

## Flemingston Court

### One of the Greater Houses of the Vale

#### Llantrisant & District Local History Society

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Flemingston or Flimston is a small parish of about 600 acres four miles south of Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan. It presumably takes its name from the Fleming family who were its resident lords from the 13th to the 17th century. For this period the history of Flemingston is the history of the Fleming family, although in our own age it is most famous as the home and final resting place of Iolo Morganwg.

Sixteenth century Glamorgan historians believed that the Flemings ranked as one of the original 'Twelve Knights' and one version of the 16th century 'Winning of Glamorgan' has it thus:

To Sir John Fleming he [Fitz Hamon] gave the castle and manor of St Georges with the Manor of Gwaynvo, Leckwith, Part of Caerau, for his granary and provision, and he built a strong castle at Wenvoe where he lived half his time. This Sir John brought men of husbandry from the Low Countries to be his Graingers and his herdsmen of whom came the Delehays and Lugs and Withers and many more.

This is certainly a false claim and as Professor Ralph Griffiths says in *The Norman conquest and the twelve knights of Glamorgan* Stuart Williams (ed.) *Glamorgan Historian Volume Three*:

The family from Flanders ... which made a name for itself in Glamorgan in later centuries, cannot be pinpointed before about 1200, when Richard and William "Flandrensi", or Flaming, won their place among the gentry of the county.

There appears to have been at least two branches of the Fleming family in Glamorgan from the 13th century on, if not two distinct Fleming families. The Sir William Fleming who was lord of St Georges by the first two decades of the 14th century was probably the Sir William who acted as deputy to Sir Bartholomew Badlesmere as Custos of Glamorgan, in which capacity he executed Llywelyn Bren. Tradition has it that Sir William was, himself hung for this act, but more probably he was executed for taking part in the barons revolt against the Despencers. Either way both he and Llywelyn were buried at the

Greyfriars in Cardiff. This branch of the Flemings was short lived as Sir William left an only daughter who married Edward Malephant to which family the manor of St Georges passed.

The Flemingston branch first appears in the record as lords of the manor in 1315. Flemingston appears to have been a part of the Manor of St Tathan or Aberthaw, being, with East Orchard, West Orchard (St Athans) and Gileston, one of the four knight's fees held by the Nerber family since the conquest. One Philip le Fleming seems to have inherited a share of the Nerber lands in the early 14th century.

However, the Church and parish must have taken their name from the family and the earliest surviving record of Flemingston Church, so called, is in the Taxation of Norwich in 1254, from which we must assume the Flemings to have been already, then, the lords or sub-lords of the manor, yet the extent of 1262 shows Philip le Nereberd then to be holding all four fees of St Tathan. We can only assume that they were holding the sub-fee under the Nerbers and that what had happened by 1315 was that they had inherited a share to hold directly of the chief lord of Glamorgan.

G.T.Clark in his *Limbus Patrum* has a pretty confused account of the family, but as ever, his instinct is unerring, though poorly served by his editing skills. In the middle of his account he makes the following statement:

Before 1315, one branch, that of Flemingston or Flimston, held a part of the Nerber estates in St Tathan's. Walter, probably of this line, tested a Bonville charter about 1250. Philip le Fleming held the Nerber lands in 1315, and he left two sons, *Philip* and *Richard*. Philip m. Christiana ..., and died s.p. She died 1 May, 1361, a widow, holding one third of

Flimston. The heir was RICHARD, Philip's nephew, aet. 21, 1360, in ward to Guy de Brian, custos of Glamorgan. He inherited Flimston, and died before 1375. His successor was PHILIP, probably his brother, who held one fee in St Tathan's. He was the ancestor of the Flimston line.

It is impossible to make any sense of the first five generations of the Flemingston pedigree given by Clark, which he, himself describes as 'exceedingly doubtful'. They include none of the historic Flemings such as Walter and Philip whom Clark identifies in the 13th century. Like all Norman families their early history is quite obscure and their pedigrees are not taken seriously in Glamorgan until the compilers are satisfied they have become Welsh, in this case by the early 15th century. For P.C.Bartrum the reliable pedigree, taken mainly from Golden Grove and George Owen of Henllys, begins with generation 11 born c. 1370, who is Philip ap Richard Fleming and I have placed the pedigree deduced by Clark from 1315 ahead of Bartrum's and it seems to give a credible account of the family back to 1315.

