settled down in midfield until the Pontypridd forwards took up a dribble, where Schofield, the visitors' fullback nearly let his side down. Arthur Lewis made a mark and the home team continued to press, but were unable to pierce the keen defence offered by the visitors. Pearce made another good run for Treorky, but was called back, the ball having been improperly handled. Shortly before the call of time E. J. Whales dribbled well up the field and scored a try which W. J. Jones converted. **Final score: - Pontypridd 8 pts (1 gl + 1 try) Treorky 3 pts (1 try).**

Another home defeat

Due to the Wales v Scotland match at Swansea the same day as this game on Feb. 6th 1904, Pill harriers were short of several of their usual players for their visit to Pontypridd. The homesters kicked off and pressed for a while, but the Harriers relieved, and Buckley passed to Moses, and the latter punted into the home 25. The visitors continued to press until Cousins kicked to near the home line and Pole following up smartly scored a try. Played of a scrambled nature ensued, the passing being poor until S. Williams scored another try for the Harriers just before the interval. H.T. score: Pontypridd 0 Pill Harriers 6 pts.

Pontypridd went off smartly at the start of the second half and nearly scored. The ball was then worked to the centre, and by forward play the ball went into the Pontypridd ground, where the homesters had scarcely the best of it. Whiles and Walters were prominent for Ponty, and the brothers Moses for Pill. Shortly before the final whistle, Ted Lewis kicked across to Bert Warlow, who scored in the corner. **Final score: - Pontypridd 3 pts (1 try) Pill Harriers 6 pts (2 tries).**

Defeated by Penygraig

Pontypridd's home league encounter against Penygraig took place at the People's Park before a large crowd on Feb. 27th 1904. Owing to the late arrival of the visitors the game did not kick-off until 4.45. Pontypridd kicked off from the railway end and at once forced matters. Davies, the visiting halfback, however, got away, and play being taken to the Pontypridd 25, Treharne got over in the corner for a try which Matthews failed to convert. On the drop-out the homesters were awarded a free-kick and W. J. Jones found touch near the halfway line. Shortly afterwards, owing to the home fullback misfielding, one of the Penygraig forwards was allowed to score. HT score: Pontypridd 0 Penygraig 8 pts.

Penygraig continued to press on the restart, and Fred Kelland replied with a good kick. Rogers then made a run to the centre for Pontypridd, but he was forced into touch. The homesters were now playing a better game and Bert Warlow, receiving the ball near the centre, ran well into the visitor's territory. The same player was conspicuous a few minutes later, but he tried to get through when a pass to Usher would have been better. One of the visitors was then carried off the field injured. Matters were now fairly even for a while and play hovered near the centre until Vaughan scored a late try for Pontypridd, the conversion being a failure. **Final score: - Pontypridd 3 Pts (1 try), Treorky 8 Pts (1 goal & 1 try).**

Back, W. J. Jones; threequarters, Bert Warlow, Fred Kelland, W. G. Usher, Rogers; halves, J. Whales & Perry; forwards, Charlie Whiles (c), Walter Grubb, PC Willie Spiller, P.C. Phillips, S. Stevens, D. Jones, Ted Vaughan & R. Bolton.

Cilfynydd shock Ponty

There were several absentees from both sides during Pontypridd's home league match against Cilfynydd on March 12th 1904. During the first quarter of an hour Cilfynydd played a dashing game, the threequarters being very active. The home defence was repeatedly put to the test and Fred Lewis once saved his goal by a smart pick-up and run. The visitors continued to play aggressively, Rees Morgan being conspicuous. Their opponents then dribbled to neutral ground and Ross Jenkins, intercepting a pass, ran to the quarter-line, and receiving a pass from Stoyles, scored in the corner. Pontypridd afterwards attacked, and W. J. Jones dropped a lovely goal from a mark near halfway. HT score: - Pontypridd 4 pts Cilfynydd 3 pts.

In the second-half Pontypridd at first pressed, but their opponents soon reached the homesters 25, and following a scrummage here, Stone picked up in the loose and had no difficulty in scoring Cilfynydd's second try. W. J. Jones then dropped another goal for Pontypridd, and a fine dribble by the home captain, Fred Lewis,

put the visitors on the defensive. Relief was obtained and after open play Pontypridd had to defend again. Eventually Rees threw from a scrummage to Stoyle, who dropped a winning goal for the visitors. **Final score: - Pontypridd 4 pts (1 dg) Cilfynydd 10 pts (1 dg & 2 tries).**

The Western Mail commented: - "Cilfynydd's long line of defeats in the league is at last broken, this being the teams first victory. They thoroughly deserved it. They started at a very hot pace, which was well maintained throughout. Play was fast and open, and on the days form Cilfynydd were without doubt the smarter lot. Their backs collectively did better than their opponents, though on the home side Freddy Lewis was always to the fore. Jimmy Rees of Cilfynydd, was the best half-back on the field. He was in splendid form and repeatedly set his threequarter-line in motion. Forward, the packs were well matched but the visitors held a decided advantage in heeling out."

County police defeat Pontypridd

The County Police put a strong team out for their visit to Pontypridd on April 9th 1904 and included Brice and Smith of Cardiff. Ponty kicked off against the wind and rain, and after scrimmaging in neutral ground Alexander passed out and sent the visiting threequarters' moving. Brice made a gallop, but was pulled down by W. J. Jones. Jenkins ran from his own quarters to the home 25 and looked like scoring when Fudge, the home half, collared him from behind. Rain fell heavily at this stage, and aided by the wind the police attacked, Jenkins making an unsuccessful attempt at a drop-goal, but moments later the police dribbled across and Davies (Cowbridge) scored, and Brice converted.

The police maintained aggressive measures, but a loose dribble changed the venue, and Hamm improved matters with a run, which took play to the police quarter-line. The visitors retaliated with a dribble to the home goal, but the pressure was quickly relieved. The homesters were again in trouble, but the forwards' heeling out well gave the ball to the halves, and Marchant, the Penygraig man, kicked well up the field, but Brice turned the leather to touch. Rhys Davies made a strong run for the police as far as the corner flag, and following the line-out, Alexander scored an unconverted try. A bad mull by the home custodian then let his side down, Brice scoring another try with a strong run, which he converted himself. Marchant figured after this and following up a punt scored at try for the homesters. Ht: Pontypridd 3 Glamorgan Police 13 pts.

The homesters took advantage of the wind on the restart, and quickly took play to their opponent's quarter-line, and after W. J. Jones had kicked, the police defence was put to a severe test. Rhys Davies brought relief with a dribble and the visitors removed operations to the home territory. A penalty sent them back, and Ernest

Jones made a run and found touch near the corner-flag. A moment later W. J. Jones scored, and Marchant made a fine kick for goal, but the ball struck the upright and bounced out. Ernest Jones later sent his side on the aggressive, but there was no further scoring. **Final score: - Pontypridd 6 pts (2 tries) Glamorganshire Police 13 pts (1 try & 2 goals).**

Pontypridd: Back, W. J. James; threequarters, George Hamm, K. Marchant, W. J. Jones, E. Jones; halves, Fudge & D. Williams; forwards, Charlie Whiles (C), Jack Whiles, Fred Kelland, Ted Vaughan, H. Williams, Walter Grubb, E. Thomas & R. Bowden.

Home defeat by Penarth

A gloriously fine afternoon favoured Pontypridd's home match against Penarth on April 16th 1904, and a fairly large crowd attended, but the match start was delayed until 5 o'clock. The game in the first-half was very keenly fought out. Pontypridd, towards the interval had the better of matters, but, chances were lost by Rogers and Usher. In the second-half Penarth pressed throughout and had it not been for the fine defence of the home backs the score would have been much heavier. **Final score: - Pontypridd 0 Penarth 14 pts (3 tries & 1 gl).**

Pontypridd: Back, W. J. James; threequarters, W. J. Jones, W. Rogers, W. G. Usher, George Hamm; halves, T. Fudge & D. Jones; forwards, P. Boyle, Jack Whiles, Tom Bryant, Walter Grubb, E. Thomas, H. Williams, R. Bolton, Fred Kelland.

A foretaste of things to come

The Evening Express of 23rd April 1904 reported: - . Elaborate arrangements are being made by the local committee to give the Cardiff team which is being brought to the town by Mr. W. M. Douglas next Saturday a cordial reception. The game will (by kind permission of Mr. Gregory, J.P.) be played on the beautiful Ynysangharad Park, and not on the usual football ground. The committee have thought it best to arrange this, seeing that the People's Park is rather bare of grass. A record, crowd is expected to witness the match

Cardiff XV beaten

Pontypridd's home engagement with a Cardiff team organised by Mr. W. M. Douglas on April 29th 1904, created a good deal of interest locally, and there was a capital attendance on the Ynysangharad ground, which was lent for the occasion. The visitors put out a strong side and Pontypridd were assisted by Stoyle and Jimmy Rees, the Cilfynydd centre and half-back. The visitors became

aggressive early-on in the game and Jones almost let Ponty down and was forced to concede a minor. Then Pontypridd attacked, and making a dash along the touchline George Hamm scored in the corner. W. J. Jones with a fine kick, just missed the conversion. The Cardiff backs became very active after this and handled the ball very well. A sound defence was presented, and the fact that it was not upset was due to the keen tackling. The homesters got well out of danger and two or three Cardiffians' mulling very badly imperilled their line. George Hamm being collared by Williams within a couple of yards of the corner-flag. The visitors tried hard to drive their opponents across the neutral-line, but failed, until a flying kick by a forward to near the quarter-line. Stoyle figured in regaining lost ground and following up a kick Spiller knocked-on when a splendid chance presented itself. In the second-half Fudge scored a try for Pontypridd and McGrath and Davies replied for Cardiff. **Final score: - Pontypridd 8 pts (1 gl & 1 try), Cardiff 6 pts (2 tries).**

Pontypridd: - Back, W. J. Jones; threequarter-backs, A. Lewis, W. Rogers, J. Hamm and Styles; halfbacks, F. Fudge and J. Rees, Forwards, C. Whiles (Capt.), A. Grubb, H. Williams, E. Thomas, R. Bolton, P. C. Spiller, and J. Ryan.

Found drowned at Pontypridd
(Evening Express 30th April 1904)

David Llewelyn, an old man, was on Friday found drowned under the old mill wheel at the People's Park. The discovery was made by a stableman. Deceased was seen on Thursday afternoon at the point-to-point races at Llanwonno, and late at night near the old mill. There is an opening to the mill stream from the lane which leads to the football field, and it is supposed that the deceased fell through this into the stream. One of his ears had been eaten by rats. Llewelyn was employed doing sundry jobs in the town, and stayed at the model lodging house.

So the season on the People's Park had come to an end but change was in the air. The last competitive game had been the home defeat by Penarth on April 16th 1904. The game against the Cardiff XV had been played on the Ynysangharad field and foretold the move of the club for the following season to that ground. But the start of the 1904-05 would see a trial match, and more, played at the People's Park, because the Ynysangharad Ground was not yet prepared or was being used by the cricket club.

