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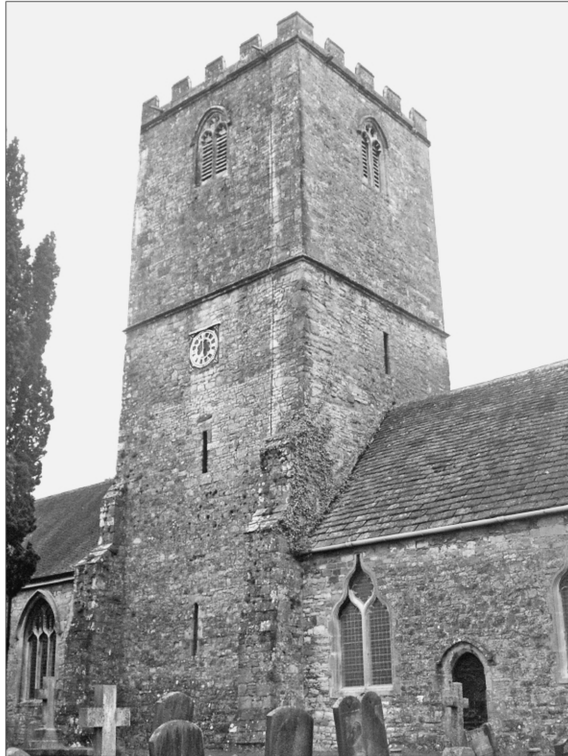

Edited by
ANNETTE M. BURTON

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Email: monmouthshireantiquarian@googlemail.com

Website: Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association
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Front cover: the south and east faces of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008. *See* 'Lacking Inspiration: the incomplete history of the tower of Caldicot parish church', Fig. 5.
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A MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE: LLANELEN, ABERGAVENNY

By Victoria Jackson and Jonathan Kissock

The parish of Llanelen lies approximately two miles south of Abergavenny (*See* Fig. 1a). It stretches from the river Usk on the east side, almost to Blaenavon on the west. Our interest in this area was first stimulated by the presence of a possible early medieval church here.[1] In addition, the documentation for the evolution of the settlement pattern hereabouts is good – and whilst that from the seventeenth century onwards is plentiful, there is some early material too. The place-name evidence (as recorded on the 1832 1 inch: 1 mile OS map) for the evolution and function of the elements that make up the landscape is exceptional. A number of deserted structures offer the potential for a study of the vernacular building tradition of the area too.[2]

The lowland of the parish is laid down to small enclosed fields, whilst the upland is characterised by woodland and unenclosed moorland mixed with more small enclosed fields. The village today is dominated by a large housing estate, but towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century the village had few dwellings, with most of the population inhabiting farmsteads dispersed throughout the parish. Agriculture would have been the dominant economic activity. There is clear evidence for prehistoric activity here; stone cairns, for example *Carn-y-Defaid* and *Carn-y-Big Fach*, are common. Roman coins have been found too. Medieval sites include a possible holy well on the Blorenge and the battle between Peter de Montfort and Gronw ab Ednyfed and the south Wales princes took place there in 1263.

The late medieval and early post-medieval landscape

The tithe map shows that the village of Llanelen stood clustered around a crossroads: *Croes Llanellen* as it was called from at least 1618.[3] Here the main roads from Llanover to Llanfoist and Pontypool to Abergavenny meet. The village is radial in plan without a green and the church, situated on a slight rise and the adjacent Llanelen House are separate from it. The church was rebuilt in the nineteenth century. However, the rebuilding incorporated original medieval features and foundations. The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust claim that parts of the nave, rood stair and porch date to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but that the chancel is 'almost certainly earlier'.[4] The local style of the font may date it to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. As Llanelen was a parish by 1254, it is likely that the church is of at least this date.[5] The *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 reveals that the Benedictine priory of Abergavenny had appropriated the tithes of Llanelen parish; these were valued at £1, an insignificant sum compared to the total value of the priory's

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1 Curiously one of the authors (JAK) had already studied another medieval church by the name of Llanelen; however this lies in northern Gower. *See* Schlesinger, A. and Walls, C. with Kissock, J.A., Lovegrove, C., Pollard, K. and Wright, N., 'An early church and medieval farmstead site: excavations at Llanelen, Gower', *The Archaeological Journal*, 153 (1996) 104–47.

2 Jackson, V., 'A study of the vernacular architecture in the north-eastern part of the parish of Llanelen, Gwent' (forthcoming).

3 Gwent Archives (hereafter GA), D 1210/1513: copy of the Llanelen tithe map, 1848; GA, D 591/21/162: 'messuage called Growe Vawre between the way leading from the place called Croes Llanelen towards Prior's wood', 1618.

4 http://www.cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk/arch/ggat/english/ggat_interface.html (accessed 19 Feb. 2012).

5 Petts, D., *The early medieval church in Wales* (The History Press, Stroud, 2009) 99; http://www.cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk (see fn. 4).

assets of £51 17s. 10½d.[6] The churchyard is curved for about a quarter of its circumference and in places it stands well above the surrounding land. (The original, full boundary cannot be determined; the construction of Llanelen House and park and, more recently, a housing estate has obscured any earlier boundaries.) The form may indicate an earlier date for the church's establishment, as may the dedication.[7] Dedications to Elen are often taken to be references to St Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, although this can never be proven. Alternatives include the north Welsh saint, traditionally of late-fourth century date, Helen of Caernarfon – the wife of Macsen Wledig; she was supposed to have introduced monasticism into Britain.[8] The place-name Cilberis (*cil* = nook or cell; with *beris* derived from St Peris, a north Welsh saint of sixth-century date) may also be a reference to early medieval ecclesiastical activity here.

Abergavenny priory may only have had a small estate of 240 acres and two mills in 1291, yet William Rees's map of fourteenth-century south Wales tentatively suggests that the priory held the whole of Llanelen parish, an area of almost 1,200 hectares (or 3,000 acres).[9] The place name Coed-y-Prior (being used in 1571 and still extant today) points to the more extensive holding and the tithe map and apportionment show that Priory wood was owned by St Mary's priory. Yet the amount of tithe free land – often indicative of monastic ownership – is small.[10] The priory's demesne and lands were granted to William Harbert on 16 May 1538.[11] Other lands were granted to James Gunter in 1546.[12] The mill was let separately by the Crown to Watkin Draper 'for 5s for the rent of one corn mill with all the suit to the said mill pertaining or belonging of old time lying in the parish of Llanellen'.[13] Its site is uncertain. Rees places a water mill on the northern edge of the parish and a stone dam stands there today.[14] Yet there is also a mill inside the southern edge of the parish called Ochram mill – perhaps the 1492 Ogoron's mill, although this was in the adjacent fee of Llanover and Goytre. Other place-names in or near the parish may also suggest sites for mills, such as Tir Philip Melin and Pantey Leison field (= blue fulling mill?)[15]

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6 Cowley, F.G., *The Monastic Order in South Wales 1066–1349* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1977) 276.

7 Evans, E., *Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites in South-east Wales* (Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd., Swansea, 2003) 26–8. Brook's description of the churchyard as polygonal would appear to be the result of a misunderstanding of the OS map. *See* Brook, D.L., 'The early Christian church in Gwent', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 5 (1988) 67–84.

8 Hughes, D., *The British Chronicles: book 1* (Heritage Books, Maryland, 2007) 128, 131 and 134.

9 Rees, W., *South Wales and the Border in the Fourteenth Century* (Ordnance Survey, Southampton, 1933); Cowley, *The Monastic Order in South Wales* … 273.

10 GA, D 1210/1513: copy of Llanelen tithe map, 1848 and D 1210/1514: copy of Llanelen tithe apportionment, 1848.

11 GA, D 1583/79/4: transcription of 'The late Priory of Burgavenny parcel of the possessions of the said late Priory suppressed by authority of Parliament', 1546 (undated, ? early 19th cent.); D 591/21/233: 'Gworlod Ycha, Gworlod Ysha, Croft Bach … by lane leading from Twyn Shenkin towards Twyn-y-Lladron and the Lord's waste', 1678; D 1210/1513: copy of Llanelen tithe map, 1848; D 1210/1514: copy of Llanelen tithe apportionment, 1848; Misc MSS 740: 'Glan Usk Estate', 1760, 15; Bradney, Sir J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1906, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991) 158–60; Bradney, Sir J.A., … *Volume 1 Part 2b The Hundred of Abergavenny Part 2* (reprinted by Academy Books, 1992) 369–77.

12 GA, D 43/359: 'Assign, Cae Manor from Richard Gunter to Walter Morgan', 1649.

13 GA, D 43/3595: 'Lease, two mills … Ogoron is mill and Goytre is mill', 1492.

14 Rees, *South Wales and the Border* … (1933).

15 GA, D 591/6/1242: 'Tir Philip Melin', 1812.

Other field names in the lowland part of the parish suggest uses or associations, for example, Gworlod y Goov recorded in 1497 (= meadow of the smith) and Cae yr Odyn in 1677 (= field of the kiln).[16] A number of field names containing the element *gweirglodd* (= hay meadow), for example Gworlod y Barre (*barre* perhaps from bảer = greedy) and Gwrlod Pen y Cawsai (pen = head or main; *cawsai* = trackway) demonstrate the availability of a large amount of feed for livestock.[17] The hollow ways leading to the upland farms are characterised by an abundance of holly and some farm names contain the element *celyn* (= holly), for example Cwm-celyn and Llwyn Celyn. Holly is easily digested by cattle and holly woods often formed a valuable winter feed for livestock.

In contrast to the lowland, the uplands of the parish consist of unenclosed moorland, woodland and small enclosed fields. At least one of the farms in this area can be dated to the late medieval period; Cwm-Mawr existed in the fifteenth century,[18] although it is quite probable that other farmsteads first recorded in the post-medieval period have an earlier origin.

An earlier landscape?

The evolution of the early medieval landscape is one of the least understood aspects of Welsh history. The period between the end of Roman rule and the Norman conquest is a particularly shadowy one. Attempts have been made in Gwent and elsewhere to identify key sites in and the components which made up the landscape. One of the key units was the multiple, or complex estate. Here it is proposed that traces of one element of one estate – an upland cattle farm or *lloc gwartheg* – can be identified. Similar discoveries have been made in Gower, north Wales and north-west England.[19] Whilst the existence of units of this type is not doubted,[20] this is thought to be the first description of a Gwentian one as a physical entity.

The study of the multiple estates is dominated by the name of G.R.J. Jones who used the north Welsh law codes to attempt to explain the way in which the landscape and its resources were managed.[21] The definition of the multiple estate is relatively straight forward.[22] It comprised a diverse

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[16] GA, D 43/4726: 'Lease, meadow Gworlod Uch Ben Yr Code Llanelen nearing on lands of Lewis Gunter known as Cae-yr-Odyn', 1677; Misc MSS 1740: 'Glan Usk estate', 1760.

[17] GA, D 591/21/12: 'Land called Errowe Vawre', 1571; Misc MSS 1740: D 433/14/7: 'Plan of White House Farm estate and Ogram Mill lands', undated.

[18] GA, 591/21/233 [*see* fn. 11] and http://www.ggat.org.uk/cadw/historic_landscape/blaenavon/english/Blaenavon_016.htm.

[19] Kissock, J.A., 'The upland dimension; further conjectures on early medieval settlement in Gower', *Morgannwg,* 45 (2001) 56–65; Kissock, '*Llanau, llysoedd* and *lociau*: identifying the early medieval landscape of Gower' (forthcoming); Kissock and Anthony, M., 'The early landcapes of Llandewi and Henllys, Gower', *Medieval Settlement Research,* 24 (2009) 71; Aitken, M.A., 'Some settlement patterns in Lancashire' in Hooke, D. (ed.), *Medieval villages: a review of current work* (Oxford University committee for Archaeology, Oxford, 1985) 173–7. Sadly, the impressive documentary evidence for the management of these land use systems in north-western England available to Aitken, for example 'Land use and management in the upland demesne of the de Lacy estate of Blackburnshire, *c*. 1300', *Agricultural History Review ,* 42 (1994) 1–19, has not survived for Gwent.

[20] Longley, D., 'Status and lordship in the early Middle Ages', in Aldhouse-Green, M. and Howell, Ray (eds), Griffiths, Ralph A. (general ed.), *The Gwent County History. Volume 1. Gwent in Prehistory and Early History* (University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2004) 287–316.

[21] The full canon of Jones's work on multiple estates has recently been brought together as Barnwell, P.S. and Roberts, B.K. (eds), *Britons, Saxons and Scandinavians: the historical geography of Glanville R.J. Jones* (Brepols, Turnhout, 2011).

[22] Gregson, N., 'The multiple estate model: some critical questions', *Journal of Historical Geography,* 11 (1985) 346.

range of social classes: kings and princes stood at the apex of the hierarchy and were supported by a mayor or similar official. The remainder of the population were divided into freemen and then into bondmen and slaves (on whom fell most of the onerous burdens of labour service and tribute.) The evidence for the existence of some of these groups may be indirect – for example, the presence of the elite element may take the form of a palace, rather than the identification of a named individual or family. The landscape of the estate would have been diverse – with upland and lowland, pasture, arable land and land suitable for other resources, for example tracts of wood. The whole estate should have been a historical entity – perhaps surviving until relatively recently as a parish or manor. Its history might extend backwards too with evidence for early-medieval, Roman and prehistoric activity. Ideally, each estate was divided into four townships or *trefi*, with twelve of them (ie forty-eight townships) making up a commote. The commotes also contained two extra townships. Both belonged to the king and were the location of his *llys* and his cattle pastures. Here his bondmen would have supervised the grazing of his cattle and performed related labour services. It is proposed that the township where the cattle were grazed can be equated with the *lociau* described below.

The *lloc gwartheg* was probably a form of vaccary. The landscape of this area exhibits features consistent with those that Kissock and Mary Aitken have found elsewhere. These are enclosures that are often oval or sub-circular in shape. They can be measured in terms of hundreds of hectares. Farmsteads tend to be found around the periphery of the enclosures and Jones uses the term 'girdle pattern' to describe this. Running down from the enclosures are stock tracks (or *gyrlwybr*) leading towards the lowland pastures. At the top of the droveways often stand smithies and mills.

