

Stallcourt, Llanblethian

Initially a Caercady estate property

Stallcourt House as it stands today was built in the late-nineteenth century by WA James of Cowbridge, who built several substantial houses in and around the town, all of stressed stone. These included *St Crispin* and *The Shield* in Eastgate, and *Stafford House* in Westgate, where James himself resided. *Stallcourt* has changed little in appearance since its construction. It is square in shape, and consists of four large square rooms downstairs, of identical measurement, leading from either side of a corridor.

The house was constructed close to the original site of *Stallcourt Farm* which was initially part of the Caercady Estate. *Caercady House* near Welsh St Donats was the home of the Jenkins and Thomas families, and so we see various Jenkinsons and Thomases among the owners of *Stallcourt*, until its sale to John Homfray of the Penllyn estate in 1879. It remained a Penllyn property until the 1960s.

In 1792, the farm was occupied by Thomas James, yeoman, who leased it from Lewis Jenkins. James died in that year, and left the property to his wife Mary; she soon married a widower of some substance, Rees Adam, who hailed from Llanharry. Adam extended the size of his farm by renting other lands in Llanblethian, but died in 1815, after falling from his horse near Cowbridge Town Mill.

A second sad occurrence linked to the mill was the death in 1823 of Twm Thomas, a butcher who then lived in *Stallcourt*. Being somewhat under the influence of drink, he stumbled and fell into a watercourse near the mill - from a bridge whose side walls had been destroyed. 'A peaceable and inoffensive man, he lost his life due to the inefficiency of the parish officers...' said David Jones.

At least between 1840 and 1861, Richard Griffiths was the occupant of the farm. In the 1851 census, he is recorded as having been born in Cadoxton, Neath, was aged 54, and was married to 58-year-old Mary, born in Llanblethian. Richard farmed 63 acres, with the assistance of two labourers. Also in the house was their general servant, Matthew Harry, aged 17, from Pyle, and two lodgers, boys from Aberdare - Gwilym and Gomer Williams. Mary died in 1852, and Richard's second wife in 1858. In 1861, Richard lived with his son Richard, aged 7, and a housekeeper. Sadly, young Richard died soon after enumeration day; his father died in 1867.

In the 1871 Census *Stallcourt* was in the occupancy of Thomas Richards, a farmer and widower aged 40, who farmed 92 acres and who with his wife Elizabeth had moved to *Stallcourt* from a cottage next to the *General Picton Inn*. Two general servants - Ellen George, unmarried, aged 18 from Cardiff and William Rees, unmarried aged 19 from Llanblethian - were employed to help him with his young family of two sons and two daughters.

Henry Jones, farmer, was resident at *Stallcourt* in 1881. He was aged 42 and farmed 52 acres. He came from Llysworney; his wife, Elizabeth, was also 42 years of age and was born in Llanblethian. They employed an unmarried servant, Mary Ann Edmund, as a general domestic - she, too, was born in Llanblethian. There were three lodgers at the house, the Revd Owen Bowen, aged 38, Curate of Llanblethian, who came from Myddfai, Edward Henry Boyle, unmarried aged 33, a Tutor-Teacher from Norfolk and Robert Leonard, aged 16 and a scholar born in Clifton, Bristol.

In 1885 the farm was occupied by David Thomas who was the subject of a great tragedy when he was brutally murdered on Llanblethian Hill in 1885, aged 48 years. David Thomas had left South Wales in his twenties together with his brother. They went to seek their fortune in America. The brothers succeeded in making money and David returned to the Cowbridge area and settled at *Stallcourt*. He was renowned as a shrewd cattle dealer and generally esteemed in the district as "of genial, good tempered bearing". On the night of 30 October, after celebrating a

successful day's sales with a drink or two in the *Duke of Wellington* in Cowbridge, he was waylaid on his way home up Llanblethian Hill, killed with a billhook and robbed of his money (£66) . The murderer was David Roberts, aged 28 years, a former soldier who lived with his father, Edward, in a small cottage in Piccadilly. The money was found hidden in the cottage; Roberts was found guilty of the murder and hanged at Cardiff Prison on 2 March 1886. David Thomas left a wife and four children.

Anna, David's widow, remained at *Stallcourt*. In the 1891 Census, she was recorded as being 46 years of age, from Pembrokeshire. She had three children living with her - Jane, 18 years of age born at Llysworney; Thomas, aged 14, scholar, and Mary Elizabeth, aged 11, both born at Llantrissant. Revd Thomas Cynon Davies, a Clerk in Holy Orders from Llandysul, Cards, also resided at the house. The residential domestic servant was Mary Ann Samuel, aged 31, from Penllyn. Anna ran the farm with some help from Thurston Bassett of Crossways, and from her son-in-law, Fred Williams, who was very involved in the horse-racing world, and bought hunters for the Glamorgan Hunt. He took over *The Bear* hotel in Cowbridge in 1926..

Thomas Thomas , the son, returned from farming in Red Farm, Penllyn to take over the tenancy of Stallcourt in 1916, and farmed here until 1926. It is now a private house.

