

DAVIES



Mr J Alden
1 Mill Park
Cowbridge
CF71 7BG

11 November 2003

Dear Mr Alden

I am writing to you following your letter in the GFHS September magazine. I started researching my family history about 18 months ago and have traced some of my ancestors to Cowbridge and Llanblethian area. I have visited the churchyard at Llanblethian to see some family graves.

I enclose a potted history of my family ties in the area and wonder if you were able to answer any of my queries below or had any information that may be of interest to me.

On one grave and on some of the census sheets for the Davies Family it gives the dwelling as 'The Farm' in the Parish of Llanblethian. I am sure that there must have been many farms in the area, so was this a generic name or would this have been one particular farm. (1851 70 acres, 1861 80 acres). I don't know obviously if this is the same farm.

Do you know if the Commercial Hotel still stands as a building or if there are any archives which may have pictures of it that I may be able to obtain?

I was also wondering if you were able to explain the confusion I have between East Village and East House. Are they one and the same and again does the building still stand?

I also have a photograph of a family member taken by the S Hayter Studio 'near the Station, Cowbridge. It is possibly of my Grandmother, who was born and lived in Pontypridd but whom my Father says spent many holidays in Cowbridge as a young girl. I presume that this photographic studio no longer exists but wondered if the contents had been saved or archived anywhere.

I would be grateful if you could give any assistance regarding my ancestors in the Cowbridge and Llanblethian area or point me in the direction of where I might find further information.

I enclose a stamped addressed envelope and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Nicholas', written in a cursive style.

Helen Nicholas

DAVIES FAMILY

I believe that my great, great, great grandfather and his wife are buried in the parish church of St Blethian, namely David Davies, of The Farm who died on 12 August 1843 aged 55 years and his wife, Ann(e) Davies who died 1881. I do know that my GGG grandparents were called David and Ann(e) Davies and they certainly did live in Llanblethian for part of their lives but I have yet to verify that this is their grave.

Of the children I know about, they had three daughters Ann, Mary and Jane who were born in Llansannor according to the 1851 and 1881 census, a son David Howell (my GG Grandfather) born in Carleon, and the two born in Llanblethian were Ebenezer and Elizabeth. In the 1841 census for Glamorgan I can find no record of the family at all. In the 1851 census my GGG Grandmother Ann(e) and her daughters Ann, Mary, Jane, Elizabeth and son Ebenezer are in Llanblethian at The Farm. My GG Grandfather David Howell Davies was married by 1851 and was a farmer in Ystradowen and remained there until his death as a farmer and innkeeper at the White Lion Inn, Ystradowen.

The 1861 census shows Ebenezer and his sisters, Ann, Jane and Elizabeth still at 'The Farm' in Llanblethian, all unmarried.

Ebenezer married Jane Nicholas (born in Cowbridge 28 Feb 1845) on 20 July 1876. She was the daughter of Thomas Nicholas Timber Merchant and Builder born in Llanblethian and his wife Mary Nicholas. They had three children Jane Ann (b 13.12.1876, David Bevan (b 24.9.1878) and Mary (b 1.1.1880), all born in Cowbridge. Their address on the 1881 and 1901 census is East Village, Cowbridge.

Both Ebenezer and Jane are buried in the parish Church of St Blethian, Llanblethian. On their death certificates their place or residence is shown as East House, Cowbridge. I have not yet managed to establish what happened to their children. David Bevan Davies was in London in 1901 where his profession is given as a bank clerk. Their daughters Jane Anne (Annie) and Mary (May) are not married in 1901 and Mary is present at the death of her mother in 1924 as Mary Davies, presumably still unmarried.

Ebenezer's nephew (my GG Uncle) was a hotelkeeper of the Commercial Hotel in Cowbridge and died there at the age of 33 11 August 1881. He married Lydia Elizabeth Richards on 7 April 1875 at the Parish Church of Cowbridge. Lydia was born in Llanblethian to Silas and Elizabeth Richards in 1851. I believe Elizabeth Richards to be buried in Llanblethian Church.

