



"COWBRIDGE, an expanding market, is one of the finest in the whole of South Wales for top quality fatstock."



Auctioneers at Cowbridge Market: Mr. Robert L. Morgan, Mr. Robert Thomas and Mr. David Watts.

# A thriving mart serves the Vale

**A**PART from its claim to be one of the finest marts in South Wales, for top quality beef from the rich pastures of the Vale of Glamorgan, Cowbridge market is a really friendly place to visit, in the heart of the tiny borough.

Farmers and butchers meet regularly each Monday when a brisk trade starts at an early hour with big deals finally being completed verbally.

By  
**Chris  
Yorath**

So matter of fact and friendly, yet thousands of pounds worth of superb fat cattle—mainly cross Hereford—are changing hands under the expert auctioneering of the two firms of Messrs. Herbert R. Thomas, Son and Edwards, and Messrs John David, Watts and Morgan.

When I visited this week's market on Monday the first thing that struck me was the number of huge transport lorries bringing in 120 fat cattle (and they certainly were fat), over 400 lambs and 150 porkers from all parts of South Wales.

## Pressure

The precincts of this famous old market were a hive of activity with everyone, from farmer to butcher to drover performing his duty to the full. There was barely time to talk, as the animals were duly penned and listed.

When everything was ready, however, the farmers had time to relax and indulge in friendly conversation over a cup of tea from a mobile canteen or a glass of ale at the Olde Mason's Arms which adjoins the market premises.

I soon formed the impression that these men of the soil get on with the job and have no time for argument and petty squabbling. British farmers did a magnificent job during the war years. They are still doing their utmost to supply the British public with the best quality beef, lamb, pork and veal.

Last year, auctioneer Mr. Herbert R. Thomas, a genial figure among the agricultural

fraternity of the Vale of Glamorgan, was unable to attend the particular weekly mart I visited through ill-health.

On Monday last however, he was looking as fit as ever, full of energy and always "in the thick of it," directing operations with an experienced and masterly touch.

Mr. Thomas is secretary of the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Society (the famous Cowbridge Show at Penllyn Park each August) and has been connected with Cowbridge market for over 40 years.

He told me: "I think that without any exaggeration Cowbridge market is one of the finest in South Wales for top quality fat stock. Entries are well-maintained, with an average of over 100 fat cattle each week.

"Owing to the very severe spring though, lambs are slower coming forward and the weekly figure of between 400 and 500 is slightly below normal."

## Increasing

The number will undoubtedly increase in the near future. One advantage at Cowbridge is that stock is available to the butchers, for immediate slaughter."

I learnt that the auctioneers have under consideration an expansion to the present sheep section, which will be an important addition to the existing premises.

Early business was conducted by Mr. Herbert Thomas's son, Mr. Robert Thomas, in the calf section

and by Mr. W. Haydn Lewis in the pig section, while veteran auctioneer, Mr. David Watts, was carrying out his duties as consultant and adviser to Messrs John David, Watts and Morgan. Mr. Watts has been a familiar figure at Cowbridge mart for 60 years.

A former Mayor of Cowbridge, Mr. Watts told me: "For me, it is a real pleasure to visit Cowbridge market each Monday, and chat with many old friends. I would not miss it for anything."

Two leading Glamorgan farmers who have a big hand in the affairs of the fat cattle section are Mr. Vincent Thomas, who runs the 500 acre Coldbrook Farm at Cadoxton, and Mr. Harry Thomas of Beechcourt, Cowbridge. Mr. Harry Thomas, son of the late Mr. Thomas Thomas, is one of the biggest dealers in livestock in South Wales.

Last year he was president of the Bridgend Christmas Fatstock Show, and in another sphere is a former captain and president of the Bridgend Rugby Football Club.

## Good prospects

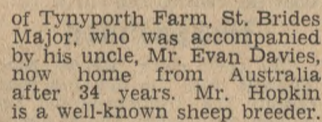
Another regular and important visitor to Cowbridge mart is Mr. Vivian Thomas of Pancross Farm, Llancaiach. I well remember Mr. Thomas telling me last year of his herd of 70 Friesians, 150 cattle, and a flock of 5,000 head of poultry.

Talking over business prospects were Mr. I. H. Radcliffe of Church Farm, Ystradowen, who has been a regular visitor to Cowbridge for over 40 years and Mr. D. A. Thomas, of Old Wallace Farm, Duffryn, St. Nicholas, both farmers of repute in the Vale.

Other notable agriculturists in the busy throng among the pens, were Mr. Glyn Thomas, of Clawddymynach Farm Monknash, Mr. Elwyn Howells of Sealand Farm Wick and Mr. Mansel Hopkin,



Mr. Herbert R. Thomas, auctioneer at Cowbridge, and Mr. J. C. Todd.