Results Season 1903-04						
1903					F	A
Sept	5th	District XV	Home	Won	14	0
	12th	Grange Stars	Home	Lost	0	3
	19th	Roath	Home	Won	11	5
	26th	Devonport Albion	Away	Lost	6	30
Oct.	3rd	Llanelly	Away	Draw	0	0
	10th	Bridgewater Albion	Home	Won	6	3
	17th	Maesteg*	Home	Won	3	0
	24th	Llwynypia*	Home	Won	6	5
	31st	Llanelly	Home	Won	9	0
Nov.	7th	Maesteg*	Away	Won	6	3
	14th	Treherbert*	Away	Lost	3	7
	21st	Tredegar	Home	Won	8	0
	23rd	Cilfynydd	Away	Lost	0	4
	28th	Penygraig	Away	Lost	0	11
Dec.	5th	Treorky*	Away	Lost	0	3
	12th	Aberavon*	Home	Won	6	3
	14th	Cilfynydd	Away	Lost	0	3
	19th	Mountain Ash*	Home	Won	3	0
	24th	Caerphilly	Home	Won	3	0
	25th	Aberdare*	Home	Won	7	5
	26th	Bristol	Away	Lost	0	3
1904						
Jan	2nd	Penarth	Home	Post.	---	----
	9th	Llwynypia*	Away	Lost	3	6
	11th	Aberdare*	Away	Lost	0	3
	16th	Treherbert*	Home	Draw	0	0

	23rd	Treorky*	Home	Won	8	3
	30th	Tredegar	Away	Lost	0	12
Feb.	6th	Pill Harriers	Home	Lost	3	6
	13th	?				
	20th	Aberavon*	Away	Draw	3	3
	27th	Penygraig*	Home	Lost	3	8
Mar	5th	Mountain Ash	Away	Lost	0	12
	12th	Cilfynydd	Home	Lost	4	10
	19th	Pill Harriers	Away	Lost	3	11
	26th	Plymouth	Away	Lost	3	27
Apr	2nd	Cheltenham	Away	Lost	3	16
	4th	Bridgewater Albion	Away	Lost	0	16
	5th	Exeter	Away	Lost	3	11
	9th	Glamorgan Police	Home	Lost	6	13
	16th	Penarth	Home	Lost	0	14
	18th	Treorky	Away	Lost	3	16
	22nd	Cilfynydd	Away	Lost	4	9
	29th	Cardiff XV	Home	Won	8	6

*= Glamorgan League fixture. This result sheet is compiled from the result sheet as published in the South Wales Daily News on April 16th 1904. Seasons' playing record: Played 41, Won 14, Drawn 3, Lost 24. Try scorers: Fred Lewis, 6; Jack Warlow, 5; Bert Warlow 3; E. J. Whale, 4; Jack Norton, 3; Charlie Whiles, W. G. Usher & Fred Kelland, 2 each; W. J. Jones, Arthur Lewis, Fred Harries, Tom Bryant, Moses Norton, Fred Davies, Ted Vaughan, George Hamm, Fred Marchant, H. Handford, 1 each. Drop goals: W. J. Jones, 2; Jack Horton & J. Carey, 1 each. Penalty goal: Marchant, 1. Captain, Jack Warlow; Patron, Godfrey L. Clarke, President, Dr. D. E. Evans; Vice-captain, Charlie Whiles; Secretary, Tom Phillips; Treasurer: George Parfitt (White Hart Hotel); Ground: People's Park; Headquarters: White Hart Hotel.

Season 1904 - 05

The seasons' prospects - Farewell to People's Park?

(Evening Express 10th September 1904)

The Pontypridd club commences the 1904-05 season under more favourable auspices than has been the case for some time past. Notwithstanding the adverse weather and the drawback of a bad ground and some disappointments, the financial statement presented at the last meeting was under the circumstances most satisfactory. The prospects for the ensuing campaign are very rosy. A new, convenient and commodious ground has been secured, thanks to the sportsmanlike courtesy of Mr. H. M. Gregory, J. P; on the Ynysangharad Park. Mr. Tom Phillips, the secretary, who has stuck manfully to his post throughout the vicissitudes of the team, points with credit to an excellent list of fixtures, the opening game to be played on Saturday next, September 10th, against Canton and District Union League.

September 3rd 1904 - The Trial match

The Pontypridd club opened the season with a trial match on the People's Park. A few of the old players turned out, but most of the men were new players from various parts of the district. The two teams were: - Whites: Back, W. J. Jones; threequarters, T. Biddlescombe (Llwynypia), A. Bassett (Tonyrefail), Williams (Tonyrefail) and Bassett (Llanbradach); halves, J. Davies (Tonyrefail), and J. Jones; Forwards, P.C. Woods (Captain), J. Ryan (Cilfynydd), Heaton (Caerphilly), S. Lewis, J. Cosslett, and Walter Grubb.

Stripes: Back, George Ham; threequarters, Duncan McGregor, Tom Jones, W. Thomas, Roy McGregor; halves, D. Seaton & Ernie Jones; forwards, Mog Griffiths, Quartley, Foulks, Harrison, R. Thomas, H. Scrivens and J. Jones.

P.C. Woods kicked off at a late hour, and during the process of play several men came into prominence. A fairly good game was witnessed, and for the stripes tries were scored by Morgan Griffiths, Quartley and Jones. A moment before time the whites made a spirited attack, and W. J. Jones, who had lost none of his smartness, crossed with a good try. Final score: - Stripes 9 pts (3 tries) Whites 5 pts (1 goal).

Pontypridd v Canton September 10th 1904

Pontypridd opened their season with a match against Canton on the People's Park before a fair crowd and in fine football weather. Pontypridd: Back, W. Jones; threequarters, Arthur Williams, Duncan McGregor, Bert Warlow, and A. Lewis;

halfbacks D. Seaton & Jones; forwards, C. Whiles (Capt.), J. Warlow, Seaton, Morgan Griffiths, J. Whiles, Vaughan, Kellard, and Harrison.

Canton kicked off from the railway end, and for a few minutes the visitors kept play in the home 25. Warlow very soon relieved by kicking to the centre. From a scrum here Jones made a nice opening, which enabled Bert Warlow to score. W. J. Jones converted with a nice kick. On the restart a scrum was formed in the centre, where Arthur Williams was conspicuous with a fine run and kick to the visiting 25. Kelland crossed with another try, which was not converted. Canton brought off a bout of passing on the restart, but the centres were unable to break through. Play was very even for some time until the homesters forced matters and a minor was conceded. Following the drop-out, Seaton found touch near the visitors' 25, but Dacey kicked well over the centre line. Arthur Williams renewed the attack with a brilliant run, but was unable to break through. Halftime Score: - Pontypridd 1 goal & 1 try - Canton 0.

Warlow restarted for the home team, and after some exchange kicking Bert Warlow was tackled in his own 25. Seaton found relief with a kick just outside the centre line. Ernie Jones got away nicely from the next scrum and, passing to Jack Warlow, enabled the latter player to score near the posts, W. J. Jones finding no difficulty in converting. Play was of a give-and-take character for some time, until Arthur Williams came away with a splendid dribble, but over-ran the ball, and Kelland, who was in the rear, picking it up, scored a second try, which was converted by W. J. Jones. The homesters were awarded a kick, and Seaton just missed dropping a goal. Ernie Jones then scored a try from a scrum near the line, the kick for goal failing. Final score: - Pontypridd 21 (3 goals and 2 tries), Canton 0.

Pontypridd v Glamorgan Police September 17th 1904

The Glamorgan Police team on this Saturday played their first match of the season, they being opposed to Pontypridd on the People's Park. There were several changes in the visiting team, a number of selected players unable to turn out for various reasons. On the home side three of the chosen forwards were absent, otherwise they were well represented. Pontypridd: - Back, George Ham; three-quarter-backs, Fred Lewis, Arthur Lewis Duncan McGregor, and Bert Warlow; halfbacks, E. Jones and D. Seaton; forwards, C. Whiles, J. Warlow, W. Grubb, J. Ryan, W. Bendall, C. Edmunds, J. Heaton and Morgan Griffiths.

Whiles kicked off for Pontypridd, the home pack assuming the aggressive reach the police quarter-line, where they were awarded a free. Hamm took the kick, and just missed the goal. A long kick found touch by the Pontypridd 25 flag, and for a

few minutes they police kept near the line and caused some trouble to the homesters before the latter managed to get away with a loose dribble. After a kick by Freddie Lewis, his brother Arthur followed at top speed and was going for the line, when G. Evans pushed him into touch by his quarter flag. The homesters attacked with vigour, but the ball went back, and Hamm missing it Lisk got across the division line and had a clear course. When he neared the ball it tamped to one side otherwise the Tonypany Constable would have had a good chance to score. The homesters were forced to the line, but after a scrummage Fred Lewis intercepted a pass from Lisk and punted to the fullback, who was smartly collared by Bert Warlow before he could kick. The home backs at this stage nicely handled the ball, and were going well when McGregor just missed an awkward pass. A forward rush to the line followed, which Rees Davies stopped by kicking into touch. The ball was kicked out, and Fred Lewis going at a rare pace scored a splendid try in the corner. Hamm failed to convert, and a moment later McGregor gave a clean pass to the captain, who again scored an unconverted try. Halftime score: - Pontypridd 6 pts (2 tries), Glamorgan Police 0.

Vickery resumed, and several exchanges favoured the Police. An awkward transfer by Smith was missed by Lisk, with the result that operations were removed to their quarter line. McGregor got away and punted, but Franks made mark and kicked to neutral ground. Desultory play ensued, but a couple of kicks by Morgan Griffiths and Arthur Lewis brought about another attack, during which Seaton, who was doing good work at halfback, made a smart attempt to drop a goal. The quartette were again on the move, and had Fred Lewis taken a high pass from Warlow he would have gone across. A moment later Ernie Jones dropped a lovely goal. The Police assume aggressive tactics, but McGregor picking up sent the ball well down the field. Following up his punt, smartly, he collared the fullback and sent him to touch near his own quarter flag. A mull by Fred Lewis enabled Lisk to dribble to the Pontypridd 25. Pontypridd attacked vigorously, but Evans and Rees Davies saved certain tries by tackling Freddie Lewis and McGregor, whilst a moment later Davies also prevented J. Warlow crossing. Eventually, however, he passed to McGregor, and the latter transferred to Fred Lewis, who scored the third try. George Ham converted. Final score: - Pontypridd 16 (2 gls, 2 tries) – Glamorgan Police 0.

Last game at People's Park

Pontypridd v. Roath

September 24th 1904

The above teams met at the People's Park, Pontypridd, in the presence of a large number of spectators. Fine weather prevailed, and the condition of the ground being light and dry, a fast game ensued. Teams:- Pontypridd: Back, George Hamm; three-quarter backs, D. M'Gregor, Mat Phillips, Fred Lewis, and W.

Rogers; half-backs, Dai Seaton and D. Jones; forwards, C. White. J. Warlow, W. Grubb, Heaton, Griffiths, J. Ryan, Ames, and T. Vaughan. Referee, Mr. G. Austin, Penygraig. Roath won the toss, and preferred to play with the wind. Soon after the kick-off a scrum was formed in mid-field. Several rushes were made by the visitors, but were driven back by the forwards. McGregor receiving a pass from Richards, was pushed into touch. Rushes by Pontypridd gave them much ground. Subsequently, play was much in evidence in the visitors' territory. After a free-kick, which was awarded to the visitors owing to the forward play of Pontypridd, a scrum was formed. Half-time score:— - Pontypridd 10 - Roath 0 **Final score:— Pontypridd 18 (Pontypridd 3 Goals & 1 try) pts Roath 0.**

Comment: - Roath had many men away, but still, as indicated by the score, Pontypridd's performance was good in every department. As anticipated, the game was a fast one, and a good deal of passing was indulged in to advantage by the Pontypridd men. They were stronger and heavier in the forwards than the visitors, and the backs were very clever in handing the ball. The rushes made by Pontypridd were always dangerous. There is no need to comment on the individual play of the Pontypridd players, for each of them played remarkably well, and when pressed showed good defence. Freddie Lewis, the Pontypridd captain, again played in fine form. The game was a good one, and the character of the play was most encouraging from a Pontypridd standpoint.

The following week the Pontypridd Football Club played their first game back at Ynysangharad when they met Caerphilly in 0-0 game. A few days later the new ground was officially opened when Llanelly visited the town. The game was kicked off by Ack Llewellyn (W.R.U.), former Ponty captain. The final Pontypridd rugby club games on the Peoples Park

September 3rd 1904 Trial Match

- September 10th 1904 Pontypridd v Canton. Won 21 – 0.
- September 17th 1904 Pontypridd v Glamorgan Police Won 15 – 0.
- September 24th 1904 Pontypridd v. Roath Won 18 – 0.