Lady Joan Fleming, whose recumbent effigy lies in the church, must be the wife of one of these 14th century generations, but we have no record of her in life. Geoffrey Orrin *Medieval Churches of the Vale of Glamorgan* describes the effigy thus:

... the stone effigy of a lady depicting Joan Le Fleming, a member of the Flemingston branch of the Norman family who held Flemingston a hundred years or more after the Norman incursion into Glamorgan. Her head rests upon a small square cushion with an oblong stone under it, and she is wearing a wimple which covers neck and chin, leaving the face exposed. The eyes are closed while the hands are clasped on the breast in the attitude of prayer. The dress is long, reaching to the feet which

rest upon a lion whose head is missing. The inscription which is in Norman-French and Lombardic characters faces the wall and leads one to suppose that it is not in its original position. The wording reads as follows ... (Lady Joan Fleming lies here and may God have mercy on her soul. Whoso prays for the soul of the deceased will receive forty days pardon.) The effigy is later than the arched recess -- of 14th-century date.

The Flemingston line of the family came to an end in the 17th-century with William Fleming who died leaving five daughters and co-heiresses and one base son. The daughters all married but the estate went to the Thomas family of Betws and Llanmihangel with whom the Flemings had much inter-married. Christopher Fleming, the last William's father, married Ann daughter of James Thomas of Llanmihangel while his sister Jane married Robert son of James and sister Alice married Edward son of James, [though the latter does not appear in the Thomas pedigree]. Jane and Robert's daughter Ann was the heiress who carried Llanmihangel to her husband, William Thomas of Betws and their son, Jane and Robert's grandson, was Sir Edward Thomas of Llanmihangel and Betws. Their great-grandson was Sir Robert Thomas, Bart. who according to a *Fashion Deed* of 1657 [G.T.Clark in L.P.] was, in that year, living at Flemingston Court. Sir Robert sold Flemingston, Llanmihangel and Betws in 1684 to Sir Humphrey Edwin the some-time Lord Mayor of London from whom it descended to the Dunraven family.

Two fine examples of the built environment remain, the church and Flemingston Court, to make Flemingston worth a visit by any local historical group. Of these G.T.Clark had this to say:

The fortified house still stands. Part is of high antiquity, and the court is still surrounded by the old embattled wall, which skirts the contiguous churchyard. The whole is well cared for, and in an order creditable to both landlord and tenant; but none but an inveterate antiquary will lament over the recent and complete reconstruction of the church, one of very many good works executed silently by the venerable and deservedly beloved Countess of Dunraven.

Clearly, as an inveterate antiquary, Clark did lament the reconstruction of the church, but his reverence for the aristocracy, to say nothing of common politeness, would not allow a more direct statement of his dismay than the above.

The Court is described in detail by RCHAM in *Glamorgan: The Greater Houses* photocopies from which will be available to members at the meeting. No doubt we shall find, as we often do, that many of the conclusions therein have been overtaken by later discoveries made by the house-holders.

The Church is described in detail in Geoffrey Orrin, *Medieval Churches of the Vale of Glamorgan* and I shall leave that to speak for itself. The effigy of Lady Jane Fleming I have already mentioned. From our perspective today, the most interesting feature is the memorials to Iolo Morganwg and his family and Mr Orrin's description of these follows:

In the north-west corner of the nave is a fine memorial monument to Iolo Morganwg and his son Taliesin ab Iolo. It is composed of twin tablets in the form of an open book in white marble, inscribed in Welsh and English, and was erected in 1855, by Caroline, Countess of Dunraven, and other titles admirers of the old Glamorgan bard and antiquary. The

English version reads as follows:- 'In memory of Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) of this village, stone mason, bard and antiquary. Born at Penon in the adjoining parish of Llancarfan on the 10th day of March (old style) A.D. 1746, died on the 18th December 1826'.

Mary finding Jesus in the temple. This is dedicated to the memory of Edward Williams, (d. 1886) of Middlesborough, son of Taliesin and Iolo's grandson. This was erected in 1920 by William Illtyd Williams, a great-grandson of Iolo.