Mr. Harry Thomas, Cowbridge farmer.

Personalities at the market



The sale of fine quality lambs in progress at Cowbridge and (right) head drover Mr. Ivor Langdon shows his skill with a difficult animal.

Where a half century of farming is recalled

WHEN you walk into an ancient and historic market, and talk to characters, who have been connected with it for half a century, you get first-hand information, on farming over the years.

It is always interesting to visit Cowbridge Market and meet the "Sons of the Vale," regarded as the finest farmers in the county.

It was a real pleasure to mingle with them at last week's mart to listen to some hard bargaining and hear many witty remarks between farmer and butcher alike, in a general atmosphere of all-round satisfaction.

Little wonder there was satisfaction because the stock of cattle and lambs filling the pens was second to none in Wales.

Magnificent young beasts arrived from the rich pastures of the Vale to stand under the covetous eyes of butchers from Cardiff, Barry, Pontypridd and Bridgend.

Methods

At an early hour large transport lorries rumbled into the mart from all parts, quite unlike the old days when animals were driven along country lanes to eventually swarm through the narrow streets.

Sound methods are applied at Cowbridge, where the weekly sales are conducted by the two well-known auctioneering firms of Messrs. Herbert R. Thomas, Son and Edwards and Messrs. John David, Watts and Morgan.

It was unfortunate that Mr.

Herbert Thomas was unable to attend this particular sale, although everything was well under control in the capable hands of his son Robert and the third member of the firm, Mr. Collwyn Edwards.

From Messrs. John David, Watts and Morgan were the experienced auctioneers, Mr. Robert L. Morgan, Mr. Morgan Joseph and Mr. Haydn Lewis.

Pleasure

All these young auctioneers, who have learnt the business from their elders, are a credit to the agricultural community.

They are extremely popular with everyone associated with the mart and the weekly sales are always conducted in a splendid, happy-go-lucky atmosphere.

Undoubtedly the "Daddy of them All" is veteran auctioneer, Mr. David Watts, who has been connected with Cowbridge Market since 1903.

Although unofficially retired, Mr. Watts still takes an active interest in the sales, and more or less, works in the capacity of "Consultant and adviser."

Cowbridge personality, and a former Mayor of the borough, Mr. Watts is probably the most well-known auctioneer in Glamorgan, and certainly one of the most popular. He told me, "I always enjoy meeting old friends at the mart, and helping in any little way I can. There is something about Cowbridge Market which gives you a feeling of pride and pleasure."

Mingling with the farmers.

By CHRIS YORATH

I had an interesting chat with Mr. Vivian Thomas, who runs 650 acre Pancross Farm, Llancarfan, in partnership with his son, Anthony. Mr. Thomas owns a pure-bred herd of 70 Friesians, 150 beef cattle, and has a flock of over 5,000 head of poultry. This year, he has about 220 acres of grain.

Mr. Thomas has been farming Pancross, in the heart of the Vale, since 1935. At his fine, old farmhouse, he has entertained, among others, a group of Russian delegates, African tribal chiefs, and most recently, a party of Italian journalists.

All the distinguished visitors have been greatly impressed with his fine, modern buildings and appliances.

Regular

Mr. Thomas said, "I can remember Cowbridge Mart from the old days, and we are naturally greatly attached to it. It is well situated, and serves the entire Vale of Glamorgan admirably."

Mr. Thomas has other brothers in the farming fraternity, like Mr. Glyn Thomas, of Clawddmynach Farm, Monkash, Mr. Reg Thomas, of Park Farm, Bridgend, and Mr. David Thomas, all well-known agriculturalists.

With Mr. Vivian Thomas was Mr. Vincent Thomas, who controls 500 acre Coldbrook Farm, Barry. Mr. Vincent Thomas is a very big breeder of fatstock, owning about 350 cattle and several hundred breeding ewes.

Examining fat lambs was Mr. Jenkin Rees, of Tynywaun Farm, Newton, Cowbridge, a breeder of Hereford and Friesian cattle and cross-bred ewes.

Biggest

He is a regular visitor to Cowbridge Mart, together with Mr. Tom Rees, of Newton House Farm, Cowbridge, who has been farming since 1916, and has now handed over the reins to his nephew, Mr. Gwyn Rees.

Mr. W. A. Durbin, who has been farming Caeau Farm, Maendy, for the past five years, said, "My farm is only two miles away, and I find Cowbridge a very convenient mart."