From 'Llanblethian Buildings and People' 2001

1778, 1801 and 1820	Lewis Jenkins (all described 'formerly of Lewis Richard and late Richard Lewis')	<i>Bute R6/17-19</i>
1792	Will of Thomas James, yeoman – bequeaths to wife Mary James 'my leasehold estate called Stallcourt held by me under Lewis Jenkins Esq.'	
1804-9	Lewis Jenkins o, Rees Adam occ. 8/-	<i>LTA</i>
1809	Lewis Jenkins, late of Caercady, devised all his estate to use of Mary Ann Jones for the rest of her life, and then to her sons	<i>GRO D/D WP Box 5, Bundle 25A</i>
1815	Death of Rees Adam, born Llanharry 1750, thrown from horse nr Town Mill. He married (2) Mary James widow of Stallcourt 'The Adams family': Edna Adams, Cowbridge	
1820	Mary Ann Jones married John Thomas of Cowbridge, surgeon	<i>D/D WP op cit</i>
1821 <i>LTA</i>	Late Lewis Jenkins owned, William Lewis occ 8/-	
1823	Thomas Thomas, Twm, butcher - 'August....body of Thos. Thomas, Twm, of Stall Court, butcher, found drowned close to bridge over waste water running near to Cowbridge mill. Intoxicated. Side walls of bridge were almost entirely destroyed. He appears to have fallen over. Peaceable and inoffensive man - lost his life due to negligence of the parish officers who suggested the bridge on a public road was to be without side walls. Water did not cover his	

	body - was shallow.'	WAH Fisher
1827	Joseph Thomas died	<i>Llb. Church memorials</i>
1830	Mr L Lewis prop. Dr Davies occ. 8/-	<i>LTA</i>
1831	Late Lewis Jenkin prop. Mr L Lewis occ. 8/-	<i>LTA</i>
1840	John Thomas o, Richard Griffiths occ.	<i>Tithe#175</i>
1851	Richard Griffiths, farmer of 63 acres, 54, b Cadoxton, Neath, with wife Mary, 38, 2 scholar lodgers aged 12 and 9, and a servant	<i>Census#10</i>
1852	Richard Griffiths occupied; Mrs Thomas Lewis owned	<i>Llb rates R13 2/5</i>
1852	Mary, daughter of Joseph and Mary Thomas, died at the Stallcourt	<i>Llb parish records</i>
1854	Baptism of child born to Richard and Sarah Griffiths of Stallcourt	"
1858	Sarah, wife of Richd. Griffiths, died at the Stallcourt	" "
1861	Richard, son of Richd Griffiths, died there aged 7 yrs.	"
1861	Richard Griffiths, farmer of 24 acres, widower, 63, b Neath, with son Richard, 7, b Llanstephan	<i>Census#12</i>
1866	Marriage of George Boyd Powell, pensioner from the 60 th Rifles, of Llanblethian, son of George Powell, domestic servant, to Rachel Elizabeth Blethyn of Stallcourt, daughter of William Blethyn, draper	<i>Llb parish records</i>
1867	Death of Richard Griffiths	<i>Llb parish records</i>
1867	Sarah, daughter of George and Rachel Powell, born at the Stallcourt. (Died 1901)	<i>Llb. parish recds.</i>
1869	Thomas Richards, Stallcourt and old farm	<i>Reg. of electors</i>
1869	Death of Catherine Richards, Stallcourt, aged 37	<i>Llb parish records</i>
1870	Death of Elizabeth Richards, Stallcourt, aged 2	<i>Llb parish records</i>
1871	Thos. Richards, widower, 40, farmer of 92 acres, b Llb., + sons Llewellyn and Thomas (11 and 18 mths), + daughters Ann and Jane (9 and 7) + 2 servants, Ellen George and William Rees	<i>Census#14</i>

- 1874 Thomas Richards occupied; Mrs MA Thomas owned, Stallcourt (plus 86
acres) *Glam. County Rate 10*
- 1877 Thos. Richards occupier *Sale documents of Caercady estate*
- 1877 Caercady estate sale *Fo LB61. 658.82*
- 1879 Conveyance, trustees of late John Jenkin Thomas of Caercady to John R
Homfray (Penllyn Estate); Nos 172 and 174-6 of Tithe map
D/D WP op cit
- 1880 John Morgan, farmer *Slater's*
1880 O B Price of Stallcourt *Western Mail*
- 1881 Henry Jones, farmer of 52 acres, b Llysworney + wife Elizabeth + servant
Mary Ann Edmund,
+ 3 lodgers (Rev Owen Price, curate of Llb, Edward Henry Boyle, teacher and
Robert Leonard scholar) *Census#12*
- 1882 Sale of Stallcourt - ? not the house *Western Mail*
- 1884 David Thomas, farmer *Kelly's*
- 1884 Correspondence re William, David and Thomas Thomas in USA
D/D X 731/3
- 1885 Murder of David Thomas
- 1891 Anna Thomas, 46, farmer b Pembrokeshire + daughters Jane and Mary
Elizabeth (18 and 11), son Simon (14), boarder (Rev Thos. Cynon Davies) and servant Mary
Ann Samuel *Census#54*
- 1895,1912 and 1914 Mrs Anna Thomas, farmer, Stallcourt Farm *Kelly's*
- 1914 Death at Stallcourt of David Webb, aged 95 *Llb parish recds.*
- 1918 Thomas Thomas, formerly of Red Farm, Penlline *Bute 1519 p284*
- 1926 Thomas Thomas, farmer *Kelly's*
- 1950s There was a wooden bungalow next to Stallcourt where Jim Morgan's mother lived.
Memories of residents of Longmeadow Court

Sources/references :

GRO = Glamorgan Record Office, where most of these documents, like Llanblethian rates, Kelly's & Slater's trade directories are held

Bute papers = in GRO or National Library, Aberystwyth

LTA = land tax assessments in GRO

WAH Fisher notes = in Cardiff Central Library

D/D = deeds in GRO