The proposed *lloc gwartheg* comprises the lands of Ffrwd wood, Coed-y-Prior, Graig Syddi and Ysgubor Aur which together with the farm of Cefn-y-Coed all form a large oval-shaped block of land; this measures 2.6km north–south and 1km east–west and so has an area of about 260 hectares. (*See* Fig. 1b). On the west this coherent block of land runs gradually upwards from about 200m above sea level to a maximum of 302m on its north-western edge; to the north and east the descent is steeper. At least three, possibly four, trackways run from this block of land out to and beyond its boundaries. All are marked by deep hollow ways often flanked by species-rich hedges and therefore are probably of some antiquity. One runs eastward from the southern end of Coed-y-Prior. Another runs from the same area and follows the line of the Ochram brook towards Cwm Mawr and beyond, running past Pen-y-gawsai to Craig-yr-Hafod at its extreme western end. It has been argued that this trackway was a Roman road.[23] Both run close to Heol y Gof (*gof* = blacksmith) and Garn-gofen (*garn* = enclosure, *gofaint* = smiths). A third trackway runs along the northern edge of the *llociau* towards Ninfa, which lies just outside the parish. Heol-gerrig (= stone road) on the steep eastern flank of the *llociau* could also be a trackway.

A second enclosure may also exist; the *lloc aur,* the arable enclosure. In addition to various tasks associated with the care of the king's herds the bondmen would be expected to grow their own foodstuffs and keep their own animals. Immediately adjacent to the *lloc gwartheg* stands a larger sub-circular block of land. Approximately 1.7km in diameter, it encompasses the lands along the Nant Llanelen and the Ochram brook. In contrast to the *lloc gwartheg* with its single farm this land is divided between numerous small ones. The Pen-y-gawsai track runs through this enclosure to terminate at Craig-yr-hafod (*craig* = rocky or craggy, *hafod* = summer farm.) This may suggest that the bondmen's cattle pastured within the farms of the *lloc aur* or the lord's cattle from the *lloc gwartheg* were being moved out to more distant pastures at certain times of year. Transhumance – the regular, seasonal movement of beasts and their attendant peoples – away from

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[23] Shon, 'The Place Names of Monmouthshire' (unpublished MS, 1924) 214.

the main settlement was an important and widespread practice. It enabled summer pastures to be fully utilised and took the animals away from the arable lands during the crop-growing seasons. Great and Little Hardwick or Herdewyk (= stock farm) on the far bank of the Usk may have been part of a similar system too. Just outside the boundaries of the *lloc* stand the farms of Hendre Glyn (*hendre* = permanent settlement; *glyn* = valley) and Hendre Court; these may have been permanent settlements within a more fluid and flexible set of land use practices. The administrative centre of the estate may have lain some 2km further south, near Llanover, where the farms of Upper Hendre and Hendre Isaf (*isaf* = lower) stand close to Maerdy (*maer* = mayor or steward; *ty* = house.) The lordly focus may have stood at Castell Arnallt, which is thought to have been Seisyll ap Dyfnwal's fortified *llys* in the immediate pre-conquest period.[24] It is proposed that this area once formed part of a pre-Norman land use system within a multiple estate framework.

These sites are often undateable, but Aitken believes that there is a close relationship between them and Roman military settlements; she suggests that the *lociau* may have had their origins as Roman cattle farms. Abergavenny was the site of a Roman fort from AD 60 onwards and Roman coins have been found at Herdwick. If not Roman in origin, the system could still be an early medieval one.

In summary, the core of the village was established at a suitable site on a cross roads near a river crossing. Most of the settlement however consisted of individual farmsteads, possibly of medieval origins, dispersed throughout the parish, but all connected by trackways or roads to the village core. The landscape is characterised by a mixture of arable, pasture and woodland with deep hollow ways indicating a frequent movement of stock over centuries between the upland and lowlands. This marked contrast in topographical composition between the uplands and lowlands reveals a multi-use landscape with arable and meadow on the lowland and rougher pasture on the upland, but with a close symbiotic relationship between the two. At first glance Llanelen parish may seem a rather unassuming area, but investigation reveals an ancient landscape rich in early and later medieval dimensions. It can be suggested that there has been a continuity of occupation and exploitation of the landscape of the parish since perhaps the Roman era.

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24 Phillips, N., *Earthwork Castles of Ergyng A. 1050–1250* (Archeopress, Oxford, 2006) 103.

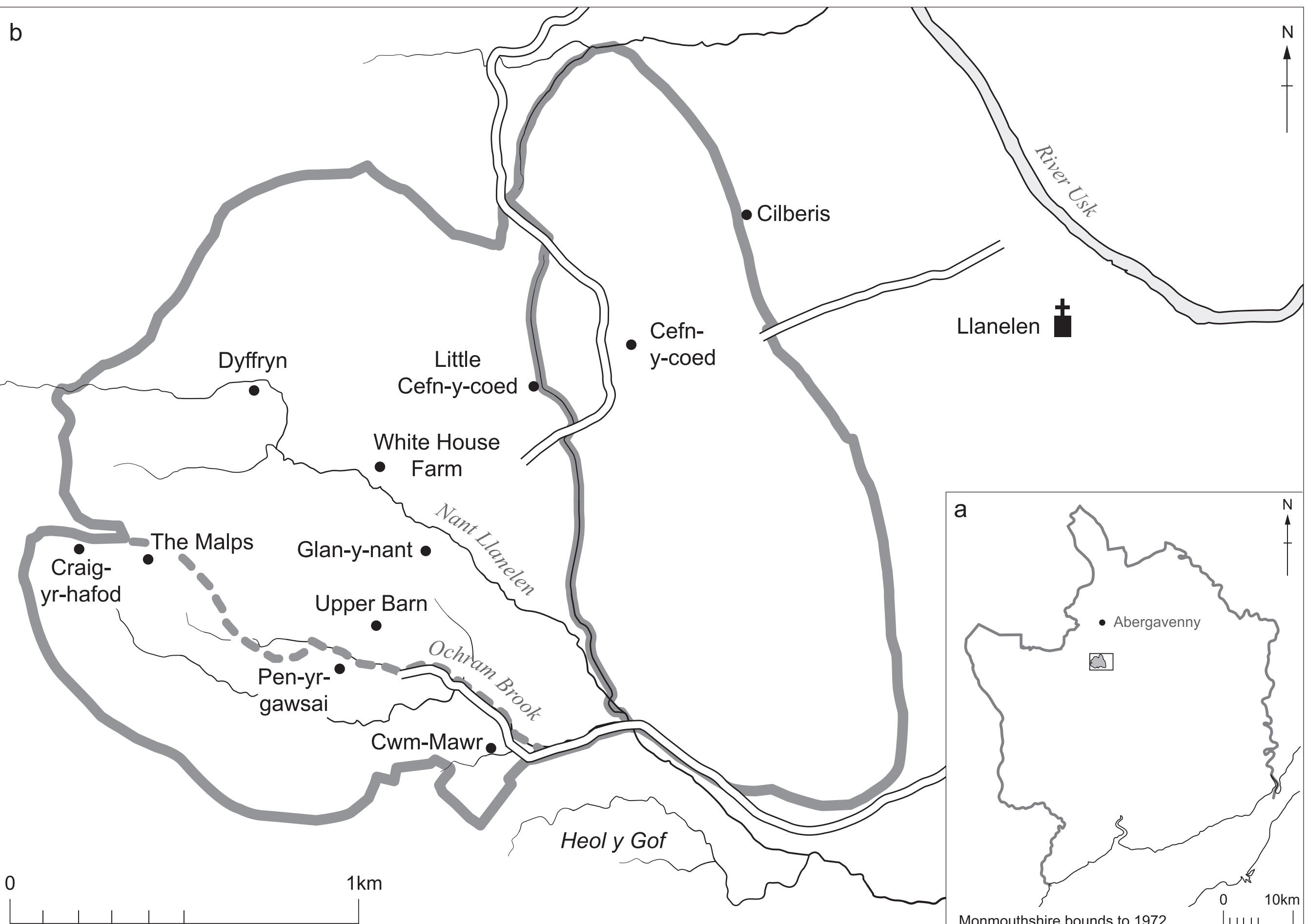

Fig. 1a (inset). The parish of Llanelen.

Fig. 1b. The *lloc gwartheg* (right) and *lloc aur* (left) – part of the wider multiple estate in the eastern part of the parish of Llanelen.
Copyright: Anne Leaver.

LACKING INSPIRATION: THE INCOMPLETE HISTORY OF THE TOWER OF CALDICOT PARISH CHURCH

By Mark Lewis
with help from members of the
Young Archaeologists' Club, SE Wales Branch

The parish church of St Mary, Caldicot, was extensively restored by Henry Woodyer in 1857–8 (Newman, 2000). The earliest surviving depictions of the church, which predate this restoration, show the tower capped by a pyramidal roof (Figs 1–4; The National Archives, London, hereafter TNA, 2281 (Plan entitled *Caldicot's Lordship in the County of Monmouth*, Wm. Foord, surveyor, dated 1771); Mitchell, 2006: 104, plate 20 and Pitman, 2005: 84, plate 15). Freeman (1851: 106) describes the central tower at Caldicot (and Undy) as having '…a quadrangular capping and no battlement'.

The phasing of the modified central tower has long been recognised (Newman, 2000: 152) and is generally acknowledged to comprise of two or three surviving Norman storeys capped by two Perpendicular storeys of late fifteenth-century date. It may also be noted here that the externally battered base of the southern face of the tower slightly changes orientation as it rises from its foundation and the footings for the south-western buttress are set at a completely different angle, perhaps indicating an even earlier phase of the building at this point. Newman (*op. cit.)* attributes the current pyramidal cap on the tower to Henry Woodyer's 1857–8 restoration of the church, but the images reproduced here bear witness to an earlier, similar, pyramidal predecessor(s).

The external southern face of the tower displays a marked change in masonry where the second storey ends and the third storey begins – immediately below the clock face which covers a slit which matches the others of the tower (Fig. 5).[1] Viewed from the north side, the western wall of the tower is clearly and significantly battered to the top of the third storey and the change from rough, small, quoins to finely squared, large quoins is obvious here (Fig. 6). This has been accepted as evidence for a doubling in height of the tower through the addition of the Perpendicular modifications which cap it today.

This change in masonry certainly suggests a later addition or modification to the earlier, Norman tower, of which two storeys can be externally clearly identified. Examination of the internal surfaces of the walls of the tower suggests that a modified Norman tower may survive to its full height (three storeys). This tower was fenestrated only with narrow slits with external openings only 8 inches to 11 inches wide, but deeply splayed internally. A lancet (matching the other slits but with a pointed arched head) was provided on the south side only on the ground floor, slits were provided on the north and south faces of the second storey (where the east and west elevations are occupied by the rooflines of the nave and chancel) and slits were provided on the north, south, east and west faces of the third storey.

Interestingly, the western slit of the third storey is blocked with mortared masonry which includes a column and capital from an arch or window of Early English style typically of thirteenth-

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[1] Miss Lily Frances Chitty, FSA, OBE (1893–1979) used to advise church crawlers to heed the advice of the psalmist and, before going in, first to 'walk about Sion and go round about her, and tell of the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses, that ye may tell them that come after'. A good deal can be learned about an ancient church from its exterior (anonymous, undated guidebook, *Saint Mary's Parish Church Caldicot*, p. 8, probably attributable to Revd David Vickery, vicar 1978–88).

century, or earlier, date (Fig. 7). The capital and column fragment is weathered and there is no visible pigmentation. Although the mortar is clearly of some antiquity and it would be plausible that this slit might have been blocked or part blocked during late fifteenth-century modifications to the church (which enlarged the tower and resulted in a modified nave, chancel, new north aisle and porch, making significant quantities of earlier architectural elements redundant), this blocking appears to have taken place after this aperture was depicted, albeit in reduced form, in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 1851 (Fig. 4). The 1857–8 Woodyer restoration of the church is therefore a reasonable occasion to propose for the blocking of this western slit.

The Freeman (1851) engraving of Caldicot church (Fig. 4) and the anonymous sketch of 1832 (Figs 2 and 3) are noteworthy for their depiction of the original southern chancel windows of Decorated style, described in Freeman's text as 'two quinquefoiled ogee lights placed together under a label, following the shape of their outer sides, but with a square head'. These windows were reconstructed (presumably by Woodyer *circa* 1858) with additional, third, upper lights, in keeping with the double ogee, reticulated, west window of the nave. The third, upper, lights do not appear above the chancel double lights in the 1851 engraving nor the 1832 sketch. This modification appears to be confirmed by the account by Glynne (posthumously published in 1902). Glynne's account of Caldicot was not published with the date of his visit there (his notes were compiled between 1824 and 1874) but his description of Caldicot clearly predates the Woodyer restoration. Glynne (1902: 85) described the chancel as

> …Perpendicular, it[s] east window of three lights; on the south a small door, and on each side two windows; one on the south has something of a castellated character, with a kind of flattened trefoil-head of two lights. The others are square headed.

Close examination of the interior stonework of the blocked northern window of the sanctuary is rewarded with surviving medieval wall painting in the form of red lines to imitate ashlar bonding. Some salmon pink pigment also survives. Externally, the reconstruction of the south chancel wall above the Woodyer windows (with 1857–8 tracery) is clearly discernible and a reused, un-scraped, plastered stone with yellow ochre pigment adhering has been placed there. It would appear that the potential for surviving medieval wall paintings at Caldicot might have been significant prior to the 1857–8 restoration and the 1924–6 scraping of the walls back to the bare limestone rubble (Edwards, 1994). More positively, the removal of the wall plaster of the interior revealed blocked earlier window apertures (and a fine *piscina*) and their embrasures may still preserve some medieval painting.

Woodyer is also almost certainly responsible for the introduction of the rose (or wheel) window high in the east wall of the north aisle when he completely rebuilt that aisle taking his inspiration (and borrowing the mouldings) from the church's fine porch. The rose window is perhaps a faint, albeit developed, echo of his earlier east window for the south chapel of Sketty, St Paul, Swansea (Newman, 1995: plate 93).