Ann(ie) Davies, Daughter of David Howell Davies and niece of Ebenezer Davies, married David Harman who was born in Cowbridge. His parents were John and Ann Harman. John Harman was blacksmith. I am unable to find the family on the 1841 census for Glamorgan but by 1851 Ann Harman (David Harman's Mother) is living in West Village, Cowbridge and is shown as a blacksmith's widow. By 1881 David Harman, a solicitors Clerk General is living in High St, Cowbridge with his Mother and sister, Susanna Harman, unmarried and a Milliner and Dressmaker. David's wife, Ann(ie) Harman (my GG Aunt) is living at this time with her Father David H Davies at the White Lion Inn, Ystradowen.

David and Ann(ie) Harman had two children, only one of whom survived – Annie Beatrice Harman. She was born in Ystradowen but her father's address on the birth certificate is given as Cowbridge. Annie Beatrice married David John, son of farmer David John, of Trehyngyll, Llanblethian on 7 March 1889. Looking at the birth certificate of their first child it seems as though Annie Beatrice was already pregnant

when she was married, which I understand was not uncommon amongst the farming community and was possibly why they married out of the family village but at the congregational church in Bridgend. By 1901 their address is Tyn Y Caia Farm, Llandow and they have four children Thomas John, Holford John David John and Miriam John.

That is as far as I have got with this part of the family!

19 November 2003

Dear Helen,

Thank you for your interesting letter - which has given me some bits of information, too.

First, to answer your questions:

1. 'The Farm' is Llanblethian Farm, which was situated nearly opposite Great House in Llanblethian. Today only the walls of a few outbuildings remain, incorporated into some of the 4 houses erected on the site. A good locating photograph appears in *Llanblethian Buildings and People*.
2. The Commercial is no longer a pub, but has been converted into apartments, and is now named Eastgate Mews, I believe. It stands on the corner of Eastgate and Croft Terrace. A photo of the pub in 1906 is in *Old Inns and Alehouses of Cowbridge*.
3. Eastgate is the name of the street running east from the High street in the centre of the town as far as the traffic lights. East Village is the name which used to be given to the eastern part of Cowbridge, including Eastgate, Cardiff Road, &c .
East House is rather more prosaically 18 Eastgate, a fine double fronted listed building, with an early 19th century facade concealing a 16th century core. There are two castellated bays, and Georgian windows.
4. Sam Hayter's studio no longer exists, though the building - 50 High Street, upstairs - does. There is no archive.

Now a bit more detail on your people:

1. David Davies was at the farm in 1829. The property belonged to a wealthy local gentry family, the Carnes. Their papers record previous tenants being given notice to quit in 1820, and as far as I know, the next recorded tenant is David Davies. He was certainly there in the Tithe map of 1840. The 1841 census for Cowbridge and Llanblethian no longer exists - but they almost certainly were at the Farm in Llanblethian.
2. In 1891, Ebenezer Davies was the census enumerator, with terrible writing, for Llanblethian, though he was then living in Cowbridge
2. Thomas Nicholas occupied 72-74 Eastgate (today's Cowbridge Bookshop and Oops a Daisy) between 1849 and about 1857. He was married for the second time in April 1844 - to Mary Hopkin, spr, dressmaker, dau of William Hopkin of Cowbridge.
3. Jane Nicholas is recorded in 1874 as owning but not occupying some property in Eastgate, including East House. I don't know when she moved in with her new husband, but she was at East House in 1881 and still there in 1912 (and obviously till her death).
4. Wm H Davies was at the Commercial in 1880. Silas Richards was the previous landlord of the pub, and was the son of the schoolmaster at Penllyn. Lydia re-married and continued at the Commercial after William's death.

Cowbridge Record Society

1 Mill Park Cowbridge CF71 7BG

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5. Ann Harman is herself listed as a blacksmith in trade directories long after her husband's death. She lived at 77 High Street (Llwyncelyn) - sketch of the house in *Cowbridge Buildings and People*. This house was conveyed in 1862 to Edward Harman of Merthyr Tydfil. From this time the house was called Tydfil. By 1903, Jane Harman was the owner, though also in 1903 it was David who conveyed the cottage at the back of the property.

With a lot of searching, I could possibly dig out a few more bits and pieces - I don't know how useful this has been to you. Members of the family are mentioned in three of our books: in case these are of interest I include an information sheet.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Alden
Editor &c