Boxing at the Millfield in the early 1900's it is hard to judge whether it was actually on the field, possibly in a tent or in the open air. What is known is that by 1909 boxing was taking place weekly on a Monday night. It had various names: - The Millfield Gymnasium, the Millfield Boxing Club, The South Wales Athletic club, and several other names. However, although several title fights took place there they were rarely reported in the local newspapers. In 1907 fights were taking place in Pontypridd at the Victoria Hall, situate behind the Victoria

Hotel and Ynysangharad Gymnasium. Freddie Welsh was also in south Wales and fought twice at an unnamed venue, probably at the former.

Chapter 7

1907

The wife's cork leg (Cardiff Times 27 July 1907)

At Pontypridd on Wednesday Johanna Smith, elderly woman, applied to the local magistrates for a maintenance order against her husband, Mark Smith, hawker, Millfield, Pontypridd. Mr. T. W. Lewis, Pontypridd, defended. Applicant said she had been married to defendant five years. He constantly abused her, and had come home drunk to the van where they lived, and had beaten her unmercifully. She had also been beaten in bed by him, but could not defend herself with her cork leg off. (Laughter.) Defendant had had nine children by a previous marriage, and they were all against her. He had turned her out bag and baggage. Smith denied the cruelty, and said his wife had left him nine times altogether on her own account, Mr. Lewis: - "Why did you marry her?" (Laughter.) The Stipendiary: - "Why did you marry her?"- Defendant: - "That is hardly a fair question." (Laughter.) Defendant was ordered to pay 6s a week towards his wife's maintenance.

Pontypridd practice match

A practice match in connection with the Pontypridd Football Club was held at the People's Park, Pontypridd, on Monday, Sept 2nd 1907 between the Probables and Possibles. The two sides were composed mainly of members of the junior team, and resulted in the Probables being victorious by two tries to one try.

Freddie Welsh at People's Park - Last fights at Pontypridd

Two fights in one night

Welsh, after his remarkable performance of stopping Joe White in sixteen rounds, undertook another big task on Thursday, October 3rd 1907 when he was matched to fight two good men in ten rounds each. His opponents, at Pontypridd were **Arthur Ellis**, the 9st 6lb champion of England, and **Gunner Hart**, the welterweight champion of the navy. The conditions were that Welsh would forfeit a side stake of £50 if he failed to accomplish the task of stopping both men in the limited period, but if he obtained a verdict on points he would receive a purse of £50. Once again the gathering was of a private nature, this time at the Millfield grounds Pontypridd, sometimes known as the People's Park, and this was Welsh's last fight before returning to America and indeed, his last ever competitive fight in Pontypridd. Gunner Hart was the first opponent of Welsh, and in the opening rounds he shaped well and forced the fighting. Welsh was content to measure up his opponent and avoid punishment. In the third round,

however, the Welshman punished his weightier opponent with terrific force, raining blow after blow on the body, which palpably tired Hart. In the next two rounds Welsh led with terrific lefts, and fought his man to a standstill amidst wild cheering.

Arthur Ellis immediately stepped into the ring, and another spirited contest ensued. The Englishman was clever at footwork, but could never really get at Welsh, who, as in the previous bout, took things coolly at the start. Forcing the fight in the third round, Welsh, after smartly avoiding a swing, jumped in with a left on the jaw which staggered Ellis. The in-fighting was telling its tale on the Englishman, and he was warned not to hold on several occasions. With a half hook on the jaw Ellis went to the boards, only to get up to meet further severe punishment. In the fifth round Welsh scored heavily, sending Ellis down three times in quick succession. Ellis, however, rose with extreme pluck, but the referee wisely stopped the fight and declared Welsh the victor. Freddie had demonstrated great variety in attack, and when in the clinches he scored rapidly and wore out his opponents by his marvellous in-fighting.

All that week shopkeeper Mr. Frank Thomas, "My Hatter," Taff Street, had on view the chain belt presented to Freddie Welsh, with an excellent photograph by Mr. Theo P. Morgan, of the marvellous bundle of muscles which had created so much excitement in Pontypridd.

A boxing Carnival at Pontypridd

A boxing carnival is to be held at the South Wales Athletic Club, Pontypridd on Saturday evening 22nd December 1907 for the 6 stone championship of the world. Champion Joey Smith (London) and Kid Logan (America) will compete. There will be other competitions.

Champions meet at Pontypridd

A boxing carnival was held at the South Wales Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Saturday night 28th December 1907 for the 6 stone championship of the world between the 5st. 6lb. Champion of Wales, Joey Smith and Kid Logan, the American 6 stone champion. There were other competitions. Mr. Tim Sullivan (Dowlais) acted as referee and the rounds were of two minutes duration each. The American had the advantage of reach and weight, but what Smith lacked in physique he made up in alertness, and cleverly avoiding the heavy blows of his antagonist until the fifth round, when he was subjected to two or three hard knocks. In the sixth round, however, Smith punished Logan badly with some stinging blows on the face, and, though the latter exhibited a good deal of courage and fought gamely, it was evident in the succeeding rounds that he was having

the worse of matters. Logan also sustained an injury to his leg, which rather handicapped him, but he stuck bravely to his guns until the fifteenth round, when the force of a thrust from Smith, together with his effort to avoid another swinging blow, caused him to injure his arm. Logan then retired, and Smith was declared the victor amidst loud plaudits.

Boxing champions meet at Pontypridd

A twenty-round boxing contest for the 6st. championship of England and America was waged at the South Wales Athletic Club, Pontypridd on Saturday night, 22nd December 1907, the contestants being Joey Smith, the 5st. 6lb. champion of Wales, and Kid Logan, the American 6st. champion. Mr. Tim Sullivan (Dowlais) acted as referee, and the rounds were of two minutes' duration each.

The American had the advantage of reach and weight, but what Smith lacked in physique he made up in alertness, and cleverly avoided the heavy blows of his antagonist until the fifth round, when he was subjected to two or three bard knocks. In the sixth round, however, Smith punished Logan badly with some stinging blows on the face, and, though the latter exhibited a good deal of courage and fought gamely, it was evident in the succeeding rounds that he was having the worst of matters. Logan also sustained an injury to his leg, which rather handicapped him, but he stuck bravely to his guns until the fifteenth round, when the force of a thrust from Smith, together with his effort to avoid another swinging blow, caused him to injure his arm. Logan then retired, and Smith was declared the victor amidst loud plaudits.

1908

Gipsy drowned

(Evening Express 8th January 1908)

A young gipsy named William Price, who resided in a van at the Mill Field, Pontypridd, was drowned in the Rhondda River on Tuesday through attempting to reach a piece of timber. There being a strong current at the time, Price, who was wading up to his waist in the water, got into difficulties, and was carried away. A woman gave the alarm, and every effort was made to rescue the man. His body has not yet been recovered.

Pontypridd glove fight

28th July 1908

A boxing match took place at Pontypridd last night between W. Baxter and G. Mc'Lucas, two local lightweights. The contest was one of twelve rounds for a purse of £6 and sides stakes of £10. The full number of rounds were fought, and the verdict was given to Mc'Lucas on points.

Boxing match

Monday 2nd November 1908

A twenty-round boxing contest for £20 aside, which took place, between Syd Raynish (Pontypridd), and Jack Priest at the Ynysangharad Saloon, last night, resulted in Priest being declared the victor. Raynish, who was not as strong as his opponent, was counted out in the ninth round.

Fatal boxing bout - Pontypridd man's death

(Evening Express 10th December 1908)

Mr. W. L. Yorath (city coroner) held an inquest at Cardiff to-day into the circumstances of the death of William Mills, of Tram-road, Treforest, who died on Monday at Cardiff Infirmary, falling upon injuries sustained in the course of a boxing match at Pontypridd on Saturday night last. Deceased's father (John Mills) said his son was a Taylor, and enjoyed splendid health. He was engaged in a boxing competition with Thomas Evans at the Ynysangharad Gymnasium on Saturday evening. Witness was present, and noticed that everything went on all right up to the last round. The combatants caught hold of each other, and were breaking away when deceased fell on his side on the boarded floor. He was unconscious, and was assisted. They sponged him and made efforts to revive him. Nothing serious was apprehended; but deceased, failing to recover consciousness, he was taken to witness's brother's house in Taff Street. Dr. Morgan Rees was summoned, and on Monday Dr. Sheen (Cardiff) advised deceased's removal to the Cardiff Infirmary. The fall was not the result of a blow, deceased falling where water had been spilt in the process of sponging. It was a fair match.

John Williams, a butcher, of Bridge-street. Pontypridd, who rented the upper floor of the gymnasium, and was present during the match, said Mills was knocked down in the fifteenth round, but got up and completed the round. Neither of the men then showed any appearance of exhaustion. In the sixteenth round they locked. When they separated Evans led off, and Mills in avoiding the blow slipped and fell on his side. Dr. Isaac Masters said deceased was admitted to the Cardiff Infirmary on Monday afternoon at 5.15.

He was unconscious, and his left side was paralysed. He seemed to be suffering from compression of the brain, caused by a clot of blood pressing upon it. An operation was performed to remove the clot, but it was found that the blood was in an inaccessible position. The deceased died from the compression of the brain, caused by bleeding at its base, a state which was quite consistent with the story which had been told of Mills' fall. He did not believe such a state could be caused by a violent blow from a man wearing a boxing- glove .

John Owen, of Trehafod, the referee in the match, corrected previous evidence, and said the match finished during the fifteenth round. At the end of the fourteenth round deceased had been having the better of the fight, and seemed the fresher of the two. In the fifteenth round the two men clinched. When they broke away Mills made a "side-step" to avoid Evans, slipped, fell heavily on his left side, and pitched on his head. He made no attempt to get up. No undue violence was used on either side throughout the fight. Deceased slipped owing to some water on the boards, which made them slippery. Witness noticed this after the thirteenth round, and ordered some sawdust and resin to be thrown over it. Police-constable Evan Davies also gave evidence The Coroner in summing up said that boxing contests were perfectly legal, unless the men continued until both or one of them was perfectly exhausted, and in consequence of that exhaustion fell and in falling received a blow which caused his death. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death.

Keen contest at Pontypridd Monday December 14th 1908

There was a crowded attendance at the Ynysangharad Gymnasium, Pontypridd, on Monday evening, when the chief attraction was a twenty-round encounter between Dai Stephens and Les Williams, both of Tonypandy for £50 aside and a purse of gold containing £50 and after a vigorous contest, which lasted the whole of the 20 rounds, Les. Williams was declared the victor on points.

Revivalist service outside a boxing booth.

A counter demonstration to a boxing meeting at Pontypridd on Monday night was organised by the local Young Men's Christian Endeavour Society, who conducted a service on the revival lines in a torrential downpour of rain for upwards of two hours. In the booth itself the proceedings at the religious gathering were distinctly audible, and the strains of hymns intermingled with the characteristic hubbub of a boxing match.

1909

Monday February 15th 1909 W. Blake v Jack Priest at Ynysangharad Gymnasium.

Thursday July 26th 1909 – Charlie Webber defeated Danny Garnett at the Millfield Athletic Club.

MILL FIELD GYMNASIUM,
PONTYPRIDD.

GRAND OPENING NIGHT,
MONDAY EVENING NEXT, July 26th.

FIFTEEN ROUND BOXING CONTEST
Between
CHARLEY WEBBER (Pontypridd) and
DANNY GARNAT (Cilfynydd),
£20 aside and Club Purse.
Stakeholder and Referee, "Sporting Life."
Also 10st. WRESTLING COMPETITION.
Winner 50s., Runner-up 10s.

Entrance Fee, 1s., to be sent in not later than
MID-DAY, JULY 26th, to SECRETARY, Mill
Field Gymnasium, Pontypridd.

Doors open 7.50 p.m. Commence 8.0 p.m.
Admission 1s., Reserved Seats, 2s. e956

Evening Express 24th July 1909

Treforest man's game fight - Fred Delaney. Birmingham, and Jack Preece, Treforest, fought twenty two-minute rounds at the Mill Field Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Saturday night, Sept. 4th 1909, for £30 a-side and a purse of £40. The contest lasted the full number of rounds, when Delaney was given the verdict on points. The winner was more skilful than his opponent, and established an early lead by his smartness. Preece, although getting the worst of matters, fought gamely throughout.