Freeman's (1851) depiction of the belfry louvers (Fig. 4) portrays them as possessing large quatrefoil-headed Decorated tracery not the Perpendicular tracery (complementing the east window of the chancel) currently there. Reference to the drawing displayed in the parish church (Fig. 3) and other pre-restoration (pre-1858) images fails to resolve the issue of the louver architecture pre-restoration. The rendering of the tracery in the surviving depictions as Decorated in style may represent nothing more than artist's license or naïve rendering. This is certainly true of the sketch published by Mitchell (*ibid.*) where the porch is certainly not as depicted in other broadly

contemporary images and conveys nothing of the architecture of its crenellated front and sides. Other cinquefoil headed lights are not accurately rendered within the same images, where they are usually simplified to be drawn as trefoil heads. Examination of the west window of the north aisle in Fig. 4 shows it to have been depicted as comprising two lights, not of three lights as is the case today. The slightly set-back western wall of the north aisle impairs the view of its western window as viewed from the south-west and this might account for an engraver's or artist's error by reproducing a three light window as a two light window. Glynne (1902: 85) reported that 'In the north aisle all the windows are uniform Perpendicular, of three lights'. Whilst many of the other architectural features are accurately depicted, some of the detail is not, or is omitted. A large quatrefoil upper light is possibly a mistaken or simplified artistic interpretation, or merely an artistic suggestion, of the two Perpendicular mini-lancet upper lights with mini-quatrefoil above evidenced by the belfry louvers at Caldicot today.[2] Glynne (1902: 85) reported that the (pre-1858) tower '…is lofty and very plain, of Perpendicular character, having square-headed belfry windows of two lights, and a moulded parapet with Pointed roof of tiles'.

It is difficult, therefore, to be certain that the west window of the north aisle was originally of two lights or that the tower belfry louvers were of Decorated, large quatrefoil headed type (as at Llanthony priory's churches at Painswick, Awre and Haresfield in Gloucestershire and the abbey of St Peter, Gloucester, built *circa* 1450–60) prior to the 1857–8 restoration in Caldicot. Glynne's account of the north aisle and chancel fenestration does support the theory that the west window of the north aisle was inaccurately depicted as two lighted (Fig. 4) and that the chancel windows were modified after his visit. Glynne and other pre-1858 sources do not mention a rose or wheel window in the east wall of the north aisle so these certainly do not contradict the theory that this is a Woodyer addition.

Glynne's description of the tower louvers as Perpendicular probably shifts the balance of probability towards the existing Perpendicular louvers although his description of square heads can not be reconciled with any of the illustrations of the tower that survive and must almost certainly be discounted. Careful examination of the mortar of and surrounding the belfry louvers internally and examination of the tracery of the louvers has not conclusively demonstrated their antiquity. The louvers are much decayed and much restored internally. Expanding (wrought) iron ties appear to have once split some of the louver tracery, necessitating repair. A distinctive pink mortar was used in repairs and gap filling which appears to have also been used to re-point much of the top of the belfry, but in patches. Mortar levelling for the Woodyer pyramidal roof sill beams is bright white, not pink. Careful observation of the detail of the louvers shows them to be of a different design to the Woodyer north aisle Perpendicular windows and this is perhaps the best pointer to a different architect and their antiquity, at least in part.

One final observation on the *Archaeologia Cambrensis* engraving (Freeman, 1851) is the apparent presence of a small building or lean-to (no longer surviving) situated in the churchyard near or adjoining the north-west end of the north aisle (Fig. 4). The perspective of the engraving is probably too indistinct to be sure that the structure is separate from the church. It appears to have been fenestrated in its southern or western face with an arched window with moulded label.

Examination of the interior of the third storey of the tower at Caldicot reveals four substantial, corresponding, beam slots, two on either side of the slits in the east and west walls of the tower (Fig. 8). These might indicate that this was an early (probably the modified Norman) belfry and that the

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[2] Compare with the louvers of Llanthony priory's church at Hempsted, near Gloucester, rebuilt by Prior Dene *c*. 1467–1501 (Rhodes, 2002: xviii).

bell-frame at this level was approximately 58 inches (1.47m) wide between its beams, constructed so that the bell(s) swung east–west across the centre of the tower. Now-empty joist holes in the east and west walls of the tower above this bell-frame (at a reasonable ceiling height for this storey) either indicate the position of a now lost intermediate floor of the fifteenth-century tower, the position of the roof of the modified Norman tower, or, possibly, both. These joist holes also held substantial beams running east–west.

If the tower was once three storeys high and fenestrated throughout with slits and a ground-floor lancet, the external perpendicular drip-mould around the tower above the tower clock, corresponding with the internal joist holes already mentioned, would mark the approximate height of the unmodified Norman tower. It is possible that the Norman church tower at Caldicot would have resembled the central towers at nearby Undy, now lost (*Gwentia Eccles. Antiq. IV*, 12) and Penhow, reconstructed in 1913 (Coxe, 1801: 32; Jones, 2007: 104), both of which also had a pyramidal roof and plain slit-like fenestration during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There is no evidence for angled masonry louvers within the slits at Caldicot but the one-time presence of timber angled louvers cannot be discounted.

The uppermost (fifth) storey of Caldicot church tower, the current belfry for its eight bells, has four, two-light, pointed-headed louvers of Perpendicular style (which *are* probably of late fifteenth-century date), one in each of the north, south, east and west elevations of the tower. Internally, the relieving arches for these louvers are matched and joined by contemporary relieving arches of the same dimensions (75 inches wide), at forty-five degrees to the faces of the tower, across its internal corners. These squinches create an internally perfectly octagonal masonry top to the belfry and the existing tower (Figs 9–12). Each of its eight sides measure 75 inches (1.905m) internally. The squinches are of two tiers, the larger (measuring 75 inches, noted above) having smaller squinches (relieving arches) within them only 25.5 inches in width (Fig. 12). All eight squinches are edged with arches made up of faced and plainly chamfered stone, mostly of fossil-free oolitic limestone. Abundant tool marks on the stones of the squinches indicate that they were only roughly hewn. Squinches are used by architects to transfer the downward forces from domes, octagonal lanterns or spires to the supporting walls of rectangular structures below. The form and locations of the Caldicot squinches indicate that the architect intended a spire here as part of the Perpendicular (late fifteenth-century) modification of the older tower.

A plainly chamfered corbelled string moulding runs around the octagonal interior of the tower belfry above the squinches (Fig. 13). This would have been intended to divide the oolitic limestone spire from the limestone rubble masonry of the tower below. The one course of oolitic limestone ashlar above the corbelled string moulding is inclined inwards at four degrees from the perpendicular (Fig. 13). It appears that a stone spire was intended but that only the first course was completed. With no evidence for mortar having been laid on the upper surfaces of the stones of the first inclined course, it is likely that the intended stone spire was never realised.

Whilst surviving accounts for repairs to the roofs of the towers and internal buildings of Caldicot castle indicate that many of them were roofed with ‘flat stones’[3] and some of them were shingled (Birbeck, 1965, chap. 6), there is no indication in, or on the octagonal top of, the church belfry that a timber superstructure for a shingled or tiled spire ever capped the church.

Until its dissolution in 1538, Caldicot parish church belonged to the Augustinian priory of Llanthony-by-Gloucester (commonly, but not contemporarily, referred to as Llanthony Secunda).

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[3] 6,000 stone tiles were bought for Caldicot castle at Lydney in 1443 and as early as 1424, shingles appear to have lost favour and had begun to be replaced by ‘slatstones’ (Birbeck, 1965: 85).

Church Farm (recently renamed Llanthony Secunda Manor, but without historic precedent)[4] was probably at the centre of the Llanthony Caldicot estates; the demesne farm of their rectory.[5]

Llanthony-by-Goucester priory was arguably the wealthiest Augustinian house in England and the third wealthiest monastery in Gloucestershire (Rhodes, 2002: xiv). From the time of Prior Chirton (1377–1401) Llanthony-by-Gloucester prospered and invested heavily in its parish churches, manor houses and barns. The late fifteenth-century remodelling of Caldicot parish church, including an enlarged tower with intended spire, can best be explained by the wealth of Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory during that period and its responsibility for the parish church. The nearest Llanthony-by-Gloucester church (and manor) with broadly contemporary building work on the parish church of a similar scale is that of Painswick in Gloucestershire. The tower of St James' Painswick was begun about 1480 and it displays a similar architectural intent to that evidenced at Caldicot but with Decorated two-light, pointed-headed belfry openings. The spire at Painswick was either added or repaired in 1632 (Herbert and Pugh, 1976: 83; Frith, 1992). If it were newly built in 1632, provision appears to have been made for a spire, in the form of squinches and an octagonal belfry interior (as at Caldicot), in the initial, priory-sponsored, scheme.

Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory owned important freestone quarries at Painswick. They were the source of largely fossil-free oolitic limestone that was used in Monmouthshire for blind arcading of the early thirteenth-century refectory at Tintern abbey, for the chapter house capitals at Llanthony Prima priory and for two of the knight effigies at Abergavenny (Knight, 2008: 170). The fossil-free oolitic limestone used for the squinches and first course of the spire at Caldicot parish church could have been brought from this source but inspection of the Llanthony capital fragments at Newport Museum and Art Gallery[6] suggests otherwise. A nearer source of limestone, perhaps in the Bath area, is more likely. The limestone comprises of small ooliths in a spar of apparently similar hardness, presenting an oolith-prominent structure but held tightly by the natural cement. The original ashlar facing and battlements of the porch of Caldicot parish church are also of oolitic limestone which appears to be a close match to that of the tower squinches (*see* Newman, 2000: 152). Some recent patching and repairs have used a shelly Bath stone which is clearly not a perfect match.

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4 'The Priory-House' in Rogers, Nathan, *Memoirs of Monmouthshire* (1708. Moss Rose Press, Chepstow, 1983 edit.). A lordship (manor) 'of the priory of Caldecott' is named at a court of the manor of Caldicot and Newton held 1 Sept. 1613 (Bradney, 1929: 110–1 and TNA/DL 42/123) but no manor house is recorded at Caldicot in *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (Rec. Com.) ii, 423–30, although the bailiff for Caldicot was Wm. Morgan in 1535 (Rhodes, 2002: xxix, Table I). Dugdale (1846) abstracts 'Caldicote – Reddit' assis' £0 0s. 6d., Caldicote – Redd' custom' ten' £5 6s.7d. and Caldicote – Firma Rector' £16 0s. 0d.' as the Caldicot valuations cited in *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. The rectory buildings and tithes of corn at Caldicot were leased to Richard Philpot, chaplain, Margaret, widow of Richard Herbert (buried under his effigy at Abergavenny) and her sons George and Matthew for 30 years at £16 per year on 26 April 1511 (Rhodes, 2002: 102, no. 248). They were subsequently leased at Christmas in 1512 for the same sum to Richard ap Thomas, chaplain, Henry ap Thomas of Caldicot, gentleman and Henry's sons Adam, Richard, Thomas, William and Walter ap Thomas (*ibid*., 108, no. 266). Compare the rent of £16 *per annum* with that for 'the farm of the Rectory' ('*Firma Rector'*) of *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (above). The Royal Commision on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales record for Church Farm (NPRN 36633), concludes that the architecture of the basic structure of the farmhouse is consistent with priory ownership and gives a construction date of *c*. 1450–75.

5 The neighbouring barn (shown on the 1771 lordship of Caldicot map surveyed by Wm. Foord, TNA/2281) is possibly the successor to its demesne barn. The site of the tithe barn, west of the parish church, is shown on the 1842 tithe map and its footprint is partly preserved by the upstanding boundary wall of the Old Vicarage and the Church Hall. Three large Triassic sandstone quoins in the corner of this wall and remains of its lime rendering point to its high quality construction.

6 With thanks to Oliver Blackmore, curator.

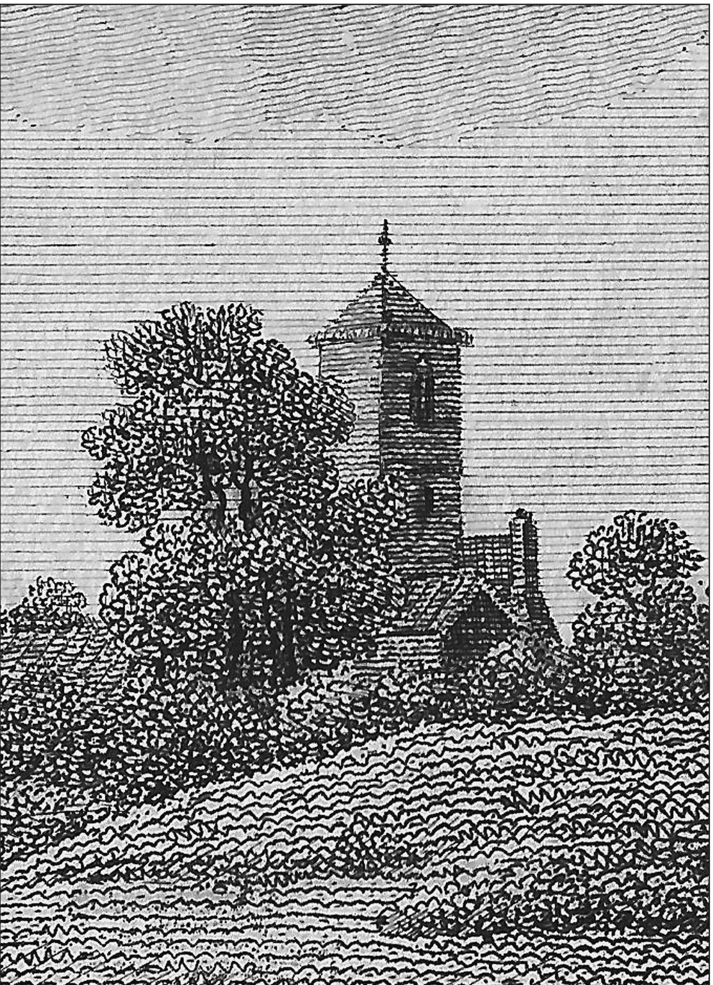

Fig. 1. Detail of Caldicot parish church from William Coxe, *An Historical Tour Through Monmouthshire* (Cadell & Davies, Strand, 1801). Engraving drawn by R.H. and engraved by W.B.

Fig. 5. The south and east faces of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 2. An anonymous sketch, dated Aug. 1832, preserved in Caldicot parish church.
Reproduced by kind permission of Canon Lyndon Harrison, rector and Caldicot parochial church council.