Iolo and his son lie buried in the churchyard. There is also a stained glass window in the north wall of the nave, depicting Joseph and

This brief Nl. concludes with an tentative re-construction of the pedigree of the Flemings of Flemingston.

#### Pedigree of the Fleming Family

PHILIP LE FLEMING, held Flemingston in 1315. Father of:

1. Philip le Fleming, s.p., m. Christina ... who died a widow 1 May 1361 holding one third of Flemingston.
2. Richard

RICHARD LE FLEMING, father of:

RICHARD LE FLEMING, his uncle's heir. Aged 21 in 1360 and in ward to Guy de Brian. He inherited Flemingston from his uncle and died before 1375.

PHILIP LE FLEMING OF FLEMINGSTON, either son or brother of the above and probably the first credible representative in the Flemingston pedigree, see generation 11 below, by P.C.Bartrum's calculation born c. 1370. But this could not be the same Richard Fleming who enfeoffed Lanfey Manor in 1473.

*13 Oct 1473: Grant of enfeoffment by Richard Fleming to David Llywelyn, canon of Llandaff & Hugh Adam, vicar of St Donats, of the Manor of Lanfey and lands in the demesne of Ogmere. Tests, Thomas Fleming.*

11. PHILIP AP RICHARD FLEMING of Flemingston (Glam 211), m. Ffelis d. of Sir Edward Austin (Glam 211) and had issue:

1. Alice, m. Jenkin ap Richard from Iestyn
2. Thomas Fleming
3. a daughter, m. Jenkin ap Gilbert Turberville 2.

12 THOMAS FLEMING, m. Olive f. Sir William ap Thomas, Godwin 8. and had issue:

1. William
2. Catherine, m. John ap Morgan from Iestyn
3. David, whence a branch
4. a daughter, m. Llywelyn ap Thomas from Iestyn 10.

13 WILLIAM AP THOMAS FLEMING, m. (1) a daughter of Thomas from Bleddyn ap Maenyrch 34(A1), (2) a daughter of ... Slough of Penmarc. By the first he had issue:

1. Catherine, m. William ap Jenkin Basset 2.

2. Christopher
3. Maurice, m. in England

By the second wife:

4. William
5. Philip, m. in England
6. Margaret, m. in England (Glam 211) or according to GO 152v. (?) m. John ap Richard
7. Jane, m. Thomas ap John Kemeys

14 CHRISTOPHER FLEMING, m. (1) Gwenllian f. Lewis from Cydrych 5(E), (2) Elizabeth f. Jenkin Mansel 1. By the first wife he had issue:

1. John Fleming
2. Catherine, s.p. (GO 153)
3. Jane, m. Lewis Raglan of Llysworney, Godwin 9(B), s.p.
4. Margaret, m. Mathew Morgan of Abertawe

By the second wife:

5. Rhys Fleming, m. Joan f. John Willy of Westron and had issue, Glam 212 & GO 152v. [Clark's version from L.P. is given below]
6. William Fleming, m. Ann f. William ap Jenkin from Iestyn 8(D2). He had a base daughter Elizabeth (Glam 212) & GO 152v.
7. Ann, m. Hugh Griffith from Einion ap Gollwyn 20(G)
8. Mary, m. Rhys ap Meurig from Rhys GochYY 11(C1)
9. Margaret II, m. James ap Roger Carne from Ynyr Gwent 2(A2)
10. Elizabeth, m. John ap Rhys from Iestyn 8(C2)
11. Janet, base by Gwenllian f. David ap Madog, clerk.

*22 May 1530: Grant by Alex. Slugg & Margaret Bawdrypp to Christopher Felmyng of land in St Tathans.*

15 JOHN FLEMING, m. Mary f. Sir John Raglan, Godwin 9(A) and was father of:

(15) JOHN FLEMING, l. 1545, 1554 when witness re Rees Meyrick if Pencoed & Trehill Manor, m. (1) Catherine f. John Gwyn, Bl ap Cynfyn 57(F1), (2) Elizabeth f. Pirs (VI) Stanley (2) of Ewlo, she was a widow. John had issue of Flemingston, Glam 212, SA 44v. & GO 153.[The following from Clark's L.P.]