Glove fight stopped - Disorderly scenes at pontypridd.

(Weekly Mail 4th September 1909)

A match for £20 aside and a purse of £50 was contested on Monday evening, August 30th 1909, at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, between Phenis Emmanuel, Cardiff, and Les Williams, Tonypandy. Mr. Hulls, of the "Sportsman," acted as referee. The contest, which was for twenty 3-minute rounds, was productive of a most unfortunate scene of disorderliness. The partisans of the two lads were very demonstrative from the start, but as the contest proceeded the excitement and disorderliness of the crowd became still more pronounced. This excitement, doubtless, affected the combatants, who lost all restraint, the referee's task being rendered exceedingly difficult. All science was at a discount. Clinches and aimless blows wildly given were the order, and the referee was constantly cautioning the two men, while the crowd became unruly in their demonstrations. After proceeding in a wild, frantic fight up to the twelfth round, the referee stopped a further regrettable display and disqualified both participants.

Young Joey Smith & Eddie Morgan

Evening Express 21 September 1909

"Sporting Life" articles have been signed by these lads to box 20 two-minute rounds at catch weight, at the Mill Field Gymnasium, Pontypridd, on the 27th inst., to be in the ring at 9.30 p.m., and they have accepted the purse of £50 offered by Mr. Dan Davies. Preparing for Summers Fred Welsh, having completed his visit to Cardiff, returned on Saturday to Merthyr, and will now start upon his course of training at *Pontypridd* for the contest with Summers in London on the 18th approx.

Fine championship fight at Pontypridd

Eddie Morgan makes Smith go all the way

The twenty two-minute round contest between Joey Smith (London) and Eddie Morgan (Merthyr) for the 7½st. championship and a side stake of £50 at the Millfield Gymnasium at Pontypridd on Monday night, 27 September 1909, was a clever exhibition. The fight went the full limit, and after a stiff combat Smith was declared the winner on points. The referee was Mr. J. T. Hull, of the "Sporting Life." Morgan was conceding to his opponent nearly half a stone in weight, and this was a great disadvantage to one so young who was pitted against an experienced pugilist like Smith. The Welshman showed very clever footwork, and, in addition, his smartness in avoiding punishment was admired. He had a serviceable left, and he used it with advantage on his opponent's face. Smith, however, forced the fighting throughout, and did not forget to use his extra

poundage whenever opportunity presented itself. His blows, too, had more power behind them, and this had its effect upon the Merthyr lad. It was a clean fight, and, though Smith was easily the favourite Morgan surprised many good judges, and he was pluck personified. In the eighth round he was easily the better lad and he staggered Smith with three well-placed blows on the face. This he repeated in the fifteenth, and several times subsequently he countered well and made good use of his openings. Smith played more to the body and at close quarters held an advantage. The verdict went deservedly to Smith, but there was not much disparity between the lads, and had Morgan possessed the weight of his victor he would, undoubtedly, have made it even a harder fight for Smith to win—indeed, if the Londoner would have won at all.

MILLFIELD GYMNASIUM, PONTYPRIDD.
MONDAY NEXT, NOVEMBER 15th, 1909.
GRAND TWENTY-ROUND BOXING
CONTEST
Between
FRED DELANEY, of Birmingham,
and
KID DAVIES, of Swansea,
For £25 aside and £40 Purse.
Doors Open 7 p.m. First Bout, 7.45 p.m.
Admission, 3s., 2s. and 1s. e1474

**Boxing championship
Tom Thomas retains his claim (October 5th 1909)**

The boxing contest for the middleweight championship of England was waged at the Mill Field, Athletic Club Gymnasium, Pontypridd, on Tuesday evening 5 October 1909, between Tom Thomas, Penygraig, and Jack Kingsland of England, and resulted in the former retaining his claim to the honour, Kingsland being decidedly defeated in the eleventh round. The contest was for 20 rounds of 2minutes' duration, and a vigorous encounter was witnessed by a crowded house. The side-stake was £100, with a purse of £200. The duties of referee were discharged by Mr. J. T. Hill of the Sporting Life. In point of weight both men were very evenly matched, though the Englishman had the advantage of a longer reach. During the first four rounds there seemed

little to choose between the contestants, but as the fight progressed Thomas's mastery of the situation was becoming increasingly evident. The Englishman seemed to be feeling the effects of the terrific onslaughts of his opponent. In the sixth round the Londoner roused himself, but was not roused sufficiently cool to avail himself the opportunities which presented themselves, and Thomas was apparently "drawing out" the Londoner. There were lightning exchanges of blows in the next couple of rounds, and while these seemed to have very little effect on Thomas, who was by no means had matters his own way. Kingsland was palpably feeling the effects, and stumbled to the boards in the seventh round. In the ensuing round Kingsland revived, and there was little to choose between either man.

It was the ninth round that proved crucial, Thomas now having his man almost at his mercy, and sending him twice to the boards with stunning blows. Kingsland remained on the boards while 9 and 8 seconds were being respectfully counted, and it was the sounding of the gong alone that saved him from being given his quietus. Not withstanding the punishment he had received, Kingsland fought gamely. He again went to the boards, but was up at 4 seconds.

Thomas now commenced pummelling his man, and a terrific left sent him down. He, however, got up before he was counted out, and though it was evident that he had no earthly chance, he was still eager to continue the combat. Blood was trickling down his face, and his left eye was badly damaged, and his seconds very wisely intervened, putting an end to the contest before the eleventh round.

Evening Express 16th November 1909

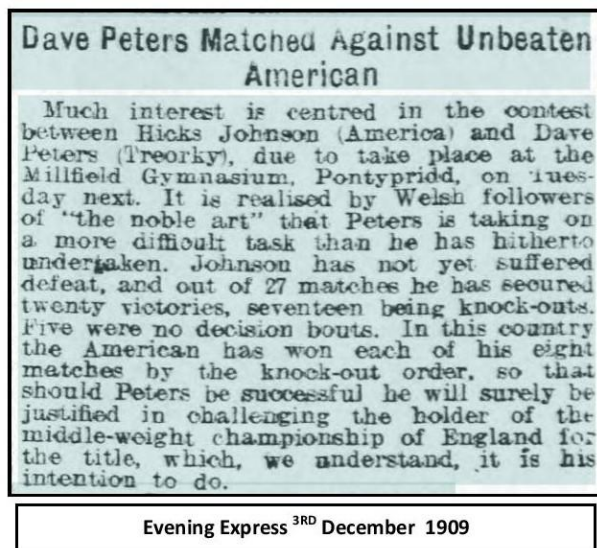
Fred Delaney (Cardiff) and Kid Davies (Swansea) fought a hard contest of fifteen two-minute rounds at the Mill Field Gymnasium, Pontypridd, on Monday night, Nov. 15th 1909, and at the end of the full limit of rounds the referee declared it a draw. Davies, the heavier man, had a strong blow, and he meted out hard punishment, but his opponent displayed splendid ringcraft and scored frequently, though not so effectively as the Swanseaite.



Thomas Thomas (8 April 1880 – 13 August 1911) was a Welsh boxer and the first British middleweight boxing champion. Born at Glynarthen, Cardiganshire (the home of his mother) and then moving to Carnelyn Farm, he began boxing in a sideshow, touring with Freddie Welsh and Jim Driscoll. After winning the local Rhondda valley heavyweight "championship", he won a National Sporting Club middleweight competition in London. Eventually, in May 1906, he fought the English champion Pat O'Keeffe to become the first national British middleweight champion. In 1909, he fought Charlie Wilson to become the first holder of a Lonsdale Belt at his weight. He won over thirty fights before losing the British middleweight title to Jim Sullivan in November 1910. He began to suffer from rheumatism. He died from heart failure in August 1911 in Cardiff. Although his boxing record is not very well documented he is believed to have won 41 of his 44 fights.

Boxing contest scene - Dave Peters breaks a record(Evening Express 8th December 1909)

A boxing contest between Dave Peters (Treorky) and Hicks Johnson (of America) took place at the Millfield Gymnasium, Pontypridd, last evening, when the former was declared the winner, the referee Mr. H. Wells; disqualifying Johnson in the eighth round for holding. The contest was for a purse of £40 and a side stake of £25, and was for twenty two-minute rounds. The contest was marred by continuous holding, necessitating the referee's constant intervention. The American in this respect was the most glaring offender, while Peters did much more effective work. In the first few rounds Johnson got home some stiff blows on the face, but the Rhondda man retaliated with interest with body blows. Johnson made some determined attempts at giving a knock-out blow, this evidently being his objective. Peters, however, smartly avoided these onslaughts, and continued to do the leading, and was evidently scoring more rapidly than his opponent. In the middle of the sixth round the referee sent the two men to their respective corners to administer a severe caution. Hugging and clinching, however, continued to be a feature, and at the conclusion Johnson, who had previously an unbroken record of 27 contests without a defeat, protested volubly against the referee's decision, and had to be parted by force from Peters by the latter's seconds. Fred Delaney, of Birmingham, have signed articles at Cardiff to box 20 rounds of two minutes each for £25 aside, and a purse of £40, given by the promoters of the Mill Field Athletic Club, Pontypridd, to take place on Boxing Day





In 1909, Dave Peters, from Treorchy, knocked out Yorkshire-born Merthyr fighter James 'Tiger' Smith at Mountain Ash to reclaim the Welsh middleweight title. Peters was of mixed race and, in those long-gone days, was routinely referred to by the London papers as "The Welsh Coon".

Fred Welsh at Pontypridd
(Evening Express 10 December 1909)

To the Editor of the Evening Express. "Sir,—On the evening of Monday, the 13th, I shall give an exhibition boxing bout at the Pontypridd Town Hall, for the benefit of Nazareth House Orphanage, Pontypridd. I had been engaged for music-hall exhibition during the week beginning the 13th, but, fortunately, on an optional contract for £200 for the week. I endeavoured to get Monday night free, but could not, and, therefore, cancelled the contract rather than be obliged to break my promise to help in a cause that appeals so strongly to me. I am not sorry to be done with the music-hall work. I have had one week of it; and that was long enough to satisfy any histrionic ambitions concealed in my breast. I could have signed a contract for £900 for four weeks, but I prefer the real article to the stage imitation. Anyhow, I need to be back in Wales for a little while. I have been away from home for nearly four weeks, and that is a long expatriation for a Welshman. Meantime I long for the hills and valleys of Wales. Cymru am byth!—I am, etc., Fred Welsh. Light-weight Champion of England.

Assault-at-arms at Town Hall, Pontypridd.
(Evening Express 14 December 1909)

The third annual assault at arms in aid of St. Michael's (R. C.) Boys' Home was held at Pontypridd Town Hall on Monday. When Fred Welsh entered the ring he was given a great ovation by the 2,000 spectators, and the Pontypridd Town Band rendered "The March of the Men off Harlech." Welsh gave an exhibition bout with Dai Stevens, the latter putting up a very promising show against the champion though obviously outclassed. Jim Driscoll, who was also very cordially received, had a bout with Salaam Sullivan Cardiff, the latter being too light for the tricky feather weight, as well as in a lower class. Joe Fletcher met Badger Brien. Dave Peters faced Ted James, while Charlie Webber and the redoubtable Jack "Bandy" Davies provided an interesting encounter. There were also a host of other contests, none of them being regarded in a serious light by the participants. In addition to the boxing there was a weight-lifting display by Young Samson, the 10st. champion of the world, and a really excellent gymnastic display by the Cardiff St. Saviour's team. Songs were rendered at intervals by well-known local artistes, Mr. Tom Bryant accompanying.