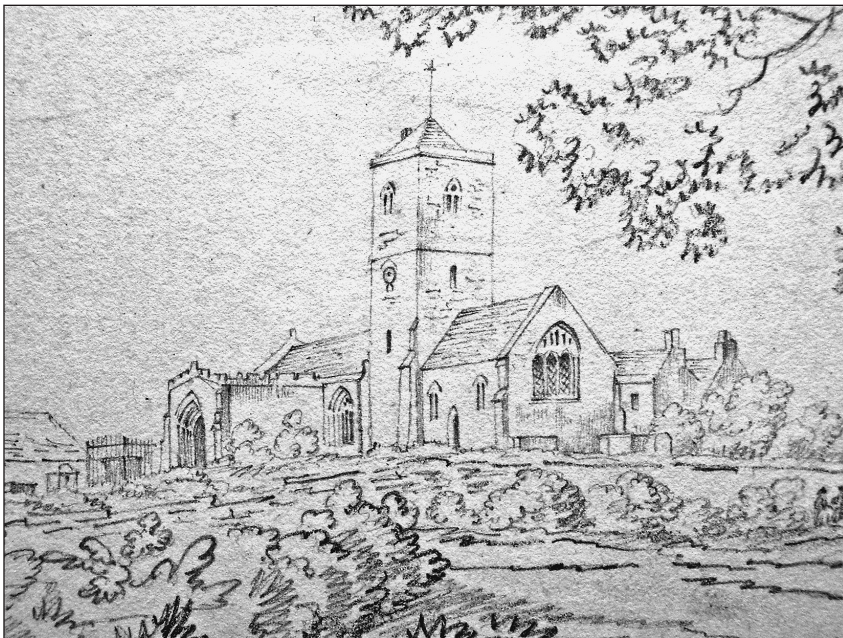

Fig. 3. Detail of the church from Fig. 2.

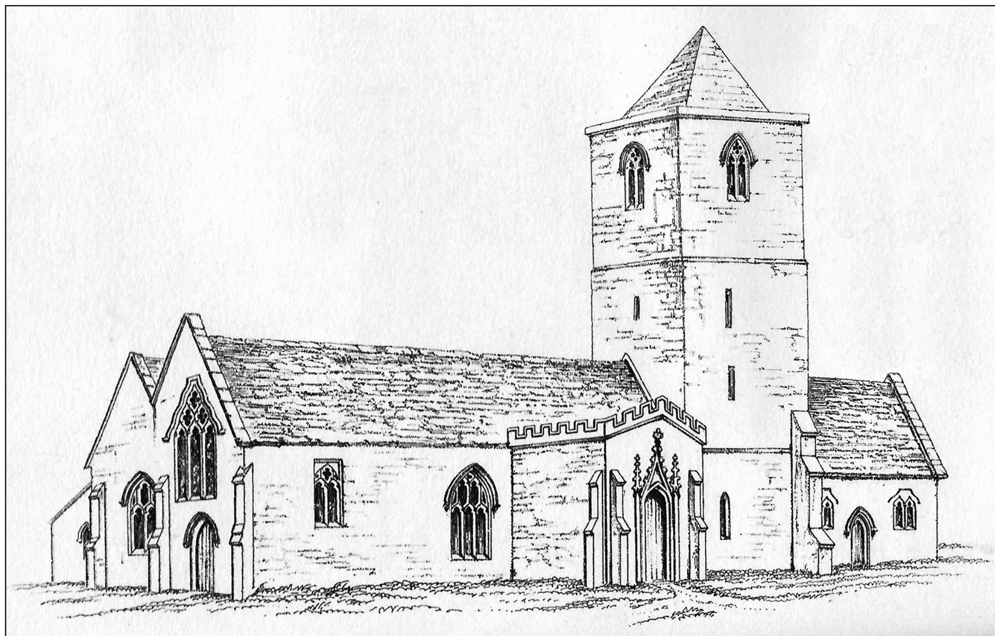

Fig. 4. 'Caldicott Church. S.W.', an engraving from *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, new series no. V, (Jan.1851) opp. p. 105.

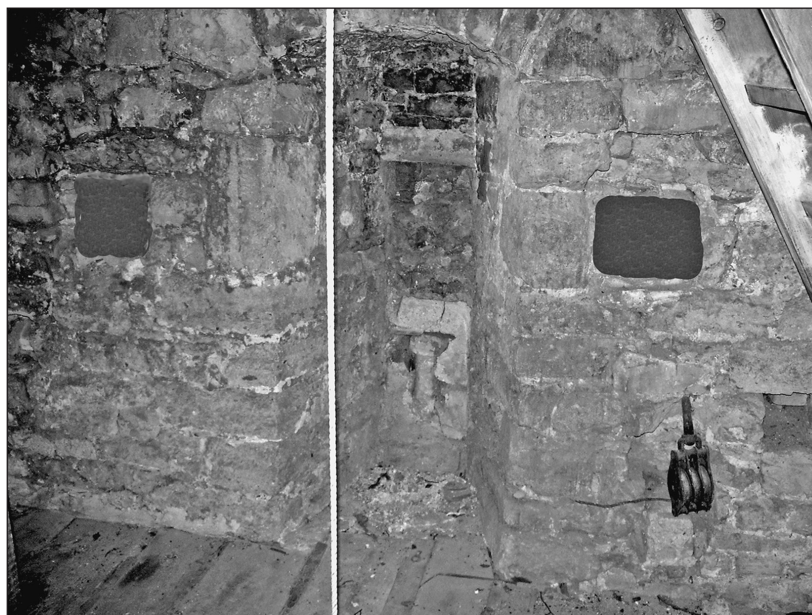

Fig. 8. The interior face of the third storey of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008 with the position of the beam slots shaded either side of the blocked western slit.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 6. The north face of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 7. The western, blocked, slit of the third storey of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008.
Photograph: The author.

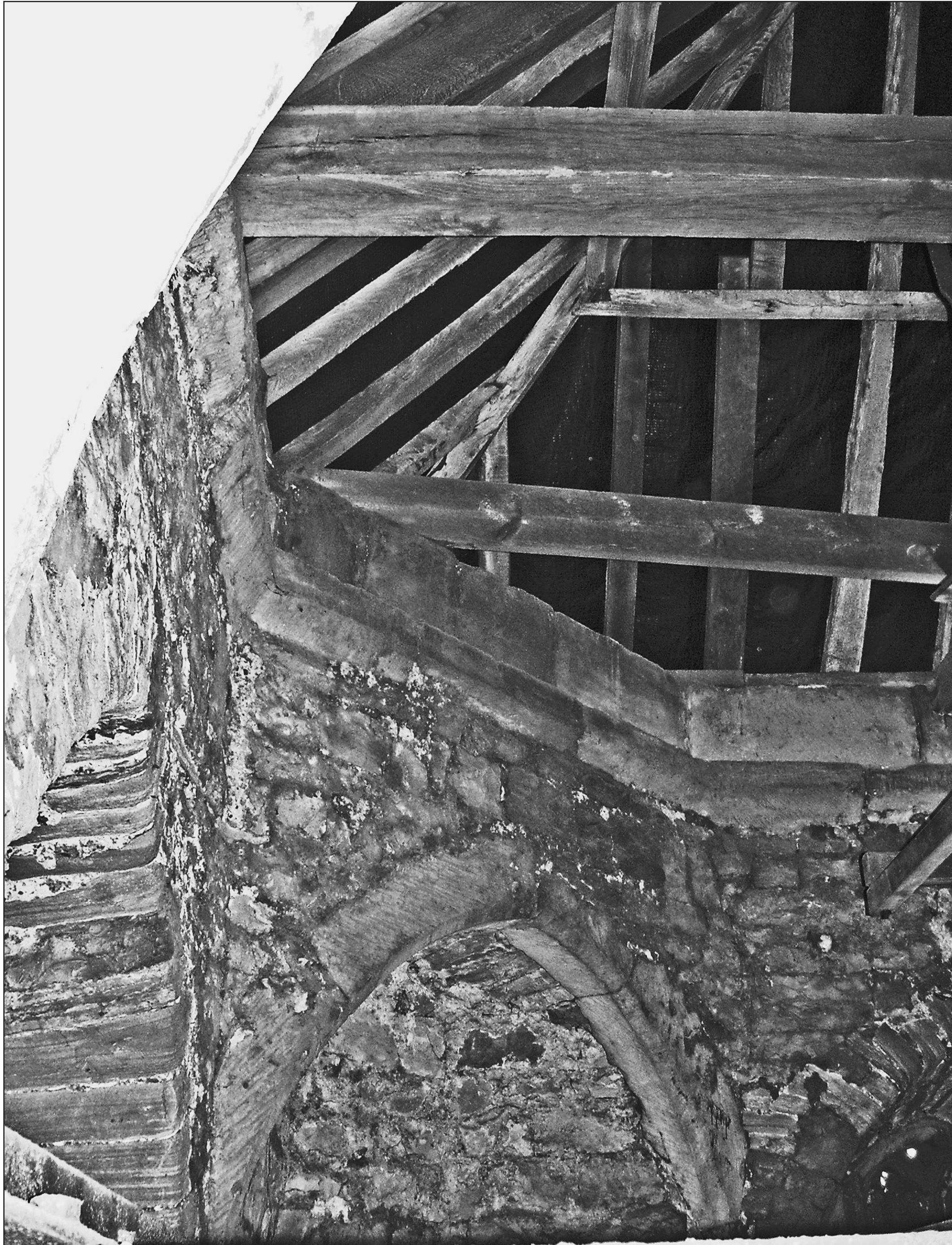

Fig. 9. The north-east belfry squinches of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008, looking east.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 10. The north-west belfry squinches of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008, looking west.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 11. The north-eastern tiered squinches of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008, looking north-east.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 12. Detail of the north-eastern tiered squinch of the belfry of the tower of Caldicot parish church in 2008.
Photograph: The author.

Fig. 13. The south-eastern corner of the belfry of the tower of Caldicot parish church looking east, in 2008, showing the first course of the intended spire.
Photograph: The author.

A close date for the modifications at Caldicot is difficult to identify. It is conceivable, but by no means certain, that the surviving tenor bell (probably the largest of the parish church's pre-reformation bells) was either cast for the newly appointed tower or that the tower was raised in height to appropriately house it. The bell is identified as a product of the Bristol foundry on the basis of a specific motif common to its inscription and those of other Bristol bells of the period (possibly cast by a founder called 'Hew the bellman' or a more commonly favoured founder named William Warwick). Walters (1919) assigns the Caldicot bell as a Bristol foundry type IV and dates it to between 1450 and 1470. Later noted campanologists (Wright, 1941: 56; Sharpe, 1969: 194, group IVb) concur with Walters' identification and chronology citing 1450–80. The Caldicot bell shares the cross motif featured in its inscription with the number seven bell at Yatton, Somerset. Surviving parish accounts for Yatton record payments for recasting bells for the church in 1451 and 1468. The 'bellmann' at 'Bristowe' was paid £4 3s. as the 'furste payment' in 1451 whereas casting the 1468 bell cost £4 3s. 9d. in full. Walters (1919: 56–7) concluded from these figures that the surviving number seven bell must be the larger Yatton bell of 1451, rather than the smaller bell of 1468. The diagnostic initial cross, common with that at Yatton, is also found at Hereford cathedral on the ninth bell which weighs 26 cwt. 1 qr. 26 lb. and is inscribed, in verse, + WILHELMVS WARWIKE + CONSTRVXIT + ME + IN SANCTE + TRINITATIS + HONORE (Sharpe, 1969: 190–1, 194). At Caldicot, can any significance be attributed to the retrograde letters E and C plus the additional N in *Mariae*, perhaps the mistakes of an inexperienced founder? After citing the number seven bell at Yatton as having been cast in 1451, a date of '*c*. 1450' is ascribed to the Caldicot bell by Wright (1941: 55).

A will, of John Bryme, clerk, dated 1525 and proved in March 1526, confirms that Caldicot possessed its medieval compliment of three bells by 1525 (TNA/Prob/11/22). The surviving medieval bell (the current 'tenor' or number eight) was possibly the largest of the medieval bells: it is dedicated to Mary, the patron saint (although a survey of Somerset towers containing multiple surviving medieval bells suggests that they did not always honour their patron or the *Mater Dei* on their largest bell. *See* Ellacombe, 1875) and it is of a suitable size (43 inches in diameter at the mouth and weighing 13 cwt. 0 qrs. 6 lbs.).[7] John Bryme willed that a fourth bell be added '…to the iii bells that be nowe in the parishe churche of our lady of Calecot in the dices Llandaff' in order to make a tuned ring of four bells '…all in acconcorde and ringing as shortly after my decesse as conveniently may be'. This would normally, and most easily, be achieved by adding a smaller bell to the three already there and it may be implied that these three were already broadly compatibly tuned. Bryme identified twenty pounds from his estate in the hands of one of his executors at Bristol for the procurement of the bell but was unsure that this sum would cover the whole cost. He clearly intended for the new bell to be '…provided and bought at my coste and charge…' probably expecting it to be cast anew. He did not will the recasting of an existing bell. Between 1529 and 1531, another bell at Yatton, Somersetshire, (thought to be smaller than the earlier number seven bell there) cost nineteen pounds and six pence for the metal and the casting of the bell by the 'Belmaker' excluding transportation and other costs (Walters, 1919: 58).

Few clues can be identified to help to pinpoint the dates of the Perpendicular architectural modifications at Caldicot parish church. Bradney (1929: 121) transcribes 'a flat stone in the north

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[7] Abergavenny possessed 4 bells weighing 45 cwt. 2 qrs. in total, Llantarnam possessed 4 bells weighing 38 cwt. 3 qrs. 4 lbs. in total, Grace Dieu possessed 3 bells weighing 55 cwt. in total (Wright, 1941: 50). At 43 inches diameter at the mouth, the Caldicot bell could have swung comfortably between the beams of the postulated earlier bell-frame in the third storey of the Norman tower (*see* dimensions given above: 53 inches).

aisle with a cross'; the grave slab of Elinore Herbert who died in November 1486.[8] If this is in its original location it is possible that the Perpendicular north aisle and nave arcade were complete by that date. The ancient roof of the north aisle survives and dendrochronology might one day provide a date for the roof timbers. Alas, the 'several remains of painted glass, principally representing coats of arms' noted by Archdeacon William Coxe (1801: 22) and Glynne (1902: 86) have not survived. The impressive two-storey Perpendicular porch at Caldicot appears to have replaced an earlier entrance near the west end of the south side of the nave where the crudely constructed wall blocking the gap contains a fine early Perpendicular square-headed window with a two-centred arched head inscribed within it.[9] The porch contains a staircase which once led to a gallery over the entrance to the church (not a *parvise*, *see* Newman, 2000: 153. *See* also the porch at nearby Caerwent parish church, where the visible beam slots make the gallery arrangement obvious there). The stair doorways and the door into the church have four-pointed arches, a style employed at the new gatehouse of Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory between 1467 and 1501 (Rhodes, 2003: xix).

The Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory registers which survive for 1457–66 and 1501–25 offer no insights into the building work at either Caldicot or Painswick (Rhodes, 2002). The priory's cartulary for 1449 listing endowments outside Gloucester (TNA/C115/83) has not been published. Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory was itself rebuilt between 1493 and 1513.