1. Christopher
2. William
3. John, father of John

by his 2nd wife:

4. Jane, m. Robert Thomas of Llanmihangel whose descendant was ultimate heiress of Flimston. She had issue (a) William Thomas of Llanmihangel who m. Elinor d. of John Carne of Ewenni and had Jane Thomas, m. William Carne of Nash, (b) Jane, (c) Ann Thomas, m. William Thomas of Betws and had Sir Edward Thomas of Betws and Llanmihangel whose son and heir Sir Robert, the last baronet of Llanmihangel seems to have had Flemingston which he sold, with Betws and Llanmihangel to Sir Humphrey Edwin, from whom it descended to the Dunraven family.

5. Ann, m. Thomas ap Howel ap Thomas of Elveston
6. Alice, m. Edward Thomas of Llanmihangel, probably a younger brother of Robert, and had (a) Robert, (b) Florence and (c) Elizabeth Thomas
7. Mary, m. William Prichard

16 CHRISTOPHER FLEMING OF FLIMSTON, m. (10 Ann d. of James Thomas of Llanmihangel and had issue:

1. William
2. Edward [Plea Rolls 31 March 1617, Edward F. of Flemingston, gent. responds to William Herbert Esq., in a debt of £10.]
3. Miles, s.p.
4. Elizabeth or Jane, m. William Mathew of St y Nill and had issue
5. Catherine, m. Harry Mathew of Canton
6. Mary, m. Mathew Giles of Gileston
7. Jane, second wife of Morgan, s. & h. of Sir Philip Cradock of Court Rhyd-hir

17 WILLIAM FLEMING OF FLIMSTON, m. Florence d. of Thomas Lewis of Van and had issue:

1. Barbara, d. & co-h., m. Robert Thomas, A.M., parson of Coychurch
2. Elizabeth, d. & co-h., m. William Powel of Llantilio, Co. Monmouth
3. Catherine, m. William Harries of co. Mon.
4. Mary, m. ... Andrew of Trostre ? co. Mon
5. Jane, m. John Fleming of Monkton
6. Miles, a base son.

*13 August 1674: Copy Court Roll of Lord Brooke's moiety of Dinas Powis: 'lands in East Broke, late of William Fleming of Flimston, 18 acres' and 'lands in Nolden called Priddie's lands, formerly William Fleming of Flimston, 30 acres'.*

BRANCH FROM CHRISTOPHER FLEMING, FLEMING OF WESTRA [Clark's L.P.]

15 RHYS FLEMING OF WESTRA, l. 1554 when witness re Rees Meyrick of Pencoed & Trehill Manor, m. Joan d. & h. of Rees [John Williams of Westra. They had:

1. Christopher
2. Sir William a priest
3. Elizabeth Fleming, m. (1) Thomas Pranch, (2) Jenkin Lloyd of Laleston

*BRA 247 26 February 1550: Rees Fleming of St Andrews, gent. enfeoffs to Rice ap Miricke of Bonvilston, gent., a messuage & 11 acres of arable, meadow & pasture in St Nicholas then in the tenure of Edmonde Gouche by the same meres & bounds as Christopher Fleming formerly held the same from Dio ap Jenkin Miricke, to be held of the chief lord of the fee by the customary rents and services.*

16 CHRISTOPHER FLEMING OF WESTRA, m. Catherine d. of Lewis Philpott Philp ap Howel and had:

17 REES FLEMING *Fonmon Deed 1432, 27 February 1600/01: Christopher F. of Westers, gent. & Rees F. his s. & h.*

A BRANCH FROM THOMAS FLEMING OF FLEMINGSTON

- 13 DAVID FLEMING, m. Isabel f. Thomas ap Dafydd Goch from Grant 3(D) and had issue:
1. John
  2. Catherine, m. Robin Goch Havard and had issue Gruffudd (perhaps the same as Guto Goch Havard in Morganwg 16(F)), m. Mary f. Jenkin Turberville 2(A) of Llanbleddian.