The Fly-Weight Champion
(Monday, December 20th 1909)

Chief interest at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd on this Monday centred on the contest for the fly-weight championship of England between Joey Smith and Kid Sullivan, two London lads, and resulted in a victory for Smith in the

ninth round, the encounter being for 25 rounds of two minutes each. It was apparent from the very start that Sullivan was completely outclassed, Smith being not only the stronger lad, but very smart with his feet and clever with his fists. Sullivan, however, made a good show, and in the seventh and eighth rounds he rallied wonderfully. It was then too late, and three times in succession he fell to the boards, where he remained some seconds. He then made a desperate effort, but again he found the boards, and his seconds threw up the sponge. Brown, of Caerphilly, beat Tom Price of Mountain Ash, and Parfitt, Newtown, Pontypridd, defeated Yank Evans, of Pontypridd.

1910

This year would see boxing continue at the Millfield Gymnasium and others at the town hall. Also the Ynysangharad Gymnasium, located somewhere in Ynysangharad Road. The evidence for this latter location and its use on previous occasions appeared in the Evening Express of 18 January 1910: -

Found dead in a loft

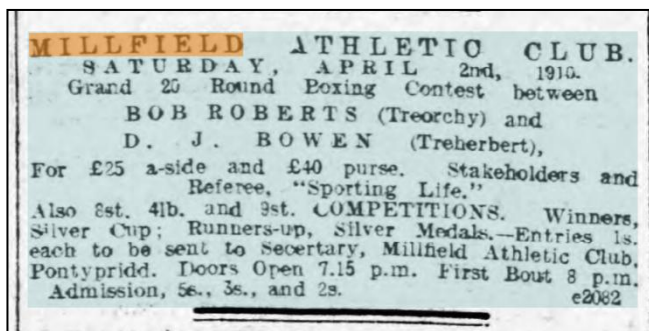
Fred Coslett (21), a fruiterer's salesman, of Bridge Street, Pontypridd, was found dead on Monday in a loft over a place at Ynysangharad-road where boxing contests were formerly waged. He had a deep gash in his throat, and a table knife was by his side. The indications were that the wounds were self-inflicted. Dr. Evans was summoned and pronounced life extinct.

Fred Welsh's indignation

(Evening Express 24 January 1910)

Writing in the 'Sporting Chronicle' today, Freddy Welsh says: - As a rule I pay no attention to defamatory statements made about me, I regard them as the natural and inevitable homage which envy always pays to success. Just at this moment, however, the tongue of rumour is so busy with my name that it seems wise to pay some attention to the infamous stories which are in circulation. The story in brief is this:- That I was asked to give an exhibition boxing bout at the assault-at-arms held in Pontypridd for the benefit of the orphanage at Treforest; that I posed as a philanthropist, pretending to give my service's free and then demanded payment for them. The story in detail is not sufficiently interesting to repeat. The facts are these: "I received an invitation to box an exhibition bout in aid of St. Michael's Boys' Home, Treforest, and at once agreed to do so. Later, in London, Mr. David Williams came to me at my hotel and said that inasmuch as Iron Hague and Tom Lancaster would be unable to appear, he would be very glad if I would assure him that I would box.

In order to box at Pontypridd I was obliged to forego a music-hall engagement worth £200 a week. Also I had business in Paris. I went to Pontypridd, however, and boxed there, and then hurried away so that I might catch the train and return at once to London and go on to Paris. Later, Mr. Harry Marks, my manager, learning that some of the other boxers had had their expense money sent them, wrote to the chairman of the committee asking that my expenses be paid. I may say that I was indifferent to the amount of my expense money, and had instructed Mr. Harry Marks to give it to St. Michael's Boys Home when he received the money from the committee; but I felt that I was entitled to the small sum I was out of pocket; and, therefore, asked for it. At no time did I ask for payment for my services; nor did I ever dream of doing so."



Knocked out in the second round

A contest between David Bowen (Treherbert) and Young Roberts (Treorky) ended in the second round at the Mill Field, Pontypridd, on Saturday night April 2nd 1910. Roberts opened promisingly, but Bowen, who was the stronger man, made up the leeway. In the second round Bowen thrice got his opponent to the boards and Roberts was counted out.

Unsustained claim in match

A contest between Dave Baxter (Tonyrefail) and W. J. Gibbs (Cilfynydd), and the Millfield Athletic Club on Monday night 13 June 1910, was of short duration. It had been arranged for 15x two minute rounds for £10 aside, but in the fourth round Gibbs, claiming a foul, left the ring, and the referee Mr. H. Wells, awarded victory to Baxter, who had done all the leading. Cliff Bartlett (Pontypridd) challenged the winner.

Boxing contest at Millfield boxing Club
(Evening Express 5th July 1910)

There was a crowded attendance at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Monday evening, July 4th 1910, to watch a twenty three-minute round contest between Ike Bradley (Liverpool) the 8st. 4lb. champion of the North of England, and Les Williams (Tonypandy), the 8st. 8lb. champion of South Wales. The contest was for £20 aside and a £40 purse, the stakeholders being the Evening Express, who appointed Mr. Barry Wells, of Cardiff, as the referee. The whole twenty rounds were fought with tremendous vigour, and the verdict was, amidst great cheering, accorded the Rhondda man.

Eight-stone Championship of Wales (1st August 1910)

The contest for the 8st. championship of Wales took place at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Monday night between Jim Southway, Pentre, the present holder, and Eddie Morgan, Merthyr, the 7st. Champion of England. The contest was for 20 rounds for £25 aside and a £25 purse given by the promoters. There was some good sparring between the two, but Morgan had most of the leading, and in the ninth round he floored his man.

From this time onwards Morgan was evidently obtaining the mastery, whilst Southway was getting palpably weaker. In the fourteenth round Morgan had Southway entirely at his mercy, and it only the call of time that saved the latter. In the succeeding round Southway's seconds intervened and threw up the sponge, the verdict given to Morgan.

MILL FIELD GYMNASIUM,
PONTYPRIDD.

GRAND OPENING NIGHT,
MONDAY EVENING NEXT, July 26th.
FIFTEEN ROUND BOXING CONTEST
Between
CHARLEY WEBBER (Pontypridd) and
DANNY GARNAT (Chfynydd),
£20 aside and Club Purse.
Stakeholder and Referee, "Sporting Life."
Also 10st. WRESTLING COMPETITION.
Winner 50s., Runner-up 10s.
Entrance Fee. 1s., to be sent in not later than
MID-DAY, JULY 26th, to SECRETARY, Mill
Field Gymnasium, Pontypridd.
Doors open 7.30 p.m. Commence 8.0 p.m.
Admission 1s., Reserved Seats, 2s. e956

Evening Express 24th July 1909

MILLFIELD ATHLETIC CLUB.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2nd, 1910.
Grand 20 Round Boxing Contest between

BOB ROBERTS (Treorchy) and
D. J. BOWEN (Treherbert),

For £25 a-side and £40 purse. Stakeholders and Referee, "Sporting Life."

Also 8st. 4lb. and 9st. COMPETITIONS. Winners, Silver Cup; Runners-up, Silver Medals.—Entries 1s. each to be sent to Secretary, Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd. Doors Open 7.15 p.m. First Bout 8 p.m. Admission, 5s., 3s., and 2s. e2082

MILLFIELD ATHLETIC CLUB.

MONDAY, APRIL 25th, 1910.

GRAND 15-ROUND

BOXING CONTEST

Between

DAVE BAXTER (Tonyrefail) and YOUNG
GIBBS (Cilfynydd)

FOR £10 A-SIDE AND CLUB PURSE.

Also 8st. 4lb. COMPETITION.—Winner, Silver Cup; Runner-up, Silver Medal. Entries, 1s. each; to be sent to Secretary, Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd.

Doors Open 7 p.m.; First Bout, 8 p.m.—Admission, 1s., 2s., and 3s. e2179

Driscoll's partner matched
(Evening Express 20 August 1910)

On the night of the Welsh Powderhall one of the most interesting boxing matches made for some time will take place at the Mill Field Athletic club, Pontypridd. The rivals are Badger Brien (Cardiff), Jim Driscoll's clever sparring partner and Fred Edwards (Matthewstown). They fight for £25 aside, and on behalf of Edwards a cheque for £5 has been sent to the editor of the Evening Express as a first deposit, a cheque for a similar amount having also been deposited by Jim Driscoll for Brien. Those who think the contest a soft snap for Brien may be reminded that the little Cardiffian has already been beaten at Mountain Ash by Edwards, who has the advantage in height and reach. That, however, was a six-round affair, and the longer distance - 20 rounds - for which articles have been signed may even up the chances.

Driscoll's sparring partner again defeated
Evening Express 29th August 1910

At the Millfield Athletic Club, at Pontypridd on Saturday evening (28th inst.) Badger Brien (Jim Driscoll's sparring partner) was again beaten by Fred Edwards (Matthewstown). The latter enjoyed a big advantage in height and reach. In the end of 20 rounds Mr. Harry Wells, appointed by the Evening Express, declared Edwards the winner. The fight was for £25 a-side.

Pontypridd school sites
(Cardiff Times – 24th September 1910)

The Pontypridd Education Committee, which met on Tuesday, considered a recommendation from the District Council that the proposed new Mill Street higher elementary school be erected on the Mill Field, and that the present site and buildings be acquired by the Council for other purposes. It was reported by Mr. D. Milton Jones (the secretary) that the Board of Education had sanctioned alterations to the existing school, but the committee had found it would be cheaper to build a new school on an adjoining site, and the surveyor had prepared the plans. Councillor D. Arnott said he was of opinion the Mill Field was not a suitable place for such a school, and suggested the Berw Road recreation ground. Mrs Rosser agreed. Eventually the matter was adjourned, and a committee was appointed to consider other sites.

MILLFIELD ATHLETIC CLUB, PONTYPRIDD.—
MONDAY, OCTOBER 31st, 1910.—Grand 20 3-minute
 Rounds **BOXING CONTEST**, for the Bantam-weight
 Championship of Wales, between **MUNROE GRANGER**
 (Cardiff) and **LES WILLIAMS** (Tonypandy), for £50
 aside and £50 purse. Stakeholders: "Mirror of Life,"
 London, who will appoint Referee. Men to weigh in
 at 2 o'clock on day of Contest at the "Evening
 Express" Office. Also 10-round Contest between
YOUNG JENKINS (Cilfynydd) and **JACK LAKE** (Car-
 diff.) Also 7st. 6lb. **COMPETITION**; Gold Medal for
 the Winner; Silver Medal for the Runner-up. Admis-
 sion 1s., 2s., 3s.; Reserved Seats 5s. Doors Open 7.30.
 Big Contest 9.0.—For Reserved Seats apply **Millfield**
 Athletic Club, or Mr. Harry Marks, Coldstream-
 terrace, Cardiff. e2811

Welsh bantam honours
 (Evening Express 31 October 1910)

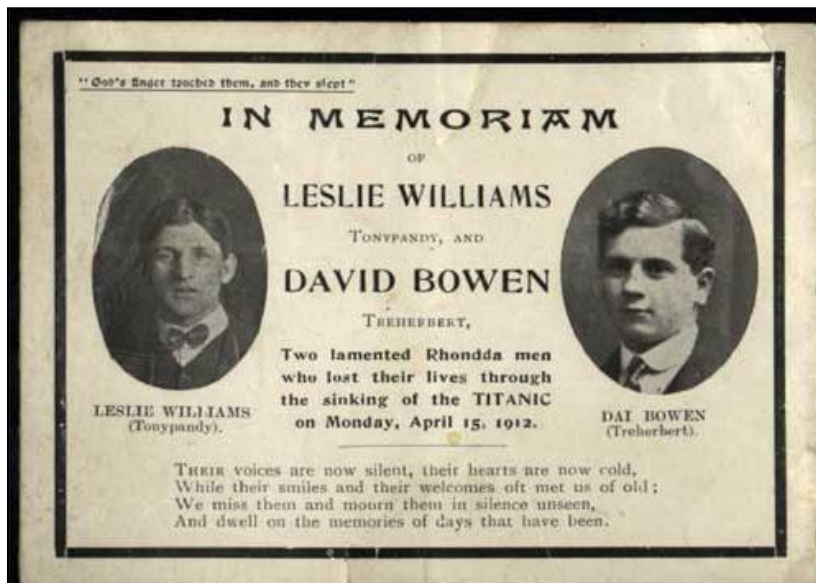
The fight for the bantam championship of Wales between Munroe Grainger (Cardiff), Fred Welsh's sparring partner, and Leslie Williams (Tonypandy), which takes place at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd this evening, was preceded by the weigh-in at the Evening Express office this afternoon. Originally the match had been fixed 8st. 7lb., but as the Rhondda lad could not get to work a postponement was agreed upon, and it was resolved to give or take 2lb. Both came within that weight. Fred Welsh and Jim Driscoll were present and they greeted each other affably. Driscoll favours the chances of the Rhondda lad.