The available evidence would appear to be consistent with a programme of building work at Caldicot parish church perhaps commencing between *circa* 1450–7 or 1466–80. It is possible that the general building improvements at Caldicot parish church might have been influenced by or a response to changes as different parties held Caldicot castle and manor during the second half of the fifteenth century, culminating with the castle and manor becoming a permanent possession of the Crown. In 1438–9, Caldicot represented the second most valuable of the duchy of Lancaster's Monmouthshire lordships, out-performed only by Monmouth (Griffiths, 2008: 254). Jasper Tudor was granted Caldicot castle and manor as earl of Pembroke in 1453.[10] William Herbert had been granted the castle, manor, town and lordship of Caldicot in 1462 'for his services against Henry VI' (Birbeck, 1965: 50). Upon his death in 1469, his estates passed to the king until his son William was granted them in 1475. Caldicot was surrendered to the king and formed part of the duchy of Lancaster from 1479 to 1857 (*ibid*., 52–6).

Caldicot parish church was at some time endowed with a fine green gold crucifix dated stylistically to the fifteenth century (Redknap, 2004: 18, no. 1), 'a truly regal gift' (Guy and Smith, 1979: 18). However, its association with Caldicot cannot be traced before the incumbency of Theodore Mansel Rhys Young-Hughes (1916–38). Edwards (1994: 26) shows that Young-Hughes gifted many of the church's ornaments and embellishments, including a twenty-one inch alms dish after an 'earnest search among the antique shops of Florence'. Edwardian photographs of the church interior clearly show the trifurcated nineteenth-century brass processional cross still used at the church today. A contemporary account of the rededication of the church in 1858 notes the procession of the choir in surplices 'with cross and banner', rather than 'crucifix' (Edwards, 1994: 11). Even

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[8] At the time of writing obscured by carpet but reportedly seen within living memory (Pugh, B., *pers. comm*.).

[9] Compare with the stone screen and blind arcading of Abbot Seabroke's Chantry chapel, St Peter's abbey, now Gloucester cathedral. Seabroke was abbot (1450–57) whilst the abbey's central tower was being constructed (Evans and Thurlow, 1982: 6 and 14). The ogee label and fleur-de-lys label of Caldicot's porch entrance echo those of the central tower and west front at Gloucester cathedral.

[10] Bath stone oolite of Somerset origin was used in the dressings of the Jasper Tudor tower at Llandaff cathedral, *c*. 1485 (Knight, 2008: 172 and North, 1957: 89).

discounting the crucifix, during the fifteenth-century Caldicot parish church none-the-less appears to have either possessed a significant benefactor(s) or was perhaps felt by the prior of Llanthony-by-Gloucester worthy of significant investment, having the potential to attract one.[11] The reason for the abandonment of the construction of the Caldicot spire (and possibly Painswick?) remains a mystery but there are plenty of possible influences on the priory. Was the death of William Herbert in 1469 a factor?[12] He wished to be buried near his father at Abergavenny (despite being buried at Tintern abbey), so his interest in Caldicot and its parish church was possibly not significant enough to invoke him as a major patron here. His will of 1469 (TNA/Prob 11/15) requests the provision of priests to sing for his soul 'afore the Trinitie at Lantiliowe' and makes bequests to Tintern abbey, the Benedictine priory of Bradwell and elsewhere, without mention of Caldicot.

Perhaps the acquisition of Llanthony Prima in 1481 provided Llanthony-by-Gloucester with resources that were allocated for new building works at Caldicot (and Painswick)? Perhaps the spire at Caldicot was abandoned because resources were diverted by Llanthony-by-Gloucester to prioritise the rebuilding of the mother house from 1493 (Rhodes, 1989: 26)?

Geographically, the nearest Monmouthshire medieval spires to Caldicot are at Nash and Trellech. The spire at Nash is of similar date and was also constructed using tiered internal squinches. The spire at Nash was constructed in 1483 by Eton College. The college had held the rectory of Nash since 1450 (Newman, 2000: 417). Nash is notable for its squint allowing a bell-ringer to observe and chime a bell during the elevation of the Host, a feature also preserved in another Monmouthshire northern tower at Llangwm Ucha. Trellech's tower and spire are probably early fourteenth century (Newman, 2000: 576) and reflect the borough of Trellech's superior status within Gwent at that time.

At Caldicot, the measured width of the belfry octagon at the base of the intended spire is 183 inches (15 feet and 3 inches or 4.65 metres). The internal spire height is calculated to be approximately 33.53 metres (109 feet) from the late fifteenth-century drip moulding (with paired eagle water spouts) encircling the top of the tower beneath the Henry Woodyer crenellated parapet of 1857–8. Such a spire would be in the region of half a metre to a metre taller externally (approximately 3 feet) with a capstone at the top not accounted for in this calculation. Overall, the intended spire at Caldicot would have added about 35 metres (115 feet) to the height of the tower. The height of the top of the Perpendicular tower masonry was trigonometrically calculated by members of the Young Archaeologists' Club SE Wales Branch during a field visit to Caldicot. They estimate it to be

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[11] No documentary references to a chantry or similar endowment at Caldicot appear to survive (*see* Gray, 1991 and Williams, 2003). However, Bradney (1929: 120) transcribes a deed of sale of 1623 which lists, amongst land in the parish of Caldicot, 'one acre of pasture called Lampe acre situated near Deepe weare between the customary lands of Phi' Robnet to the east and Nich'i Kemeys Esq. and Will'i Philpott to the west'. It is possible that this acre of pasture endowed a lamp before an image or the rood within the parish church, or funded the altar candles (for similar endowments elsewhere, including the nearby churches of Portskewett and Redwick, *see* Gray, *ibid*.). Another deed, made the following day in 1623, cited by Bradney (1929: 120–1) records the let of 'two gardens and one acre of customary land nere unto Deepe waere in the manor and parish of Caldicott now in the occupation of John Mason'. Situated near Deepweir, this acre of pasture must have been in the environs of the later Ightfield House, a name possibly derived from it? Ightfield in Shropshire is thought to be derived from the Old English *Ihtfeld* where *Iht*=creature and *feld*=field. This is a suitable field name for pasture and a larger field of about two acres near Deepweir and opposite Ightfield House was once named the Conigree.

[12] Knight (2008: 171) and Newman (2000: 585) identify the Herberts, most probably William Herbert who died in 1469, as the benefactor for the rebuilding of the parochial north aisle and porches at Usk parish church during the 1460s. The north porch at Usk exhibits a very similar crocketed and pinacled ogee hood or canopy with fleur-de-lys arrangement to Caldicot (*see* Newman, 2000: plate 31).

approximately 64 feet (19.5 metres). Had the intended spire at Caldicot been realised, it would have stood an estimated 179 feet from the ground. Interestingly, the spire at Painswick, Gloucestershire, is cited as standing to a height of 174 feet (53 metres) above the ground (Harris, 2006: 266) and its appearance today gives a good impression of the originally intended appearance of the once-planned spire-capped tower at another of Llanthony-by-Gloucester priory's churches, Caldicot.

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THE RISE OF THE HERBERTS OF RAGLAN: THE NORFOLK CONNECTION

By John O. Morley

For more than a century after the conquest of Wales by Edward I in 1282, the principality was unstable with numerous internal revolts by the Welsh.[1] There were also external threats to the country posed by patriots such as Owain Lawgoch (well-known to the French as Yvain de Galles), who is said to have fought on the French side at Poitiers. In 1369, his English estates were confiscated and the renewal of hostilities between England and France that year made the situation in Wales precarious as Owain had raised a fleet and sailed from Harfleur just before Christmas that year only to be driven back by winter storms in the English Channel.[2] The English authorities were so concerned that orders were issued to strengthen and fortify the Welsh castles.[3] From then until 1378, the English authorities were fearful of an invasion and eventually ordered his assassination.[4] For these reasons, most of the administrative, religious and military positions in Wales during this turbulent period were occupied by Englishmen. For example, between 1372 and 1400, of sixteen bishops appointed in Wales, fifteen were English.[5] Furthermore, many of the artisans living in Welsh towns, particularly those in the Marches, were English. In Abergavenny in the early 1300s, it is thought that only about 7% of the population were Welsh.[6] In the Marches, the English nobility and their supporters and sympathizers were seemingly ubiquitous to ensure control over the indigenous population. In Gwent, from 1350 onwards, these included Sir John Hastings and later Sir William Beauchamp, who were lords of Abergavenny and Sir Walter Bluet and later Sir James Berkeley, who were lords of Raglan. While the lives of these prominent families are fairly well documented, much less is known about other important historical figures who inhabited these parts.

Sir Joseph Bradney, in his monumental work on the history of Monmouthshire,[7] records that in the fourteenth century, Llansantffraed near Raglan, was the seat and estate of Sir John Morley but very little is known about him, although his daughter, Maud is better known.[8] Llansantffraed takes its name from St Bride or St Bridget, or Ffraed in Welsh, a fifth-century Irish saint and the parish church of St Bridget is the only remaining building from that era. The original mansion belonging to Morley, which was probably a small castle, is said to have stood between the church and the present

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1 Davies, R.R., *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063–1415* (Oxford University Press, 2000); Davies, John, *A History of Wales* (London, 1993) chap. 5.

2 Carr, A.D., 'Owen of Wales (d. 1378)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*) (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edit. 2008) [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20983, accessed 18 July 2012]. Owain Lawgoch was the last representative of the royal line of Gwynedd being the grandson of Llywelyn the Last's brother, Rhodri. From 1366, he began to press his claim for his Welsh inheritance supported by Charles V, king of France.

3 Carr, A. D., 'Welshmen and the Hundred Years' War', *Welsh History Review* (hereafter *Welsh Hist. Rev.*), 4(1) (1968) 31–2.

4 He was assassinated by John Lamb, an English agent, in France in 1378 (Carr, 'Owen of Wales', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*).

5 Ross, David, *Wales History of a Nation* (New Lanark, 2005) 109.

6 *See* for example, the history of Abergavenny on the website of the Abergavenny Local History Society [URL: http://www.abergavennyhistory.co.uk].

7 Bradney, Sir Joseph Alfred, *A History of Monmouthshire from the coming of the Normans into Wales Down to the Present Time* (published in 12 parts by Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1904–33, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991–3 and Merton Priory Press, 1993–4).

8 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2b the Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 2),* 316–18.

house (now the *Llansantffraed Court Hotel*). He was English and possibly employed by the Crown to control this part of the Marches (*see* later). His daughter, Maud, who was Morley's sole heir, subsequently married Thomas ap Gwilym[9] ap Jenkyn of Perth-hir (originally called Plas-yn-y-berth-hir[10]) in the parish of Rockfield. He was a minor Monmouthshire landowner and the fourth son of Gwilym ap Jenkyn of Wern-ddu.[11] After Maud's marriage, the estate at Llansantffraed passed to her husband, Thomas ap Gwilym. They had five sons and about the same number of daughters. Their fourth son, Phillip ap Thomas, inherited the estate and his descendants continued there in unbroken male descent until 1739.[12]

Their fifth son, William ap Thomas, Morley's grandson, became famous it is alleged because of his participation in the battle of Agincourt in 1415.[13] William is reported to have married, shortly after 1406, the heiress Elizabeth Bloet, the widow of Sir James Berkeley (who had died on 13 June 1405).[14] They lived at Raglan until her death in 1420 by permission of her son (who was also called Sir James Berkeley).[15] William ap Thomas subsequently married in 1421–2, another heiress, Gwladus, known as *Y seren o Efenni* (The Star of Abergavenny),[16] the daughter of Dafydd Gam (*alias* Dafydd ap Llewelyn ap Hywel) and the widow of Sir Roger Vaughan (*alias* Rhosier Fychan) of Bredwardine, who were both slain at Agincourt.[17] In 1426, William was one of thirty-six gentlemen knighted by Henry VI at Leicester where the 'parliament of Bats' was sitting. William later became known to his compatriots as *Y Marchog glas o Went* (the Blue Knight of Gwent). Around 1432, William ap Thomas, who had been granted permission to live at Raglan after the death of his first wife, purchased the estate from Sir James Berkeley and re-built the castle. As well as being the chief steward of the duke of York's estates in Wales, William ap Thomas was sheriff of Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire and later Glamorgan. He served on a number of commissions in

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9 Also referred to as Thomas ap Guillem or Gwyllym.

10 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*, 29.

11 *See* the detailed entry for the 'Herbert Family' in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1911 edit. [URL: http://www.1911encyclopedia.org]. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2b the Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 2),* 316–18.

12 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2b the Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 2)*, 317.

13 An apocryphal story recounts that the King Henry V was attacked during the battle after Humphrey, duke of Gloucester had been wounded and a group of Welshmen in the king's bodyguard led by Dafydd Gam intervened to save Henry's life, only for some to be killed in the process, including Dafydd himself and his son-in-law Sir Roger Vaughan. One of those supposedly involved in this exploit was William ap Thomas who survived the battle (Carr, *Welsh Hist. Rev.,* 36; Tout, T. F., 'Dafydd Gam (d. 1415)', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.* [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10318, accessed 20 March 2010].

14 She was the daughter of Sir John Bluet (Bloet) who had died around 1399 and whose family had held Raglan castle since 1174. Her son, also called James Berkeley, inherited the estate following his father's death on 13 June 1405.

15 Kenyon, John R., *Raglan Castle* (CADW Guidebooks, 2nd edit., 1994); Waugh's *Guide to Raglan Castle, including many interesting particulars connected with its History* (R. Waugh & Son, Monmouth, 1890). *See* also the online resource [URL: http://www.castlewales.com/raglan.html].