Mr. Harry Thomas of Beechcourt Farm, Cowbridge, is probably the most well-known farmer in the Vale of Glamorgan. Son of the late Mr. Thomas Thomas, he is a familiar figure in markets throughout the county, and at various agricultural shows. He is also one of the big-

gest dealers in livestock in South Wales. He is this year's president of the Bridgend Christmas Fatstock Show, and in the sporting world is a former captain and president of the Bridgend Rugby Football Club.

A familiar figure each week is Mr. Mervyn Morgan, Secretary of the Cardiff and Cowbridge branches of the National Farmers' Union. By his appointment in 1918, Mr. Morgan is now the oldest NFU Branch Secretary in England and Wales.

Herbert R. Thomas, Son and Edwards AND Trick, Thomas, Son and Edwards Chartered Auctioneers, Estate Agents and Valuers COWBRIDGE (Tel. 461/2) and Borough Chambers, NEATH (Tel. 637) SALE FIXTURES, 1962

- FRIDAY, JULY 13th: Penheole Farm, Pontypridd. The whole of the Live and Dead Farming Stock for the Executors of the late Mr. J. Biggs.
- MONDAY, JULY 16th: The most productive freehold dairy farm known as Llywngoleu Farm, Gelligaer, at The Tylers Arms, Nelson, at 3.0 p.m.
- WEDNESDAY, JULY 25th: The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, at 7.0 p.m. Building Plots at Aberthin and the premises formerly known as Wesley Methodist Chapel, Cowbridge.
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 3rd: Neath. 200 Store Cattle and 600 Store Lambs.
- SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th: Rhosamman. 1,000 Store Lambs and 75 Store Cattle.
- SATURDAY, AUGUST 11th: Penycae. 1,250 Store Lambs and 80 Store Cattle.
- THURSDAY, AUGUST 16th: Cowbridge Market. Sale of Engineering Equipment.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st: Penderyn. 2,000 Store Lambs and 80 Store Cattle.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th: Rhigos. 1,500 Store Lambs and 40 Store Cattle.
- THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th: Neath Cattle and Horse Fair. 250 Store Cattle.
- FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th: Llywngoleu Farm, Gelligaer. The grand herd of Friesian Cows and Implements for Mr. D. L. Evans.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th: Abergwelech Farm, Glynneath. Clear out sale of live and dead farming stock for Mrs. McCarty.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th: Cowbridge September Fair. 250 Rams, 500 Breeding Ewes and Lambs, with Messrs. John David, Watts and Morgan.
- THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th: Castellau Fawr, Llantrisant. The valuable Live and Dead Farming Stock for Mr. Leo Edwards.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd: Penderyn. 2,000 Store Lambs, Ewes, Rams and 80 Store Cattle.
- MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th: Darren Farm, Cowbridge. The excellent herd of Friesian Dairy cows for Mrs. E. Adams and Son (who are giving up dairying).
- THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th: N.F.U. South Wales Mountain Ewe Sale at Ynysallon Farm, Llantrisant. 3,000 Ewes. With Messrs. John David, Watts and Morgan.
- FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th: Llechwen Farm, Ynysybwl. Valuable Live and Dead Farming Stock for Mr. Wynham Harris (who is giving up Llechwen).
- FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th: Neath Ewe and Ram Sale. 750 Ewes, 120 Rams.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29th: Cowbridge Old Fair. 150 Store Cattle, Ewes, Lambs and Rams.
- SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29th: Rhosamman. 1,000 Ewes, Rams and 100 Store Cattle.
- FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5th: Neath. 200 Store Cattle.
- SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6th: Penycae. 1,500 Ewes, Rams and Lambs, 120 Store Cattle.
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11th: Penderyn. 120 Ponies and 150 Rams.
- SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th: Penderyn. 1,500 Ewes and Lambs and 80 Store Cattle.
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18th: Rhigos. 1,500 Ewes and Lambs and 60 Store Cattle.
- FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19th: Tytomaen Farm, Llancarfan. The valuable herd of Friesian Dairy Cows and the whole of the live and dead farming stock for Mr. Frank Rowland.
- SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27th: Neath Suckled Calf Sale. 200 Calves.
- FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd: Neath. 180 Store Cattle.
- SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd: Penderyn. 1,250 Sheep and 75 Store Cattle.

Farms, Land, Land suitable for smallholdings and houses for sale. Cowbridge Market every Monday. Neath Market every Wednesday. Please keep this list by you.



Mr. Robert Thomas, auctioneer, inspects a pen of lambs and (below) veteran auctioneer Mr. David Watts and farmer Mr. Harry Thomas, of Beechcourt, Cowbridge.



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