Sensational result of Welsh championship

There was a large attendance at the Mill Field Athletic Club on Monday evening, 31 October 1910 when a contest for the bantamweight championship of Wales took place between Munroe Grainger, Cardiff, and Les Williams, Tonypandy. The contest was of twenty-three-minute rounds for £25 aside and a purse of £50, and resulted in the referee (Mr. Bradley, of the "Mirror of Life") disqualifying Williams in the fifth round for blow below the belt. The contestants fought with tremendous vigour, and both at times hit wildly. In the first round the Rhondda man led with some terrific body punches, and when the gong went he was simply pummelling his man. In the second round Grainger showed to better advantage, but in the third round Williams was again doing all the leading, and there seemed to be only one man in it, Grainger having been severely punished both on the body and the face. The two men fought furiously until about the middle of the fifth round, when the referee stopped the fight disqualifying Williams. This led to an expression of strong disapproval on the part Williams' supporters, who were

present in at force, and so great was the hubbub that the referee was unable to publicly announce his decision.

In 1912 Les Williams and David John Bowen died when they were passengers on the Titanic.





David John Bowen, who fought twice at the Millfield during a short fight career. He was a passenger on the titanic and died alongside Les Williams.

Pontypridd man disqualified

A twenty-round contest that drew a large attendance to the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd on Monday evening 6 December 1910 was the scheduled fight between Charlie Webber of Pontypridd, and Fred Edwards, of Mountain Ash. In the first half-dozen rounds the Mountain Ash man did nearly all the scoring. In the seventh Webber twisted his man down out of a clinch, but in the ninth Edwards was still boxing the stronger, and Webber, taking no notice of the referee, was disqualified, and the fight awarded to Edwards.

Welsh-Driscoll Contest Mr. Tom Scott to be Referee

Mr. A. F. Bettinson finding himself unable to officiate as referee in the forthcoming Welsh and Driscoll, contest, Mr. Tom Scott has consented to fill the vacancy. Driscoll is training at Cardiff and has "Badger" O'Brien as partner, whilst Fred Welsh completes his preparation at his native place, Pontypridd, in company with Boyo Driscoll and others. The lowest price of admission to witness the contest is one guinea, and the highest five guineas

Boxing contests for charity at Pontypridd

(Evening Express December 10th 1910)

Pontypridd people are to have the first opportunity of seeing Bombardier Wells, who is Jack Johnson's prospective opponent, and Jim Sullivan (Bermondsey), the conqueror of Tom Thomas, perform in Wales after their recent victories, for on Monday and Tuesday an assault-at-arms will be held in the New Town-hall of the Rhondda metropolis to aid the funds of St. Michael's Boys' Home. In addition, Digger Stanley (the world's wonder in footwork), Petty-officer Curran, Jim Driscoll, and a heap of others will be present. Last year £65 was handed over by the promoters to the fund.

Bombardier Wells clever

(Evening Express 13 December 1910)

A large crowd assembled last evening at the Pontypridd Town Hall to witness the first night's programme of an assault-at-arms in aid of the St. Michael's (Roman Catholic) Homes. Those participating included Bombardier Wells, Jim Sullivan, Jim Driscoll, P. O. Curran, Jim Maloney, Jack Daniels, Sid Burns, Harry Sterling, and many other leading exponents. All three champions were accorded a very hearty reception, and it was stated that Driscoll had been refused permission by the syndicate to box. Bombardier Wells was opposed in a very clever bout by Ted James (Merthyr), and the audience were much struck by the heavyweight's clever display.

Ben Hardwidge and Fred Davies

(Monday 26 December 1910)

A brief, but vigorous encounter was waged at the Millfield Athletic Club on Boxing Day 1910 between Ben Hardwidge of Tylorstown and Fred Davies, Ferndale, and resulted in the former winning in the third round. The contest was for £15 aside. It was seen at the outset that Hardwidge was the stronger man and could easily vanquish his opponent. In the third round Davies threw up the sponge, thus giving his opponent the victory.

Jimmy takes an upward step

The Millfield Boxing Club in Pontypridd, on Saturday and Monday nights would be packed full with local fight fans watching contests organised by local promoters Williams & Gibbons. Jimmy Wilde in his biography wrote: -

“On Boxing Day 1910 Jimmy Wilde walked down the valley from Tylorstown to Pontypridd full of optimism that he would further his boxing career. He was stopped at the door by two attendants, who at first ridiculed him, and when he persisted in gaining entry they threatened him with violence. Jimmy repeatedly pleaded with the attendants to speak to the boxing club manager, Teddy Lewis, and eventually Lewis arrived at the door. Teddy was short, with grey hair and fresh pink and white skin, and a pair of Pince-nez spectacles that made him look like a schoolmaster rather than a boxing manager. The slightly deaf manager told Jimmy that he didn’t look the weight and to go away and put some on, and grow a bit before coming back again. To which Jimmy replied that he was willing to fight anyone at any weight and that he was undefeated. Lewis’ ears pricked up at this and told Jimmy to step inside and he would see what he could do.

Jimmy was taken to the upstairs room which was full of several hundred miners, many who were smoking, while the lighting left a lot to be desired. Wilde stripped in a side-room and was soon ready for his first major appearance. As he slipped through the ropes of the ring a chuckle of good-natured laughter went around the room.

But Jimmy was used to this, and his opponent, local middleweight Les Williams also thought it a bit of a joke. Williams, as others to come, was infuriated to find Jimmy still on his feet after the first round or two, and made up his mind to launch an all-out attack in the third, but this left his face and body wide open. A right to the heart, a left to the stomach, and a right to the chin saw Williams out for the count. “So you still haven’t lost a fight,” said Teddy, chuckling.”

Jimmy was to have many fights at the Millfield, most of which were unreported.

His wife Elizabeth wrote in an Australian newspaper article: "Well, we discussed the suggestion from every point, and eventually, against my conscience I agreed. So he and my father went to the Millfield Athletic Club, at Pontypridd, run by two promoters named Williams and Gibbons. When Jimmy tried to obtain admission he was barred and ordered off. He did not look like a boxer. Jimmy, however, was his usual dominant self. "I want to see the manager," he said. There was a lot of talk, and eventually a grey-haired, kindly-looking gentleman came to the entrance and peered through his pince-nez with mingled amusement and surprise.

Jimmy told him he wanted to box, and something about my husband's attitude appealed to him. After once shaking his head he told Jimmy to come inside. Jimmy looked terribly frail. He was still only a pale-faced boy of 6st. 6lb. Jimmy went into the dressing-room, and when his turn came he ducked through the ropes. The colliers were interested and sympathetic. Their sympathy changed to admiration when Jimmy trounced the other fellow and won. On the way to the tramcar he stopped at a sweet shop and bought me half a pound of chocolate almonds. This left him with three shillings, and eighteen pence to pay for tram fare."

1911

On April 11th 1911 Les Williams defeated David Bowen at the Millfield Athletic Club. Again on Easter Monday, 17 April 1911 a 15 round x 2 minute fight between Young Warner (Marylebone) and Les Williams (Tonypany) took place at the Millfield Athletic Club. The Sporting Life of 4 March 1911 reported that Jack Priest and Joe Roberts fought 15x2-minute rounds at Millfield.

Jimmy Wilde again at the Millfield Athletic Club

The Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, was the scene of a spirited contest on Saturday night, August 26th 1911, between Jimmy Wilde, Tylorstown, and Young Jennings, Merthyr, for a purse of £10 and stakes of £10 a side. Wilde had the advantage at long range, plying good straight lefts, which however, were well stopped frequently. Jennings's right eye closed down, and later his left was impaired. The referee, Mr. Harry Wells, stopped the bout in favour of the Tylorstown lad at the end of the eleventh round. Primary bouts included a fast six rounds between Walter Rossi and Gus Vonn, both of Pontypridd, the latter being an easy winner. O'Leary, Newtown and Alderman, Pontypridd, who were to have gone six rounds, finished at the end of the second, a hard blow to the chin flooring Alderman.

1912

Boxing World and Mirror of Life Saturday 23rd March 1912

Last week I anticipated that I should have the pleasure of recording a contest at Pontypridd, after a long silence, respecting that quarter. The contestants were to have been Lewis Williams and Will Phipps, both who claim the salubrious city of Penygraig as their dwelling place. To the Millfield Club I therefore made my way on Monday night. The officials of the club were on the ground, and the two men were in the vicinity. The crowd, though not conspicuous by its absence, was not so much as to require a big posse of police to regulate it. So, whether for this reason or some other, there was no business doing. There were rumours among the crowd that the police had stopped the contest, but on investigating it was found this was not the case. However there are signs of awakening, as I have already said, in the Metropolis of the Rhondda, so that perhaps when the strike is over we shall see developments. Maybe paucity of the crowd the other night is not altogether due to the strike. The “boys” still have – or had then – a couple of coins to rattle together, and had the inducement been a great one might have capitulated to the claims offered. But a bout of 15 rounds, between two comparative unknown lads, is hardly likely to make them part. I say this without any disrespect to the abilities of the two Penygraig boys. Very likely they would have given us a good show. But the big bout should be more attractive – one in which the men engaged are known to the public by repute. The Millfield club has on occasions offered good fare, and has, I think, always been rewarded by a generous passage. We hope that when the ball is got rolling again that we shall see something good.

1914

Walter Rossi v Llew Probert
(9 May 1914)

There was a surprising large crowd at the Millfield Athletic Club on Saturday, May 9th 1914 for the return 20-round match between Walter Rossi (Pontypridd), who has done well in America, and Llew Probert (Merthyr). It was a keen and close encounter, Probert showing great determination, but Rossi had better Judgment, and his defence was good, though he was in trouble in the 17th round from a hook to the jaw. The porting editor of the ‘Evening Express’ gave the verdict to Rossi. Bill Beynon (Merthyr) won a meritorious 6-rounds against Young Norton (Pontypridd), and Will Jones (Mountain Ash) scored a narrow win in a 10-round bout with Jim Jenkins (Capelcoch) while George Yeomans (Pontypridd) proved too strong for Steve Thomas of the same town in a 6-round contest.

Walter Rossi v Charlie Yeomans - Frank Moody v Young Carver
Water Rossi and Frank Moody at Millfield
(29 August 1914)

At the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Saturday 29 August 1914, Walter Rossi, (late America), secured the verdict in 15 rounds with Charlie Yeomans (Pontypridd), flyweight. Rossi had the advantage in weight and reach and his left-hand was extremely busy throughout. Tim O'Leary (Pontypridd) went six rattling rounds with Jim Calverhouse (Treherbert), and there was not a lot in it when O'Leary, who stayed well, got the verdict. Sgt. Jimmy Young, Carver (Newport) won on points over six rounds against Frank Moody (Pontypridd), as did Will Davies (Glynaman) against Howell Hughes (Troedyrhiw).

Boxing Day 1914 at the Millfield
(Rhondda Leader 2nd January 1915)

The fight for the 8st. 6lbs, championship of the Rhondda took place at Pontypridd on Saturday night last (26-12-1914). The contestants were Sammy Lane, of Cwmavon, who is an aspirant for one of the national belts, and Walter Rossi, of Pontypridd, who has gained experience during his American tour. Rossi took the first two rounds, but fell away from the third to the tenth round. Lane became very aggressive and gave a fine exhibition of two-handed work. From the tenth round to the fifteenth Rossi was leading and wiped out the points against him. The verdict of Mr. Haydn Morgan, Penygraig, the referee, of a draw, was a very popular one.