16 According to the poet Lewys Glyn Cothi; *see* Johnston, Dafydd (ed.), *Gwaith Lewys Glyn Cothi* (Cardiff, 1995).

17 Evans, Howell T., *Wales and the Wars of the Roses* (Cambridge University Press, 1915) 45–6. Information on soldiers has been taken from the AHRC-funded *The Soldier in Later Medieval England Online Database* [URL: http://www. medievalsoldier.org, date accessed 2 Jan. 2010]. This database reports the presence of Dafydd Gam (archer, foot), named as David ap Llewellyn ap Howell, under the command of John ap Rys [reference: The National Archives [hereafter TNA], Exchequer Accounts, E 101/46/20 no.2 m1d]. There is no entry for Roger Vaughan (then called Rhosier Fychan) but there are two entries for soldiers with the surname Vychan. [TNA, E 101/45/1 m12].

south Wales which shed light on the egregious acts of piracy that infested the Severn estuary at that time.[18] However, he appears to have spent much of his time in London where his sons adopted the surname Herbert. He died there in 1445, but his body was returned to be buried in St Mary's Benedictine priory church at Abergavenny. His wife Gwladus died in 1454. The effigies of both William and Gwladus in armour can be seen on their alabaster tomb which is located along with that of their son, Richard and his wife, in the Herbert chapel of St Mary's church.[19]

It has been generally advocated that William ap Thomas's rise to prominence was predicated on his exploits and valour on the battlefield, but Evans, in his seminal work on *Wales and the War of the Roses*, suggests otherwise.[20] He says that the prevailing opinion that William ap Thomas was knighted for his valour in the French wars is erroneous and that his path to honour was possibly paved by his connection, through his wife, to Dafydd Gam.[21] This present account begs to differ and argues that William ap Thomas's rise to fame was not due exclusively to this connection but rather to his blood connection to another very important and powerful English family; a connection which has received scant attention until now.[22] This family were the Morleys of Norfolk who were powerful barons in late medieval England. The case in support of this contention rests on the identification of Sir John Morley, who was William's grandfather. There are few details known about him except where he lived; it is not known where he was born, where he died and at what age, or the date of his marriage. It has been suggested that he was some retainer of the Beauchamps, who were then lords of Abergavenny and either by grant from them, or by marriage obtained a small estate.[23] Other accounts have suggested that he was associated with Raglan castle.[24] The fact that he had only one child suggests that he died at an early age.

As stated earlier, Maud was his only heir as the estate at Llansantffraed transferred to her husband, Thomas ap Gwillym, on her marriage. There is considerable confusion in the literature, however, concerning the date of their marriage and the dates of birth of their children. An inscription dated 14 September 1624 (described by Bradney in 1906)[25] which mentions both Maud, her father, her husband and son Philip is still present in St Bridget's church at Llansantffraed (Fig. 1).[26]

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18 Evans, *Wales and the Wars of the Roses*, 53.

19 *See* the entry for St Mary's church, Abergavenny, on the website of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales [URL: http://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/377/details/ST+MARY%27S+CHURCH%2C+ABERGAVENNY/].

20 Evans, *Wales and the War of the Roses*, 53.

21 Dafydd Gam had supported the English cause against Owen Glyndwr and had carried his enmity to such lengths that earlier he had made a malicious attempt to assassinate the Welsh leader, an attempt which almost succeeded. He was therefore well thought of in English circles (Evans, *Wales and the War of the Roses*, 53–4).

22 There is no mention of this connection in any authoritative text covering this period, *see* for example, Davies, R.R., *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282–1400* (Oxford, 1978); Walker, David, *Medieval Wales* (Cambridge, 1990); Williams, Glanmor, *Recovery Reorientation and Reformation: Wales c.1415–1642* (Oxford, 1987).

23 Morgan, Octavius, 'Some account of the ancient monuments in the Priory Church, Abergavenny', IV, 'Sir William ap Thomas', *Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiquarian Association* (hereafter *Mon. Caer. Antiq. Ass.*) (Newport, 1872) 45.

24 Burke, Bernard, *A Visitation of the Seats and Arms of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain and Ireland,* second series, vol. II (London, 1855) 76–7.

25 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2 The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part* 2), 322.

26 Photographed by the author on 24 Sept. 2002.

Fig. 1. Inscription on the south wall of the chancel of St Bridget's church, Llansantffraed.
Photograph: The author.

After transcription, the first part states (the spelling modernized and extended):

> Near this place lie interred these dead bodies under named Thomas ap Gwilym ap Jenkin Esq., [died] 8 July 1438: and Maud his wife, daughter to Sir John Morley Knight: and his coheir Philip their son and heir [died] 9 November 1460…

Given the precise dates on this monument, it is thought likely that the information shown is accurate. Accordingly, it follows that Thomas ap Gwilym was born in 1363 at the *earliest* (allowing for a maximum lifespan of seventy-five years in this era)[27] and would not have married until 1384 when he had attained the age of majority.[28] Using the same argument, his fourth son Philip would have been born in 1385 again at the *earliest*. Given that Thomas had three older sons called Howel,

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[27] This is an optimistic estimate for this period. An analysis of age at death of English and Scottish sovereigns born after AD 1000 and before 1600 shows that only two (out of forty-three) survived to an age of death lying between seventy and seventy-five. *See* Maclennan, W. J. and Sellars, W. I., 'Ageing through the Ages', *Proc. R. Coll. Physicians Edinb.*, 29 (1999) 71–5.

[28] *See* for example, James, T. E., 'The age of majority', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 4 (1) (1960) 22–3.

Evan and David (and possibly an intervening daughter),[29] they would have been born between 1385 and 1388, placing the birth of his fourth son Philip around 1389 which would have made him seventy-one years old when he died (and fully consistent with the maximum lifespan of that era). His fifth son William, who would have been born around 1390, died in 1445, implying that he was perhaps only fifty-five years old at the time. If this scenario is correct, then William's marriage to Elizabeth Bloet could not have occurred shortly after 1406 as reported in several sources as he would still have been a minor. It seems more plausible that he married Elizabeth several years later, perhaps as late as 1411, when he also had attained the age of majority.

If indeed Thomas ap Gwilym had married around 1384 as suggested, it follows that his wife Maud (*née* Morley) was probably born between 1363 and 1368. These dates place the marriage of her father Sir John Morley perhaps a year or so earlier and consequently places his birth in turn between 1338 and 1347 (assuming that he was aged between twenty-one and twenty-five at the time). In Bradney's comprehensive account of the hundred of Abergavenny, which includes Llansantffraed, the coat of arms of Sir John Morley are described as: 'argent, a lion rampant sable, crowned or' [i.e. a silver shield overlaid with a rearing black lion capped with a gold crown] but no reference source is given.[30] Fortunately, this shield has been described elsewhere in three historical accounts of the Herbert chapel of St Mary's church in Abergavenny.[31] Firstly, Thomas Churchyard visited the Herbert chapel in 1587 and he refers to the effigies of Sir William ap Thomas and his wife Gwladus in the following way:[32]

> A Tombe in deed of charge and showe, /Amid the Chappell stands: /Where William Thomas knight ye knowe, /Lyes long with stretched hands, /A Harbert was he cal'd of right, /Who from great kindred cam, /And married to a worthy wight, /Daughter to Dauie Gam. [Churchyard also refers to the coat of arms:] His Arms three ramping Lyons white, /Behind his head in shield: /A crowned Lyon blacke is hers, /Set out in most rich field.

While Churchyard's first description is consistent with the arms of William ap Thomas which are known to be: 'per pale azure and gules, three lions rampant argent' [i.e. a vertically split blue and red shield with three upright white lions], his second observation does not tally with the arms of William's wife Gwladus, daughter of Dafydd Gam which are known to be: 'sable, a chevron between three spear-heads argent, embrued gules' [i.e. a black shield with three silver spears and a red chevron]. Bradney points out that Churchyard's second reference to the arms of 'a crowned black lion' is in error and does not refer to William's wife, but probably to those of his mother Maud Morley and by inference to those of Sir John Morley.[33]

During the Civil War, Richard Symonds the diarist, also visited the Herbert chapel of St Mary's church in 1645 and confirms Churchyard's description of the tomb of William ap Thomas.[34] He says that: 'Upon the surface lyes two statues, a man and woman; the man on the left hand'. He continues: 'At his head two angels support this shield [viz. a shield with the coat of Herbert] /Behind her head this: /Argent, a lion rampant sable, crowned or'. Yet a third account is given in Richard Gough's

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[29] Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2 The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 2*), 318.
[30] *Ibid*., 317.
[31] Morgan, *Mon. Caer. Antiq. Ass*., 41–53.
[32] Churchyard, Thomas, *The Worthiness of Wales* (London, 1587) 53.
[33] Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)* 163–5.
[34] Long, C.E. (ed.), Symonds, Richard, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the great Civil War* (Camden Society, London, 1859; reprinted by Cambridge University Press, 1997) 236.

revision of *Camden's History* (thought to have been described in 1646), in which he describes the shield in similar terms to Churchyard and Symonds, but he erroneously identifies the male effigy as being Thomas ap Gwillim Jenkin, rather than his son William ap Thomas, because he says 'at the head of his wife that lies on his right hand in full portraiture, in an escocheon [escutcheon], is the black lion rampant crowned or, being the arms of Morley'.[35]

There is some confusion here between the accounts as Symonds implies that the male effigy lies on the left hand side of the plinth while Gough implies the opposite.[36] The current arrangement of the tomb in the church is identical to that reported by Morgan in 1872 and is illustrated in Fig. 2 where the male effigy clearly lies on the right hand side.[37] Gough assumed that the female effigy was that of Maud Morley and by inference the male effigy her husband. The fact that the male effigy is dressed in armour, wears a helmet and collar of SS about his neck,[38] clearly indicates that this is Sir William ap Thomas. His father would not have been adorned in this way as he was not a knight.

Fig. 2. Alabaster tomb of Sir William ap Thomas and his wife Gwladus in the Herbert chapel of St Mary's church, Abergavenny.
Photograph: The author.

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[35] Gough, Richard, *Camden's Britannia: Or, a Chronological Description of the Flourishing Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the Islands Adjacent; From the Earliest Antiquity* (London, 1789, 2nd edit., 1806); for a summary *see* Morgan, *Mon. Caer. Antiq. Ass*., 44–5.

[36] The perspective will depend on the observer's position and the comments here refer to the arrangement of the effigies as viewed from their feet.

[37] Photographed by the author on 31 May 2002.

[38] A collar of SS was originally a badge of the house of Lancaster. Henry IV was the first sovereign to grant this honour to the nobility as a mark of royal favour.

The will of William Herbert, son of William ap Thomas, provides further confirmation of the identity of the effigy as he states in it that he wished 'to be buried in the Priory of Burgavenny, under charge, between *my fader's tomb* and the chancell'.[39] Symonds also describes the east window of the church which contained several coats of arms in one quartered shield.[40] These were usually displayed for the purpose of denoting the alliances within a family. In this case, he reports that the first quarter of the shield displayed the Herbert coat of arms: 'Per pale azure and gules, three lions rampant argent', while the others were described as 'Argent, three cocks, or wyverns, legged or. / Argent, a lion rampant sable, crowned or. /Sable, a chevron between three [spear-heads] argent'.

In reverse order, the last coat of arms is clearly that of William ap Thomas's father-in-law, Dafydd Gam; the third is undoubtedly the coat of arms of Sir John Morley, William's grandfather; the identity of the second coat of arms is less straightforward but is thought to be that of Einion Sais (living 1271), who was an antecedent of Dafydd Gam and whose castle lay in the Usk valley at Penpont.[41] Given this information, it is difficult to understand why the Morley shield lay above the head of Gwladus, the daughter of Dafydd Gam, on the effigies. However, in Morgan's view, the tomb in the Herbert chapel had been mutilated, if not altogether destroyed at the time of the reformation[42] and he had very great doubts whether anything that was then visible in *circa* 1872, except the two recumbent figures, formed any part of the original monument. He goes on to suggest that the sculptured slabs of alabaster encasing the tomb, were originally decorations for the altar of what was the Lady chapel, which were removed during the reformation and then later placed around the tomb.[43] It is likely that any coat of arms may well have suffered the same fate and have been moved and the Morley one placed erroneously at the head of Gwladus at a later date, but *before* Churchyard's visit in 1587. Unfortunately, all of the shields and coats of arms have disappeared from the church and were probably destroyed by parliamentarian soldiers according to Morgan.

Where exactly Bradney obtained his description of the coat of arms of Sir John Morley is not entirely clear although he was obviously aware of Churchyard's account which is described above. Chesshyre and Woodcock's *Dictionary of British Arms* lists the arms of a number of Morleys but none are attributed to Monmouthshire or Wales.[44] One set of entries, however, refer to the Morleys of Norfolk whose arms are *identical* with those discussed above, *viz*, 'argent a lion rampant sable

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[39] For an abstract of the will, *see* Morgan, *Mon. Caer. Antiq. Ass.*, (1872) 52. William Herbert's wish was not granted as he was he was buried at Tintern after his execution. His brother, Sir Richard Herbert, who was also executed, was buried near the spot William had requested.

[40] Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the great Civil War*, 234.

[41] Davies, R. R., *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063–1415*, 284, 319, 409–10. Einion Sais had fought under Edward III at Crecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356) and, after a lengthy residence in England, had returned to Wales enriched by the spoils of war. He took as his wife the wealthy heiress of Hywel, lord of Miskin in Glamorgan. Einion became a substantial landowner in his own right by purchasing the whole of what was later called the hundred of Defynnog, from Llywel on the border of Carmarthenshire to the river Tarell outside Brecon. He built as a home for himself a castellated mansion near the fall of a small brook into the river Usk at Penpont, some four miles to the west of Brecon on the road leading to Llandovery. *See* Thomas, W. S., *Footprints in the Sand, Brecknock Notabilities* (Gomer Press, Llandysul, 1994).

[42] In 1547, iconoclastic reformers had been instructed to destroy all shrines, pictures, paintings and all other monuments of feigned miracles. *See* Aston, Margaret, *England's Iconoclasts*, vol. 1, *Laws against Images* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988).

[43] Morgan, *Mon. Caer. Antiq. Ass.*, 42–4.

[44] Chesshyre, D. H. B. and Woodcock T. (eds), *Dictionary of British Arms, Medieval Ordinary* (hereafter *DBA*) vol. 1 (Society of Antiquaries, London, 1992); *see* also Burke, Sir Bernard, *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales* (hereafter *TGA*) (Harrison & Sons, London, 1884).

crowned or'.[45] The Morleys of Norfolk[46] were a very powerful family in late medieval England and had great influence with the kings of England. The most prominent member of this family was Robert de Morley of Morley and Roydon.[47] He was the first son of William de Morley, known as the first Baron Morley, in the reign of Edward I.[48] William was summoned to parliament from 29 December 1299 to 3 October 1306[49] and almost certainly gained his title through a series of military actions, initially perhaps by participating in the king's Welsh campaigns which culminated in the annexation of the principality by the treaty of Rhuddlan in 1284.[50] In October 1294 he took part in the abortive expedition to Gascony in the company of Roger de Mohaut[51] under the earl of Richmond and served there again in the campaigns of 1295 and 1296. In November 1297 he travelled north in the company of Ralph de Monthermer, earl of Gloucester and Hertford, to drive back the Scots, who had devastated the border counties after William Wallace's victory at Stirling Bridge on 11 September 1297.[52] He was present, along with Robert de Mohaut,[53] at the battle of Falkirk, which was fought on 22 July 1298, when the army of Edward I, which included 10,000 Welshmen,[54] defeated a Scottish army under William Wallace.[55] William de Morley became a baron a year or so later.

