

### **Belgrave House (The King's Head), Llanblethian**

1851 Kings Head - John Thomas, 72, publican and weaver, b Swansea, with wife Margaret, 72 and grandson Thomas Jones, 11, scholar *Census 69*

1858, 10<sup>th</sup> July John Thomas, landlord of the Kings Head, charged with keeping open illegal hours. *Glamorgan Gazette*

1858/1865 John Thomas, farmer, Kings Head *Slaters/Websters directories*

John Thomas was the famous Sion-y-Gwaith (John the Weaver), who helped to make the Kings Head the village ale house. David Jones of Wallington wrote of 'Sion-y-Gwaith' being a household word in Llanblethian, John T. being 'popular enough to have his name conferred upon the little "public" instead of the name the sign bears. If you wanted this house you may ask twenty people in the village for its whereabouts and not one of them at first thought could tell you anything of the Kings Head, but ask for John the Weaver's and the youngest child could tell you'.

The Kings Head and the Picton (next to Llanblethian church) held a yearly contest to ascertain who had the best tap, particularly at the Mabsant (dancing festival) which was held after the St Mary Hill Fair on August 26<sup>th</sup>, when an extra bushel of malt would be added to the ale. According to David Jones of Wallington. 'the Welshman is a dancing animal', and a riotous evening ensued.

1858 John Thomas, landlord of the Kings Head, charged with keeping illegal hours. *Bridgend Chronicle*

1861 James Kitt, 30, carpenter and innkeeper, b Pinhoe, Devon, with wife Ann, 34, b Llanblethian, son John, 5, and father in law John Thomas, 82, woollen weaver b Neath *Census 36*

1865 John Thomas, victualler owned and occupied. He had 3 daughters Ann, Sarah and Catherine *Deeds*

1866, 24<sup>th</sup> November John Thomas died intestate. James and Ann Kitt (formerly Ann Thomas) took over the property without reference to the other 2 sisters. Legal wrangling ensued. *Deeds*

1868/1871 James Kitt, Kings Head *Slaters/Kellys directories*

1871 James Kitt, 41, carpenter, with wife Ann, 43 and son John, 16, carpenter  
*Census 47*

1874 Marriage of John Bradford Kitt, 18, carpenter of Llanblethian, son of James Kitt, carpenter, to Mary Howsell, 19, of Llanblethian, daughter of Alfred Howsell, postboy.  
*Llanblethian parish records*

1880, 7<sup>th</sup> May David Jones of Wallington, in his diary, stated 'John the Weaver's old house all in ruins, and grass growing over the stones' – perhaps something of an over-statement, because the *1881 census* records the Kitts still living there.

1881 James Kitt, 51, carpenter, with wife Ann, 56  
*Census 52*

1881 Indenture between James and Ann Kitt of Llanblethian, Sarah Rogers of Briton Ferry, Morgan and Catherine Cox of Aberavon, and Thomas Jones of Llanblethian, rural postman

*A local newspaper article* around this time reported a summons by Thomas Jones against James Kitt, carpenter, of Llanharry for 'wilful damage to windows'. JK said the windows were broken but they were his own. TJ said he was building a house at Llanblethian, and 'at 12 o' clock last Friday he was called up, as JK was breaking his windows.... The damage was 11 shillings. George Hayward said he was at his house at Llanblethian, which was about 40 yards from the new building. James Williams knocked at his door on Friday night and said someone was breaking the windows at the new building....saw him pick up a stone.....two windows and a fanlight broken. JK said he did not deny breaking the windows.....he seemed to be staggering. JK said 'this aspirant Jones, I don't know what you would call him... he has pulled down my house during my temporary absence in Devonshire, and on my return I found another building on it. I have paid more than the value of the house to him, and why does he not show that he is the proper owner instead of summoning me here. He then produced documents for the inspection of the Bench to show his claim'. Jones said he owned the house through his father; he had been brought up in Llanblethian by his grandmother. James Kitt asked who was his grandmother....the Bench considered it a case of ownership and dismissed the case. TJ to appeal against the decision.

The new house, in typically solid late-Victorian style, was erected on the site during the 1880s, and in 1889 Thomas Jones sold the property to 'David Williams of Aberthin gent.'

(John Thomas of Llanblethian (father of Ann, Sarah and Catherine above), victualler, died 24<sup>th</sup> November 1866 intestate. James and Ann Kitt took over the property without reference to Sarah and Catherine, selling it to Thomas Jones, rural postman).  
*Deeds*

1884 Death of John Jones, son of Thomas and Elizabeth Jones of Belgrave House, aged five and a half years.

1889 Thomas Jones sold to David Williams of Aberthin, gentleman for £322.10s.  
Adjoining owners. *Deeds*

1891 The eastern triangular part of the garden was purchased from GW Nicholl of  
Llanblethian House *Deeds*

1891 Belgrave House - Elizabeth Williams, 72, (widow of David Williams) on own  
means, b Llantrithyd, with nephew Henry, 16, general labourer, b Cardiff, and Emily  
Hubbard, 18, general servant, b Streatham, London *Census 22*  
(James Kitt, aged 15, son of John Bradford Kitt, the grandson of James and Ann Kitt,  
was an apprentice carpenter, apprenticed to Morgan Cox, carpenter of St. Hilary in  
another census of this date).

1891 Mrs Williams, Belgrave, private resident *Kelly*

1891 Invoice from William Treseder, nurseryman, Cardiff – Mrs Williams ordering 5  
lilacs and 2 arucarias, i.e. monkey puzzle trees (*chs05659*)

1893, July Eliza Williams died from injuries sustained when thrown out of her carriage;  
an inquest was held in Great House, Llanblethian.

In an extract from 'Llanblethian in 1895' by the late alderman Robert Thomas, Belgrave  
was quoted as being 'a nice house built of stressed stone. The builder was Tom Jones  
who discovered later that he could not find any deeds. The tenant at this period was  
William Thomas and wife. He was a carrier of goods from the railway at Cowbridge.  
They had three sons – Herb, Gwyn and Charley, and two daughters, Cissie and Dulcie'.

1893 Belgrave House to let *Western Mail*

1898 Thomas Williams, mason, sold to Edward Llewellyn of Wenvoe, carpenter (the  
property was mortgaged to John Hopkins of Pentwyn House, builder and  
sculptor).  
The conveyance says it was in the occupation of John Williams John. *Deeds*

1906 – 14 Mrs Llewellyn, Belgrave, private resident *Kelly*

1918 Mrs Eva Mary Jones of Belgrave *Western Mail*

1920 – 26 Mrs Jones, Belgrave, private resident *Kelly*

1925 Edward Llewellyn, of Windsor House, Llanblethian, builder, sold to Mrs E.L.A  
Morgan of Iltyd House, Wenvoe (daughter of Edward Llewellyn).  
The house was occupied by Mrs Eva Mary Jones. *Deeds*

1927 Mrs E L A Morgan sold to Mr David John of Tynycae, Llandow (occupied by  
Eva Mary Jones). *Deeds*

*Sources/references :*

*GRO = Glamorgan Record Office*

*Kelly, Webster, Slater = trade directories, held in the GRO*