*Talbot Deed 462 6 May 1536: David Fleming of Llantwit makes a grant of a tenement on Tallegarne [alongside the r. Ely] to Thomas Dio of Llantrisant. Dating suggests this is more likely to be the David Fleming, 3rd. son of John Fleming below]*

- 14 JOHN FLEMING, m. Catherine f. Robert ap Llywelyn ap Ieuan ap Rhys, Morganwg 1(B) and had issue:
1. Thomas
  2. Jonet, m. Morgan ap William from Gwaithfoed 5(D3)
  3. David
  4. Catherine, m. William Parker

*For probable reference to David son of John Fleming see above. Also:*

*1547 Great Sessions [Cardiff Records] Complaint by Thomas Fleming of Llantwit against David Fleming and many others. Also:*

*1554 Plea Rolls [Cardiff Records] David Fleming and Jane his wife, Hoskin Thomas & Margery his wife & Jennet Manxel plead the Statute of Rhuthlan against Jacket(sic) Manxel, widow, re a messuage in Penarth, heritage of the said Jane, Margery and Jennet, whereof the said Jacket hath deforced them, and which Jenkin Turberville and William ap Rees Lloyd gave unto David Manxel and Elinor his wife and to their heirs for ever and which after the deaths of said David & Elinor ought to descend to Jane, Margery and Jennet, daughters and co-heirs of the said David Manxel and Elinor.*

- (14) THOMAS FLEMING OF TALYFAN, m. a dau. of Nicholas Sais and had issue:
1. Nicholas
  2. Morgan Fleming, (GO 153)

- 15 NICHOLAS FLEMING, m. (1) Ann f. Thomas Mathew from Gwaithfoed 5(D2), [Maesmawr, Llantwit Fardre] (b) Elizabeth f. John from Aron Fraich-hir (B2): Clark says she was d. of John Jevan Madoc by Catherine d. of Thomas Prosser of Llantrisant. He also lists the following children by Ann:

1. Catherine, m. Robert Williams of Aburthin
2. Alice, m. Thomas Griffith: [There was also, by Ann:
3. Joan Fleming who is named in the will d. 1 Sept. 1608, of her uncle Robert Mathew of Maesmawr.

and by Elizabeth:

3. Morgan
4. Thomas
5. a son, m. a daughter of Morgan Nicholas
6. Elizabeth, m. David ap John William

*Talbot Deed 824 11 October 1582: Nicholas Fleming and Agnes his wife surrender Kay y mynech near Mynydd Glew in the parish of St Donats to the use of David William. Talavan Court Roll.*

#### FLEMING OF MOUNTON [MONKTON]

- 11 JENKIN FLEMING OF MOUNTON [ap John, SA540], [Jankyn fflemyng l. 8 Oct 3 Edw. IV, 1463, Cartae] m. a daughter of Ieuan Gethin of Cowbridge (SA540), and had issue:
  1. Richard of Mounton
  2. Mawd, m. Gruffudd ap Gronwy from Einion ap Gollwyn 20
  3. Hugh Fleming of Pencarn, m. a daughter of Sir Roger Vaughan, Drymbenog 2 and issued: (a) a daughter, m. John ap Morgan from Cydyfor Fawr 15(A1), (b) Marsli, (c) Elsbeth, [the two latter from Glam 214.
  4. John Fleming of Cowbridge, whence a branch.
- 12 RICHARD FLEMING OF MOUNTON, m. Elizabeth f. Sir Henry Stradling (2) and issued:
  1. Thomas
  2. Robert Fleming of Llanilltud Fawr, whence a branch
- 13 THOMAS FLEMING OF MOUNTON, m. Catherine f. Thomas Turberville, 2(B7) and issued:

*7 November 1504: Quit-claim by Thomas Fleming, son & heir of Richard Fleming of Penlline, to Howel Carne of right of land in the fee of Llanblethian. This seems to show that the land in Penlline, presumably Penlline Court, belonged to the Monkton branch. See also William F. who was of Penlline Court and apparently sold Monkton.*

- 14 JAMES FLEMING, m. Ann f. Hywel Carne from Ynyr Gwent 2(A1) and issued:

*18 November 1540: Assignment of tail by Anne Carne, widow of James Fleming, gent. of remainder of lease of Llangewith Grange to her daughter Margaret f. Thomas on her marriage with William Thomas etc. Her other daughter was Katherine f. Thomas. According to Clark p. 375, her first husband was Thomas ap Jenkin.*