William's son, Robert de Morley, the second baron, was born around 1295 and summoned to parliament in 1317.[56] He married Hawise Marshall, daughter of William Marshall in 1316. Following the death of Hawise's brother, John, in 1317, Robert succeeded to the titles of Lord Marshall of Hingham and Rye, in right of Hawise his wife. This marriage brought Morley estates in Norfolk, Essex, Hertford and elsewhere and in July 1324, he became marshal of Ireland, by which time he had been knighted. Their son, William, was born in 1319. Robert Morley married for a second time by September 1334, to Joan (d. 1358), who was possibly the daughter of Sir Peter Tyes. They

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45 Chesshyre and Woodcock, *DBA*, vol. 1, 164, 166, 235; Burke, *TGA*, 707.

46 Doubleday, H. A. and Lord Howard de Walden (eds), Cokayne, George Edward, *The Complete Peerage, or A History of the House of Lords and all its Members from the Earliest Times* (hereafter *TCP*), vol. IX (London, 1936) 209–19.

47 Ayton, Andrew, 'Morley, Robert, second Lord Morley', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*, [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19290; accessed 25 Oct. 2004]; Calton, Robert Bell, *Annals and Legends of Calais: With Sketches of Emigre Notabilities, and Memoir of Lady Hamilton* (London, 1852) 146–8.

48 Ayton, 'Morley, Robert', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*; *see* also the entry for 'Hingham' in Blomefield, Francis, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* (hereafter *Hist. Nor.*), vol. 1 (Norwich, 1805) 666–81.

49 Lee, Sidney (ed.), Pollard, A. F., 'Morley, Robert', *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 39 (London, 1894).

50 The king, who had been crowned on 19 Aug. 1274, had pursued a major campaign in Wales to control Llywelyn ap Gruffydd and unify England and Wales. This campaign began in 1277, lasted until Llywelyn's death in 1282 and resulted in the construction of a number of new castles to quell intermittent revolts by the Welsh (*see* for example Davies, John, *A History of Wales*, chap. 5).

51 Also referred to in some sources as Roger de Montalt.

52 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP*, 210–11; Blake, William J., 'Norfolk Manorial Lords in 1316', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 30 (1952) 235–85.

53 He was the brother of Roger de Mohaut (Montalt) who had died in 1296.

54 Carr, *Welsh Hist. Rev.*, 23.

55 The arms and name of William de Morley are present on '*The Falkirk Roll*' which was composed in Anglo-Norman dialect shortly after the battle and copied by Robert Glover around 1585. *See* Brault, Gerard J., *Rolls of Arms of Edward I* (Society of Antiquaries, London, 1996); [URL: http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms1/rolls/falkirkH.html].

56 Pollard, *Dictionary of National Biography*, 82–3; Ayton, 'Morley, Robert, second Lord Morley', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*

had two sons, Robert the elder,[57] Henry who was born around 1344[58] and possibly others.[59] Robert Morley, the second baron, had a distinguished military and administrative career. He was summoned to parliament from 20 November 1317 to 15 December 1357. He was active in numerous military campaigns such Edward II's disastrous expedition to Scotland in 1322 and the dispiriting Weardale campaign in 1327, which ended inconclusively at Stanhope Park. He also fought at the battle of Halidon Hill on 19 July 1333 and served in Scotland during the winter of 1334–5.

On 18 February 1339, Morley was appointed admiral of the northern fleet and quickly established himself as an effective naval leader. During the summer of that year, having repulsed a French maritime attack on the Cinque Ports, he successfully raided the Normandy coast. This was followed by his key role in the battle of Sluys on 24 June 1340 where he broke the first, second and third lines of the French fleet in the Zwin estuary and won the greatest naval victory the English had yet achieved. This was the bloodiest battle of the Hundred Years' War and soon after he sailed to Normandy and burnt eighty of the French ships and two villages. Morley continued to serve as admiral of the northern fleet until December 1342 and it was in that capacity that he accompanied the earl of Northampton's expedition to Brittany in August 1342. In July 1346, he accompanied Edward III to Normandy and fought at the battle of Crécy and the siege of Calais. During the siege Morley played an active role in the blockade and significantly as far as this current article is concerned, successfully defended his right to bear the arms 'argent, a lion rampant sable, crowned and armed or', against a challenge from Sir Nicholas Burnell before the court of chivalry. This coat of arms was granted around the time of Edward I (1272–1307)[60] and one representation is illustrated as Fig. 3.[61] In March 1355 Morley was reappointed admiral of the northern fleet and in August of the same year he became constable of the Tower of London, posts that he continued to hold until his death in France on the 23 March 1360 during the campaign begun by Edward III the previous year. This brought to an end an extraordinary career that had lasted forty-five years.[62]

Confusingly, the description of this coat of arms in the dispute of 1346 at Calais is slightly different to that given by Chesshyre and Woodcock as it contains the additional expression 'armed'. However, in heraldry this term means 'clawed' and it is usually implicit in the description of the lion

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57 Blomefield, 'Hundred of Forehoe: Morley', *Hist. Nor.*, vol. 2 (Norwich, 1805) 476–82. The entry under 'The Manor of Morley Hall' states: 'Sir William de Morley, assigned it to *Sir Robert Morley*, his half-brother, he being eldest son to Robert deceased, by Joan, his second wife'. [URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=78100&strquery="robert morley"; Date accessed 6 May 2010].

58 Blomefield, 'Freebridge Hundred and Half: Grimston', *Hist. Nor.*, vol. 8 (Norwich, 1808) 441–52. The entry under 'Morley's Manor' states: 'Sir Robert Morley was found to die beyond sea, seized of this lordship, and Sir William Morley was his son, aged 30, by Hawisia his first wife, daughter and heir of William Mareshall, Knt. and Henry Morley, aged 15, and Robert, were his sons, by his second wife'. [URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=78490&strquery="robert morley". Date accessed 6 May 2010].

59 Burke, Sir Bernard, *A Genealogical History of the Dormant, Abeyant, Forfeited, and Extinct Peerages of the British Empire* (hereafter *GHEP*) (London, 1866) 382. The entry under 'Barons Morley' and 'Robert de Morley, the second baron' states: 'he m. 2ndly Joane, dau. of Sir Peter Tyes, and had, *with other issue*, Robert (Sir), who in the 41st EDWARD III attended Prince Edward into Aquitaine'. [URL: http://books.google.co.uk/books/about/A_Genealogical_History_of_the_Dormant_Ab.html?id=1DEGAAAAQAAJ&redir_esc=y].

60 Chesshyre and Woodcock, vol. 1, *DBA*, 164, 166, 235.

61 This illustration, created from a photograph taken by the author, is based on the coat of arms of William de Morley (the third baron) which is prominently displayed on the east window of the church of All Saints at Swanton Morley in Norfolk. For a variation of this coat of arms, *see* [URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Blason_Thomas_de_Morley_%28selon_Gelre%29.svg].

62 Ayton, 'Morley, Robert, second Lord Morley', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*

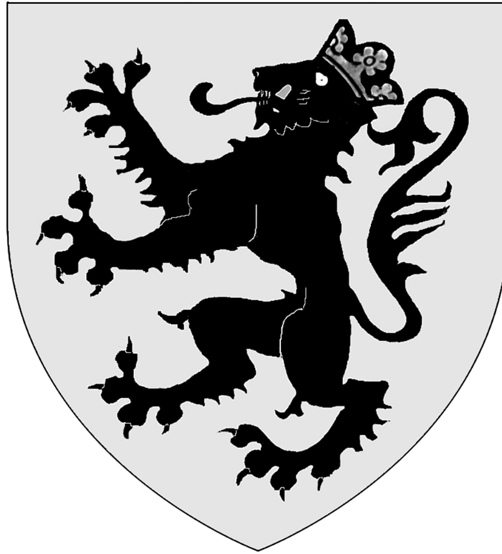

Fig. 3. The Morley coat of arms (Norfolk): ‘argent, a lion rampant sable, crowned and armed or’. *Photograph: The author.*

and often excluded.[63] In Norfolk, where a number of churches at one time prominently displayed the Morley coat of arms, the claw was sometimes shown on the shield, for example, at Hingham (on a monument described later) and Cranworth (on a window), while in other churches such as Aldeby (on a shield in the porch) and Hockering (on a reading stall) it was not.[64]

William de Morley, the third baron, was born on 24 June 1319 and he had married Cicely Bardolf, the daughter of Lord Thomas Bardolf, by 6 March 1344.[65] He succeeded to the title of Baron Morley following the death of his father Robert in France in 1360 and inherited the manors of Morley and Hingham amongst others and the hundreds of Forehoe and Eynesford. In contrast to the swashbuckling career of his father, little is known about William although he was certainly marshal of Ireland. In 1335, he was one of the attendants of Robert, earl of Suffolk in the service of Edward III in Gascony which at that time was an English duchy. William Morley was knighted in 1356. He was a ‘parliamentary baron’ having been summoned to parliament at various times between 1361 and 1378 and he was the first to use the title of Lord Morley. William is remembered for the church of All Saints in the village of Swanton Morley which was erected partly at his expense before 1379[66] and still stands intact today.[67]

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63 Parker, James, *A Glossary of Terms used in Heraldry* (London, 1894).

64 Farrer, Edmund, *The church heraldry of Norfolk: a description of all coats of arms on brasses, monuments, slabs, hatchments, etc., now to be found in the county. Illustrated. With references to Blomefield's History of Norfolk and Burke's Armory*, vol. 1 (Norwich, 1887) 276, 303, 97, 311 [URL: http://www.archive.org/stream/churchheraldryn01farrgoog].

65 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP*, 214–5.

66 In the will of William de Morley, dated 13 April 1379 (Norwich consistory court wills, no. 160, Norfolk Record Office), he states ‘I give my gilt chalice to the parish church of Swanton …. Also I give to work on the fabric of the same church already begun 10 marks (£6 13s. 4d.)’.

67 *See* the entries for ‘Swanton Morley’ in: (i) *Kelly's Directory for Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk* (Norwich, 1883) 513; and (ii) Lewis, Samuel (ed.), *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (London, 1848) 283–6.

William and Cicely had two sons, John who was the elder[68] and Thomas, who was born about 1354.[69] Following the death of William, the third baron, on 30 April 1379 at Hallingbury in Essex and his burial at Austin Friars' priory in Norfolk,[70] Thomas became the fourth Baron Morley as his elder brother John was already dead by this date.[71] Thomas was active in the French Wars[72] and died in Calais in 1416; he was buried in the same church as his father. His only son, Robert, who had predeceased him, was also buried at Austin Friars' priory,[73] but his son, in turn, called Thomas, was born around 1393 and became the fifth Baron Morley of Rye and marshall of Ireland following the death of his grandfather in 1416. He died in 1435 and was buried in Hingham church where there is still an exceptional red sandstone monument to him and to the Morleys, reflecting the family's reputation and prominence in Norfolk and England, which rises to the full height of the chancel (Fig. 4).[74] According to Pevsner, this is 'one of the most impressive wall monuments of the 15th century in the whole of England' though he dates it after Morley's death in 1435.[75]

The title of Baron Morley became extinct in 1442 with death of Robert, the sixth Lord Morley[76] although his daughter, Eleanor (or Alienore) eventually married William Lovell, who was summoned to parliament in 1469 as Lord Morley in right of his wife.

Significantly, William's first son, John Morley, mentioned above, *decessit vita patris sine prole* (died in the lifetime of his father and without issue) and although he was known to be alive in 1367 (*see* later), he had clearly died before 1379. His father William, the third baron, had married by 1344 (and perhaps earlier) and it follows that John would have been born around 1345 possibly at Morley Hall in Hingham.[77] There are no further records of John Morley that have been unearthed in Norfolk or England, but given the likely date of his birth and the arms he bore, the limited evidence presented here suggests that he may have been the person living in Llansantffraed in the fourteenth century (*see* later). This conclusion has been proposed elsewhere at the time this work was in progress, but with no supporting evidence.[78] In an alternative scenario, it has been suggested that John Morley of Llansantffraed was not the son of William Morley the third baron but rather another son resulting

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68 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP,* 215. A footnote on this page under William (de Morley), the third baron, states: 'John Morley, *s. and h. app*'.

69 *Ibid*., 216. The entry under Thomas (de Morley) states he was 's. and h., aged 25 at his father's death'. His father William died in 1379.

70 Blomefield, 'Upper, or North Conisford ward', *Hist. Nor.: The History of the City and County of Norwich, part II*, vol. 4 (Norwich, 1806) 84–90. Only the remains of this Austin Friars' priory are now visible in King Street, Norwich.

71 *Ibid*. Blomefield reports that a 'John Morley Esq.' was also buried in Austin Friars' priory, but because he places this event to between 1401 and 1416, this person was certainly not the first son of baron William Morley. [URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=78118. Date accessed 7 Jan. 2010].

72 *See* for example the entry for 'Morley' in *The Online Froissart: A digital edition of the Chronicles of Jean Froissart* [URL: http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/formy.jsp].

73 Blomefield, vol. 4, *Hist. Nor.*, 84–90.

74 Photographed by the author on 15 Aug. 2010.

75 Pevsner, Nikolaus, *English Parish Churches as Works of Art* (Batsford, 1974).

76 Burke, *GHEP*, 382. [URL: http://books.google.co.uk/books/about/A_Genealogical_History_of_the_Dormant_Ab.html?id=1DEGAAAAQAAJ&redir_esc=y]; Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP,* 209–19.

77 Blomefield, *see* the entry for 'Hundred of Forehoe: Morley', vol. 2, *Hist. Nor.*, 1805, 476–82.

78 For details of this suggestion, *see* the contribution by Jim Weber on the website of the 'Phillips, Weber, Kirk, & Staggs Families of the Pacific Northwest' [URL: http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=jweber&id=I14656].

Fig. 4. The Morley tomb at St Andrew's church, Hingham, Norfolk.
Photograph: The author.

from the second marriage of William's father, Robert Morley, to Joan de Tyes.[79] If so, he would have been the half-brother of William Morley, the third baron, rather than his son. But, although Robert Morley had married Joan de Tyes by September 1334, they appear to have had only two known sons named Robert and Henry (*see* earlier)[80] and possibly a daughter named Joan. There is no evidence at all to support the contention that John was another son resulting from this marriage.