Frank Moody defeated
2 January 1915

On 2 January 1915, a young Frank Moody was knocked out in the fourth round of a ten round bout against Charlie Stone, at Scarrott's Pavilion (Millfield Athletic Club). There was also 10-round and 6-round bouts, the latter between Ray Grant, Ystrad, and Dai Chant, Tylorstown.

Rossi in drawn fight
9 January 1915

Ted Brewer, of Rhymney, and Walter Rossi, of Pontypridd, boxed eight rounds at the Millfield on this Saturday night, the result being a draw.

1917
Boxing at Pontypridd

At the Millfield Athletic Club, on Saturday night, 6 May 1917, Ned Dixon, of Porth, secured the verdict on points in an 8-round boxing contest with Eric Jones, of Pontygwaith, the latter deputising Kid Evans, Taffs Well. In a 10-round bout Josephs, Pontypridd, beat Tommy Coates, Gifach, on points. The feature of the bout was the gameness of the latter, who was at a big disadvantage in height and weight. Josephs was hampered by Coates' methods, the latter keeping close in. The principal bout was a 15-round contest between Johnny Evans, Porth, and Arthur Bishop, Caerphilly. The latter scored freely up to half-way, but Evans did much better in the closing stages, the result being a draw.

1918

Frank Moody at the Millfield

26th October 1918

There was a large attendance at the boxing tournament held at the Millfield, Pontypridd, on this Saturday evening in aid of the Treforest Catholic schools. Mr. Charles Barnett, "Evening Express," was referee, and Mr. Wyndam Williams organiser. In a twenty-round contest Frank Moody, Pontypridd, beat Gunboat Silas Baker, the latter named taking a full count in the sixth round.

1919

Tommy Griffiths wins at Pontypridd.

There was boxing again at the Mill Field Athletic Club, Pontypridd on Saturday 12 April 1919 and in a twenty three minute rounds contest at 10st. 21b. for £50 a-side Tommy Griffiths (Pontypridd) won over Jim Jenkins (Abercwmboy) ...

Boxing at Millfield Athletic Club

A spirited holiday contest was witnessed at the Millfield A. C. on Saturday 19 April 1919, between Walter Rossi, Pontypridd and Sammy Lane (Cwmaman). The bout went the full distance of 15 rounds, and at the end Rossi was given the verdict on points. The lads boxed well, and by their hard hitting maintained interest until the end. Rossi did almost all the leading, but he found Lane very difficult to get at, and the Cwmaman fighter lost by a very small margin. In a six-round bout Young Hampton, Pontypridd, beat Jonah Brooks, Pontypridd, on points.

Surprise end

3rd May 1919

There was a surprising end to the principal contest at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd. It was a fifteen round contest between Frank Moody, Pontypridd, and Wyndham Price (Newport). Both opened in promising style, with Moody having a trifle best of the first round. Exchanges were put in at the early part of the second session, but Moody gradually worked Price to the ropes, and, feigning with the left, hooked the right hand to the jaw, and then before Price could recover from the surprise staggered him with a right to the heart.

At the end of the round Price walked to his corner and, to the surprise of everyone, asked his seconds to throw in the towel. As they hesitated Price himself threw in the towel and Moody was declared the winner. In a six-round contest Reg Jones, London, beat William Orchard, Newbridge, the latter retiring after the fourth round. A six-round bout between George Dicks, Newbridge, and Stan Herbert, Pontypridd, resulted in a draw. Evan Davies, Pontypridd, won on points against Johnny Brooks, Mr. William Bevan being the referee.

Tancy Lee as referee at Pontypridd

A large crowd assembled at the Millfield Athletic Club, Pontypridd, on Saturday 24 May 1919 to witness a side-stake match between Freddie Vincent (Aberdare) and Kid Lewis (Tylorstown). It was the fine contest seen at the building for many years, first one boxer showing up prominently and then the other. Towards the end, however, the greater experience of Lewis prevailed, and he received the decision of Mr. Charles Barnett (Evening Express).

The crowd kept admirable order, and Tancy Lee (Ex-British lightweight champion), who refereed the minor bouts, met with a great reception. At ten-round contest between Dai Chant (Tylorstown) and Harry Purnell (Pontygwaith), ended in the second round. Purnell went down from a body punch and tried to claim a foul, but Tancy Lee refused to allow the appeal, and the verdict went to Chant. Ted Lewis, Tylorstown, and Johnny Williams contested six stirring rounds, Lewis winning on points.

Boxing bouts at Pontypridd

At the Millfield A. C. on Monday evening, 2 June 1919, when a chief contest was one of 15 x 3min rounds between Ted Ryan (Cilfynydd) and Johnny Morgan (Caerphilly). The lads started well, but after a few rounds it was evident that Ryan was the weaker of the two. In the eighth round he went down to a blow on the jaw, and at the end of the round gave in. A 10 round bout between Curly Bayliss (Pontypridd) and Billy Jones (Pontypridd) produced some good clean hitting. Bayliss, however, secured a verdict on points. In another ten round bout between Billy Hampton (Pontypridd) and Jonah Brooks (Pontypridd). The latter had an

advantage in height, but Hampton was cleverer with his left. The referee gave a draw. Young Freddie Welsh (Pontypridd) and Young Moody (Pontypridd) drew in a six round contest.

Moody wins again (Twice)

On 11th June 1919 Frank Moody defeated Manny Chamberlain (Pentre) on points over 15 rounds at the Mill Field. There were also 10 and 6 round contests, the latter being Ray Grant, Ystrad, and Dai Chant, Tylorstown. And on 6 September 1919 Frank Moody beat Jim Culverhouse (Treherbert) with a technical KO in the first round at the Mill Field.

Jack Joseph's Home win

(Mirror of Life and Boxing 6 September 1919)

At the Millfield A.C; Pontypridd, on Saturday, August 31st 1919, Jack Josephs, the local lightweight was the principal winner. He went against Eddie Teague, of Blaengarw, at 9 Stone 9 Pounds in a 20 round contest for £50 aside, and succeeded at the end of the 11th essay, when the towel came in from Teague's angle of the ring.

On the early doings it seemed that the bout would prove an unsatisfactory one, for while Teague was cautioned in the first round for hitting low, a warning went to Joseph in the second for swing his opponent to the floor. From then on however, the boxing was clean, and both fought cleverly. Joseph scored with both hands on the body, and Teague was down for "seven," but he subsequently scored with a left to the body.

Joseph subsequently met his rushes with terrific punches to the body and occasional straight lefts to the face. Teague was down for "eight" in the fifth round, and in the next Joseph was down for "three." The seventh round was marked by a good straight left hand work by Joseph, and in the eighth he kept sending heavily on the body with both hands.

Teague improved in the ninth round, and he shook his man with a right hook to the jaw; but in the eleventh, he was down for "eight," and, in rising received a stiff uppercut which put him down again. The bell came to his rescue, but in the interval his second gave in for him. In a 10 rounder Rees Mitchell (Dowlais) boxed cleverly against Steve Jones (Pentre), and was a good winner on points.

Pontypridd Observer October 27th 1919 Tim O'Leary v Tommy Griffiths

1920

Pontypridd bouts
Saturday 7 February 1920

Keen contests were witnessed at the Millfield boxing pavilion, Pontypridd, on this Saturday. The chief bout was between Fred Vincent (Abertridwr) and Nobby Norman (Pontypridd) for a stake of £40. Vincent was declared the winner on points after the full number of 15 rounds. John Morgan (Caerphilly) met Tom Roberts (Pontypridd) in six rounds, the former securing the victory on points. In six round contest between Jonah Brooks (Pontypridd) and William Griffiths (Senghenydd) the latter retired in the first round. Len Vincent (Abertillery) Eddie Worman (Pontypridd) gave a pleasing four-round exhibition.

Pontypridd fights
Saturday July 31st 1920

The stiffest of battles witnessed in the Pontypridd area took place at the Millfield on this Saturday, when Bert Jones met Jess Williams in a 15x3-minute round contest for £20 aside. Both are Pontypridd lads. The opening sessions were of a ding-dong character. The fourteenth and fifteenth rounds were lively, and at the close the referee declared a draw. The “Graig Midgets” Alderman and Godfield, gave an interesting 3-round exhibition, and the following no-decision contests took place: Sam Lewis v Dick West, Fred Garrett v Dai Lewis, and Tom Tamplin v H. Davies, each over six rounds.

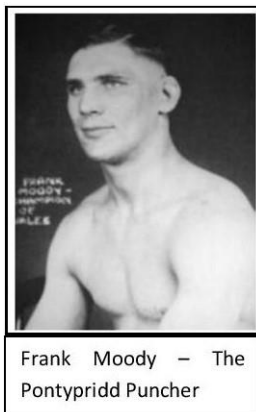
1921
22 August 1921

Walter Rossi, one of Wales's many champions of Italian heritage, won the vacant Welsh featherweight title on this day 22nd August 1921, outpointing Billy Morgan, one of the fighting brothers from Tirphil, over 20 rounds at the Millfield Club in his home town of Pontypridd. Rossi and his brother Francis, who also challenged for a Welsh crown, were raised in the Graig, the sons of a harpist who came over from Naples.

Frank Moody gets decision over Fred Davies
(22 July 1922)

At the Millfield, Pontypridd, on this Saturday, Frank Moody, Pontypridd, met shoeing smith Fred Davies, Llanelly, over twenty-rounds, the referee, Mr. Tom Gamble, stopping the contest in Moody's favour in the sixteenth round. The contest was somewhat disappointing. Bill Hampton, Pontypridd, outpointed,

outpointed Billy Atkins, Trealaw, over ten-rounds, whilst Young Fred Welsh and Dai Cochlin drew over six-rounds.



First round victory for Moody

Frank Moody, former cruiserweight boxer and Lonsdale belt holder knocked out Jim McKenzie (Scotland) in the first round of a fight at the Palace De Dance, Mill Street (now the athletic club) on 8 April 1935.

Frank Moody still showing his old-time punch

Frank Moody (Pontypridd), the former cruiserweight champion Great Britain, defeated Jack Marshall (Accrington) Pontypridd, last night, the latter's seconds throwing the towel at the end of the ninth of a scheduled 10 round bout on 29 April 1935 at the Palace De Dance, Mill Street, Pontypridd.

Last of the caravan dwellers

Mother and daughter die within a few days
(Pontypridd Observer, Leader & Free Press, 19th February 1955)

A sad little group of men and women gathered on Tuesday around the blazing funeral pyre of all the worldly possessions of 89-year-old Mrs Elizabeth Davies, the veteran traveller and caravan dweller who had lived in the Mill Field, Pontypridd, for forty years. The group had just returned from her burial service at Glyntaff Cemetery, and a few yards away in another curtained caravan lay the

body of her daughter, Mrs. M. A. Davies, who had lived alongside her mother all her life. The story of tragedy began two weeks ago when Mrs Elizabeth Davies' son died in Bridgend. Mrs Davies (senior) grieved silently and became ill in a few days. On Friday she passed away, leaving her daughter heartbroken. The daughter then developed double pneumonia and on Sunday she too, died.

Chapter closes

With their passing a chapter in the history of Mill Field closes, for they were the only two survivors of what was once a thriving community of caravan dwellers. Once there were 17 families living there, but they dwindled until only two vans on wheels remained. Through gale, rain and snow the women enjoyed every minute of their lonely life, tucked away within a few yards of the bustling town, and they died as they lived, quietly and peacefully. They will be missed by the worshipers at Mill Field Mission Hall, where they used to attend the weekly service, which is featured by an old-fashioned pedal organ and the swinging light of oil lamps; by the children who went past on their way to Sunday School there; and by the firemen who housed their appliances in the nearby garages. The firemen spent some time with the women during their brief illnesses and were sorry to see the caravans burned. Mrs Davies and her daughter used to spend some of the summer months touring the country lanes of Britain. They were descended from a long line of caravan dwellers and were married to dealers. Their homes were spick and span, full of comfort and as bright as the shining paintwork outside, but all that remains now is a heap of charcoal and ashes.