- 15 RHYS FLEMING, m. Mary f. Richard Llychwr from Iestyn 7(C2), whence issue Fleming of Mouton, ? of Monkton in Ogmor, GP 42, LPM 385. Clark continues in L.P.:
  1. Rees
  2. Ann, m. Owen John of Whitchurch
  3. Margaret, m. David son of Robert Williams of Cowbridge
  4. Elizabeth, m. Griffith James



- 16 REES FLEMING OF MONKTON, m. Mary d. of Rees Williams of Sully and had:
1. John
  2. Henry, m. Catherine d. of Lamrock Stradling of Roath [Plea Rolls 24 July 1626: Henry Fleming and Katherine his wife are selling lands in Llantwit Major to John Deere.]
  3. Christopher
  4. Rees
  5. Mary, m. William Lewis of Ely

- 17 JOHN FLEMING, m. Jane d. of William Fleming of Flimston and had issue:
1. William
  2. Jane, m. Griffith ap Griffith Gwyr

- 18 WILLIAM FLEMING OF PENLLINE COURT, who sold Monkton and seems to have m. Jane d. of William, s. of Edmund Mathew of Radyr and Jane Skerne.

*25 November 1668, nuncupative will of William Mathew, gent. of Whitchurch, mentions his daughter Jane Fleming.*

*Talbot Deed 726, 7 Jan 1641/2 in which William Fleming of Penlline, gent makes a grant to Thomas Davies of Llanharan, gent. of his messuage and lands in Cowbridge and Llanblethian '... as Rees Fleming, gent., deceased, grantor's father, held them'. This suggests William of Penlline Court was son of Rees and perhaps brother of John. Plea Rolls of 10 Sept. 1621 and 6 Sept 1630 as well as Castell y Mynmach Deed 152 dated 10 January 1623/4 all refer to John Fleming of Penlline, gent. and Jane his wife.*

#### BRANCH FROM RICHARD FLEMING OF MOUNTON

- 13 ROBERT FLEMING OF LLANILLTUD FAWR (SA42), m. Jonet Nicholl and had issue:
1. John
  2. Joan Fleming, m. Rheinallt ap Thomas Morgan from Cydyfor Fawr 14(A3)

*A grant of land in Llanilltud Fawr by John Raglan dated 10 November 1525 is attested by Robert Fleming.*

- 14 RICHARD FLEMING , m. Annes f. John from Einion ap Gollwyn 3(G) and had:

- 16 CATHERINE FLEMING, m. Anthony ap Thomas from Einion ap Gollwyn 8(A1)

#### BRANCH FROM JENKIN FLEMING OF MOUNTON, FLEMING OF ABERTAWE:

- 12 JOHN FLEMING OF COWBRIDGE, father of:

- 13 RICHARD FLEMING OF ABERTAWE, m. Alice f. Llywelyn Goch ap Ieuan Fychan of Glyn nedd and had issue:
1. Thomas
  2. Elsbeth, m. Rhys ap Thomas from Einion ap Gollwyn 11(F1)
- 14 THOMAS FLEMING, m. Angharad f. Jenkin, Bleg 2(D) and was father of:
- 15 JOHN FLEMING, m. Maesod f. Gwallter from Einion ap Gollwyn 15(B) and had issue of Abertawe, Glam 214.

#### FLEMING OF PENLLINE

- 8 JOHN NORRIS OF PENLLINE & LANGSTONE(SA49v.; Baglan 300), l. 1349(Glam 276b), issued:
1. Efa
  2. Gwenllian, m. (1) Tomkin Turberville 2., (2) Philip ap Morgan from Cydyfor Fawr 15.
- 8 EFA NORRIS, m. John Fleming and had issue:
- 9 JENKIN FLEMING OF PENLLINE (SA 52v.), m. a daughter of Robert Rayne and had issue:
1. Jonet, m. Mathew ap Ieuan from Gwaithfoed 5
  2. a daughter, m. Madog ap Ieuan from Gwaithfoed 4.  
Query if these two be not the same
  3. Catherine, m. Llywelyn ap Ifor Hir from Einion ap Gollwyn 19.
  - ? 4. a daughter, m. Alexander Giles of Gileston and issued Tobod, m. Hywel ap John Carne from Ynyr2.