* The Mission hall was under the arches by the old water board.

Razed by fire

Mrs M. Davies' funeral took place on Friday, and her home was razed to the ground by fire, as was her mother's on Tuesday. It is a tradition that when the last members of a travelling family die that their belongings should be burned after them, leaving only the memory of what was gone before. Relatives from various places in England and Wales attended the funerals, including Mrs Davies' five surviving children, Emmanuel, John, James, Joseph, Elizabeth and Ethel.

1950s & 60s

The Mill Field was the large area between the school and the Rhondda River formed by a large meander. In the 1950s & 60s it was used by the council (P.U.D.C.) Depot to store their concrete pipes, sand, gravel etc. and other construction materials that could be left out in the open. Coming down the valley I believe the entrance road was immediately before the railway bridge and ran

past the school down towards the arch ways and the viaduct carrying the Rhondda line. It was where the fire service used to keep their fire engines and practiced drills. Their headquarters was the old Welsh Harp Hotel across the road from Humphries Garage. There was an old World War Two siren which used to sound across the town when there was a fire.

Mabon's Day memories of the Millfield

Further news about the old mill in the Millfield comes to me this week from Mr. Dr. Seaton, Glyncoch Terrace, Glyncoch, who says "I spent many a happy hour there with Daffyd E. Mills and his son 'Billo.' There were two other sons, Lemuel and Tom. As you went down the road to the Millfield you would pass the mill building and also the water weir. The Mill House was behind the buildings in the garden. Under the bank, going down the hill, Dafydd had six pig cots where were always occupied. Opposite the mill building was the tannery owned by Mr. Jenkins, who lived in the villa at the foot of Carmel Hill, next to the Carmel Graveyard. The Millfield was used for sports on Mabon's Mondays and for pigeon shooting matches. Near the pool just where the Gelliwion brooks enters the Rhondda River were the wooden stables for horses competing in the sports, and on top of these was a miniature grandstand. To the right of the stables was an alpine railway. An iron wheel, four to six inches in diameter, with a handle attached, was placed over a steel cable and on an incline. You took hold of the handle and down you went – your feet dangling – crash into a well-stuffed mattress. Further on was a full sized switchback railway and these forms of amusements were there for a long time after sports had been abandoned. The man who kept an eye on them lived in a cottage up some stone stairs opposite Mr. Gale, the blacksmith. There was also a large wooden shed near the feeder, right behind Mill Street School. This was occupied by Mr. Doxey and his sons, who carried on a coach building and carriage works. - **Observer, Leader and Free Press November 1st 1952**

Another memory

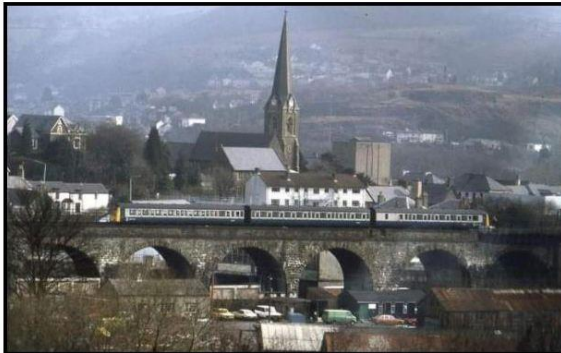
But wait, there had long been boxing at what was now called the People's Park. Jack Scarrott, a Pontypridd born showman for many years ran a boxing booth, presumably in a large tent on the ground. Mr. F. W. Pugh in the Observer of April 6th 1960 stated: - "We used to have plenty of fun at old Jack Scarrott's boxing booth. We used to flock to the booth, since it was only a penny per boy admittance to watch a wonderful evening of first-class fights. I saw Freddie Welsh and Boyo Driscoll work out there and also Tom Thomas, the legendary fighter from the Rhondda. You could see a future world champion for a penny, even the great Jimmy Wilde used to appear at the booth"

The memory of Jack Scarrott

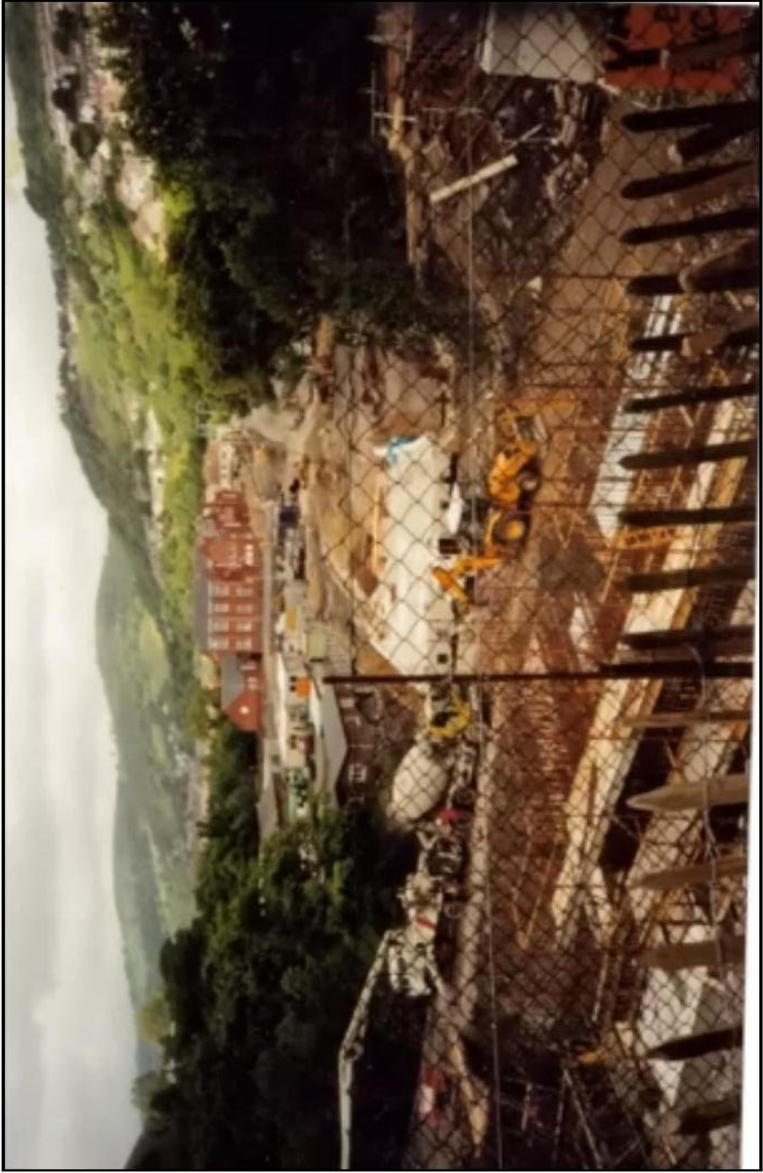
In 1936, Jack Scarrott, the famous fairground and boxing booth proprietor, who had been born in Pontypridd recalled the following story in an interview in a South Wales newspaper: - Fred Welsh and my youngest brother, Ernest Scarrott, were having a fight when they were boys, and there was a boy called Gitto Gibbons in it as well. Our caravans were then in the Mill Field, Pontypridd. One day I saw my brother Ernest coming out of a stable with his eye blacked and his lip swollen and after him came Gitto Gibbons, and he'd also been knocked out. After them came a third boy, and he was the smallest of the three and looked very shy. That boy was Fred Welsh. They'd been boxing, and I don't know where they had the boxing gloves from, for they didn't belong to me! I remember saying to my brother "Have you let this boy give you a thrashing?"

The end of the Millfield and former People's Park

In December 1993 planning permission was granted for a gyratory new traffic system in Pontypridd and one showed a road going across the River Rhondda and straight through what was once the Millfield, bringing an end to this historic location. In 1995 the new traffic system was officially opened. On November 11th 2015 a new food supermarket, built on the centre of the former Millfield, was officially opened.



The final days of the Mill Field. (Photo: Robert Masterman). The playing field turned into The Millfield Council Yard, which also included the town Morgue and a shed where animals were "put down." There was also a Mortar Mill and a steam roller that was later removed to the Ynysangharod Children's playground.



Construction of the bypass that saw the destruction of the council yard and the end of the story for the Millfield.

**URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF PONTYPRIDD
Public Pound**

THE attention of the Public is directed to the fact that there is a Pound at the Millfield, Pontypridd, in which straying animals can be impounded.

Any member of the public who wants straying animals impounded is invited to telephone

- (a) The Surveyor's Department, Municipal Building, Pontypridd — Telephone Pontypridd 2207 (between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Monday to Friday, and 9 a.m. and 12 noon on Saturday) or
- (b) Millfield Depot, Pontypridd — Telephone Pontypridd 2030 (between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Monday to Friday, and 7 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. on Saturday).

BERNARD M. MURPHY,
Clerk of the Council
Municipal Buildings,
Pontypridd.
18th January, 1956. (04)

Water authority gets six month depot reprieve

THE Taff Water Authority which occupies part of Taff Ely council's Millfield Depot in Pontypridd have been granted a six month reprieve before being asked to quit the premises.

Taff Ely want the water people out of Millfield so that they can develop the old depot into a more streamlined workplace.

The council have already given the Taff Water Division a date to be out of Millfield — December 31. But at the Taff Ely Finance Committee they asked that this date be extended for a further six months.

Taff Ely's engineer and surveyor, Mr. Colin Prentice told committee members that £86,000 had been included in the estimates of 1978-79 for the development and he did not wish the water division's presence to prejudice any proposals. He recommended then that any further stay of execution be limited to a strict six months.

Coun. Bernard Murphy commented that the Millfield project had been going on the many years and he would have thought that by now the water authority would have made up their mind to get out.

A lot of work needed to be done at Millfield said Coun. Watcyn Jacob, and he added that he hoped this would be the last six months the council would grant.

Councillors agreed to the six month time limit.

Big thrill for open day cash boost

THE League of Friends of Maeswood Community Home were thrilled that their first Open Day on Saturday, was responsible for raising the splendid sum of £410. The

Two of the uses the Mill Field was used for in its latter days.

The appearances of Jimmy Wilde at the Millfield boxing venue, most of which went unreported.

Date	Opponent	Venue	Result
26/12/1910	Les Williams	Pontypridd	No decision 3 rounds
1911			
01/01/1911	Ted Roberts	“	W KO 3
10/01/1911	Dick Jenkins	“	W PTS 6.
20/01/1911	Dai Jones	“	ND 6
02/02/1911	Kid Pearson	“	W KO 2
10/02/1911	George Lake	“	Draw 6
20/03/1911	Dai Jones	“	W KO 3
04/04/1911	Archie Grant	“	W KO 3
10/04/1911	Eddie Thomas	“	W KO 2
20/04/1911	Billy Papke	“	W KO 3
05/05/1911	Dai Roberts	“	W KO 3
15/05/1911	Archie Grant	“	W KO 3
25/05/1911	Ted Roberts	“	W KO 2
03/06/1911	Billy Brown	“	W KO 4
20/06/1911	Kid Morris	“	W PTS 6
07/07/1911	Steve Thomas	“	W KO 3
08/08/1911	Fred Chapell	“	W Disq. 6
26/08/1911	Dick Jenkins	“	W KO 11
09/09/1911	Young Avert	“	W KO 4
20/09/1911	Ted Powell	“	W KO 3
10/10/1911	Joe Rogers	“	W KO 5
20/10/1911	Young Powell	“	W KO 3
30/10/1911	Young Langford	“	W KO 2
11/11/1911	Young Towell	“	W KO 3
20/11/1911	Young Rice	“	W KO 4
12/12/1911	Young Towell	“	W KO 3
20/12/1911	Ted Roberts	“	W KO 4
30/12/1911	Young Jennings	“	W PTS 12

The above results are the recorded Jimmy Wilde bouts at the Millfield, but he also fought innumerable bouts at Jack Scarrott's Boxing Booth, also situate at the Millfield, but not recorded.