The inference reached here concerning the origins of Sir John Morley is further reinforced by Richard Symonds's account of Raglan castle in 1645, during the civil war.[81] Following a description of the coat of arms of the earl of Worcester in the gallery of the castle, Symonds continues with the statement:

> These are old in the hall windowes of this strong and princely castle: /Argent, a lion rampant sable within a garter [Thomas Lord Morley ob. 1416] /Herbert, within a garter /This is carved, old, on the wall on the outside: /Three lions rampant, impaling, a fess, in chief three martlets /Herbert was the antient owner of the castle.

His second description tallies with the coats of arms later adopted by William Herbert, first earl of Pembroke and the other with Thomas Lord Morley, who he says died (*obitus*) in 1416. Given the date of death,[82] the Thomas Morley described here by Symonds is clearly the younger brother of John Morley who became the fourth Baron Morley. This strongly suggests that the Herberts were directly connected to this branch of the Morleys of Norfolk.

All of the preceding evidence strongly suggests that Sir William ap Thomas's rise to prominence owes much to his family connection to the Morleys of Norfolk. There is also additional convincing evidence to show that he was closely associated with the family during his military service in the French wars. As stated earlier, Thomas Morley, the fourth baron, died in France in 1416; he was a knight of the Garter and captain-general of all the forces in France, although it does not appear that he fought at Agincourt. His only son, Robert, had predeceased him with the consequence that his son in turn, who was also called Thomas, became the fifth Baron Morley following the death of his grandfather in 1416. This Thomas fought there under the command of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester (the third brother of Henry V born in 1390), according to the muster rolls of that campaign.[83] Significantly, William Thomas also appears as an archer under the *same* commander at Agincourt on the *same* muster roll as Sir Thomas Morley,[84] strongly suggesting that both were acquainted given that Humphrey had only around 140 lances and about 400 archers in his retinue.[85] William Thomas's name also appears elsewhere in the muster rolls, this time under the command of William Montenay (also called Mountenay) at Agincourt,[86] but it is thought that this

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79 For details of this alternative suggestion, *see* the contribution by Jane Williams Flank on the website of the 'Williams/Rose Legacies' [URL: http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=jwflank &id=I01721]. Note that this account omits any reference to Henry, the second son from the second marriage of Robert Morley, the second baron.

80 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP,* 211–4.

81 Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the great Civil War*, 208.

82 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP,* 216.

83 TNA, E 101/45/13 m.2 [URL: http://www.medievalsoldier.org; date accessed 2 Jan. 2010].

84 TNA, E 101/45/13 m.1 [URL: http://www.medievalsoldier.org; date accessed 2 Jan. 2010].

85 Wylie, J. Hamilton, 'Notes on the Agincourt Roll', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 3rd series, 5 (1911) 105–40.

86 TNA, E 101/44/30/no.4 no.4 m.4 [URL: http://www.medievalsoldier.org; date accessed 5 Jan. 2010].

entry is a duplication of his service record.[87] It seems reasonable to infer that the person referred to in the muster rolls was indeed William ap Thomas of Raglan, who was a second cousin to and a contemporary of, Sir Thomas Morley (both were born around 1390). This inference assumes that William ap Thomas's grandfather was indeed the son of William Morley, the third baron. If so, it is possible that William had been recruited by his great uncle, Thomas, the fourth Baron Morley and was well-known to him because he was a descendant of his family.

The muster rolls also report that William Thomas was present on Henry V's second invasion of France in 1417 again under William Montenay, who this time is described as a captain, serving under Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.[88] William ap Thomas was knighted in 1426 during the reign of Henry VI as stated earlier. By this time a Regency council had been established in England following the death of Henry V in 1422 (in France) as the new king was less than a year old when he ascended the throne. Significantly, the council was dominated by Henry V's brothers, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester; John, duke of Bedford; and Cardinal Henry Beaufort. There seems little doubt that William's knighthood was supported by Humphrey on at least three counts. Firstly he was well aware of William's military service in France; secondly he would have known that William was related to the barons Morley of Norfolk; and thirdly he was aware that William had married Gwladus, the widow of Sir Roger Vaughan and the daughter of Dafydd Gam who were both heroes at Agincourt. His rise to fame was predicated therefore on all three counts but it is highly likely that his blood relationship to and military service with, the Morleys of Norfolk played a key role in his nomination for a knighthood.

There seems little doubt that the coat of arms originally present in the Hall windows at Raglan castle were there to prominently display the lineage of the Herberts which included the Morleys of Norfolk through the maternal line of Maud Morley. This would explain why the tomb and window of St Mary's priory in Abergavenny also prominently displayed the same coat of arms. The Herberts were clearly proud of their connection both with Dafydd Gam through marriage and the blood relationship with the Morleys of Norfolk and they would have used it to advantage in their quest for influence and position. This helps to partly explain the rapid rise to fame of William ap Thomas's son, William Herbert, under Henry VI and Edward IV. He was called by the Welsh, *Gwilim Ddu* (Black William) and he was knighted in 1452 and became chief justice and chamberlain of Wales for his service to the new king, Edward IV. He was also created baron of Raglan in 1461, became a knight of the Garter a year later and had custody of the future King Henry VII, who spent his boyhood at Raglan castle. William, who had adopted the surname Herbert as early as 1440, was summoned to parliament as Baron William Herbert, the first Welshman to join the ranks of the English titled aristocracy and he became the earl of Pembroke in 1468.[89] The choice of the name Herbert possibly comes from a Welsh commission established by Edward IV that purported to show that William's ancestral line came from Herbert the Chamberlain, represented as the natural son of Henry 1.[90]

When the Lancastrian insurrection broke out 1469, Edward IV commissioned Sir William, earl of Pembroke and his brother Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook, to lead an army of Welshmen

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87 Wylie comments that double entries were commonplace in the muster rolls (Wylie, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 122). There are only two entries for 'William Thomas' at *Agincourt* in the medieval soldier database.

88 TNA, E 101/51/2 m.34 [URL: http://www.medievalsoldier.org; date accessed 3 Jan. 2010].

89 Griffiths, R. A., 'Herbert, William, first earl of Pembroke (*c*. 1423–1469)', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*, [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13053, accessed 23 March 2011].

90 *See* the entry for the 'Herbert Family' in *The 1911 Classic Encyclopedia Britannica* [URL: http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Herbert_%28Family%291911 edition].

against the rebels.[91] Unfortunately their army was defeated at the battle of Edgecote, near Banbury on 26 July that year and William and his brother Richard, were captured and beheaded the next day in Northamptonshire by the forces of Richard Neville, the infamous ‘kingmaker’ and earl of Warwick.[92] While Warwick had cause to execute William Herbert, his execution of Richard Herbert was an act of pure malice.[93] The defeat was regarded in Wales as a national calamity as the list of dead included the cream of the aristocracy of south Wales. Around 168 Welshmen of note are said to have fallen. Richard Neville met his *nemesis* soon afterwards when he was defeated by the forces of Edward IV at the battle of Barnet on 14 April 1471 and killed. William Herbert’s son, also called William, succeeded him but he was forced to renounce the title of earl of Pembroke and became the earl of Huntingdon instead. Following his death around 1491, his daughter Elizabeth married Sir Charles Somerset and his successors became earls of Worcester. Raglan castle remained in that family until its destruction. The fifth earl became a marquess in 1642.[94]

Richard Symonds’s description of Raglan castle in July 1645 was probably the last known account of the complete building.[95] In August 1646, the castle was surrendered to General Sir Thomas Fairfax after a long siege. The castle was soon demolished, although it appears that the roof of the hall remained for twenty years afterwards as it was apparently difficult to dismantle. Tragically, the library which was celebrated for its wealth of Welsh manuscripts and books and said to be the finest collection in south Wales, was destroyed and all the books were burnt at this time. The timber and lead from the castle were taken to Bristol to rebuild Bristol bridge. For many years after the siege, Raglan castle was used as a stone repository, the people of the neighbourhood going there for materials to repair their farm houses and cottages.[96]

From all of the available information it would appear that William ap Thomas’s grandfather, Sir John Morley, was born around 1345 in Norfolk and would have married around 1366 at the earliest, when he had reached the age of majority. However, if he was the first son of Baron William Morley, it is not clear why a major figure of his standing was based in the principality. Because archers from the Welsh Marches are known to have played an important role in the Hundred Years War,[97] it is conceivable that he was based there to recruit forces for the army and perhaps afterwards to strengthen the Welsh castles against the threat of invasion (*see* later). The longbow, used by Welsh archers, had shown its efficacy initially at the battle of Crecy in 1346 and later at the battle of Poitiers in 1356, where it was instrumental in the heavy defeat of the French. At Crecy, over 3,000 Welshman had been raised in the principality and a similar number in the Marches.[98] Recruitment centres in Wales for the Hundred Years War are known to have included Abergavenny and almost certainly Raglan and the Three Castles (*see* later).[99]

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91 Thomas, D. H., *The Herberts of Raglan and the Battle of Edgecote* (Enfield, 1994).
92 Evans, *Wales and the War of the Roses*, 156–87.
93 *Ibid.,* 186.
94 Bradney, J. A., ‘Raglan Castle’, *Trans. Bristol and Gloucester Archaeology Soc.*, XX (1896) 76–87.
95 Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the great Civil War*, 206–8.
96 Bradney, *Trans. Bristol and Gloucester Archaeology Soc.*, 81 (1896) 86–7.
97 Carr, *Welsh Hist. Rev.*, 21–46.
98 *Ibid.,* 24. It is unlikely that anything like this number actually took part in the action; disease and desertion took a high toll of medieval armies and the number of Welshmen present on the field was probably something between 3,500 and 5,000.
99 *Ibid.,* 27. For the Breton campaign in 1343, north Wales was required to recruit 498 men, south Wales 415, Glamorgan 332, Abergavenny 156 and the other lordships multiples of 83.

John Morley, the first son of Baron William Morley, was a military man like other members of his family and it is known that in 1367, he served in Spain under Edward, the Black Prince,[100] along with his uncle, Sir Robert Morley (his father's half-brother).[101] This campaign in the Castilian civil war had been undertaken by an Anglo-Gascon army in support of the deposed King Pedro of Castile.[102] The English contingent had been recruited by Prince Edward's brother, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, in England in late 1366.[103] Interestingly, Edward's forces also included John Hastings, the second earl of Pembroke, born in 1347, who had succeeded to his father's estate in Abergavenny following the latter's death there in 1348;[104] and William Beauchamp, born in 1344, who later became known as Lord Bergavenny (following the death of John Hastings in France in 1375).[105] Sir John Bluet, lord of Raglan, born in 1340, had earlier participated in the French wars[106] and it is possible that he too was part of Edwards's army. All three men were therefore contemporaries of John Morley and were strongly connected with the Welsh Marches.

The English forces, which included a Welsh contingent,[107] were successful and won a resounding victory at the battle of Najera in northern Castile on 3 April 1367. They appeared to have suffered few casualties but the Spanish experienced huge losses. The English army then marched to Burgos, where the Black Prince declared Pedro, King of Castile. Once on the throne, however, King Pedro refused to meet his agreed financial obligations to Prince Edward and his army was obliged to live off the country for several months. Famine and heat were fast reducing Edward's ranks and accordingly he decided to return to Bordeaux and arrived there in early September 1367.[108] It is not known what became of John Morley, but it is likely that he would have returned to England shortly after the Spanish campaign with his uncle, although the possibility that he may have perished in

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100 Cokayne, vol. IX, *TCP,* 215. A footnote on this page under William (de Morley), the third baron, states: 'John Morley, s. and h. app. He served in 1367 in Prince Edward's expedition into Spain. He apparently d.v.p. and s.p'. This statement is referenced by C.M. nos. 32, 35 (TNA, Chancery Miscellanea, C 47).

101 Burke, *GHEP*, 382. The entry under 'Robert de Morley, the second baron' states that his son Sir Robert (by his second marriage) 'in the 41st EDWARD III attended Prince Edward into Aquitaine'. This corresponds to the year 1367 and to Prince Edward's expedition into Spain *via* Aquitaine. *See* the website [URL: http://books.google.co.uk/books/about/A_Genealogical_History_of_the_Dormant_Ab.html?id=1DEGAAAAQAAJ&redir_esc=y].

102 Vickers, K. H., *England in the Later Middle Ages: History of England* , vol. III (London, 1913) 209–16. [URL: http://www23.us.archive.org/stream/englandinlatermi03vickuoft#page/208/mode/2up]; Mackinnon, J., *The History of Edward the Third, 1312–1377* (London, 1900) 490–505 [URL: http://archive.org/stream/historyedwardth00mackgoog#page/n516/mode/2up].

103 Vickers, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, vol. III, 212.

104 Jack, R. Ian, 'Hastings, John, thirteenth earl of Pembroke (1347–1375)', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*, [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12580, accessed 18 July 2012]. Laurence Hastings, the first earl of Pembroke, was born on 20 March 1319 in Warwickshire, but died on 29 Aug. 1348 and was buried in the priory church in Abergavenny. His son, John (b. 1347; d. 1375), fought at Najera and in other campaigns of the French wars; he was captured in 1372, released some three years later but died in Picardy *en route* to England.

105 Carpenter, Christine, 'Beauchamp, William (V), first Baron Bergavenny (*c*.1343–1411)', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*, [URL: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50236, accessed 18 July 2012]. William Beauchamp [lord of Abergavenny] was the third son of Thomas Beauchamp, the third earl of Warwick. In 1367, William was at the battle of Najera and attended John of Gaunt. In 1378, Richard II granted William the custody of Pembroke castle and its estates as the son of John Hastings was a minor.

106 Ayton, Andrew, *Knights and Warhorses; Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 1994; 1999) 266 [URL: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=rnHfh4tLQHcC&pg=PA292&lpg=PA292&dq=sir+john+bluet]. John Bluet was present at the Rheims campaign of 1359–60.

107 Carr, *Welsh Hist. Rev.*, 28.

108 Mackinnon, *The History of Edward the Third* (1900) 503–4.

Spain cannot be completely ruled out. His uncle, Sir Robert Morley, clearly returned to England and continued to serve in the French wars; he died in England in 1385 or 1390.[109] John Hastings and William Beauchamp also survived the Spanish campaign though the former died in captivity in France some eight years later.[110]

According to Bradney, Llansantffraed was the seat and estate of Sir John Morley[111] and although it is by no means certain that he was the son and heir of William de Morley, the third baron, the limited evidence presented here points to that conclusion. Bradney further reports that Tre Adam, in the parish of Llantilio Crossenny, was also a seat of Sir John Morley implying that Morley held several estates in Gwent.[112] Unfortunately, Bradney's work has been criticized in recent times on several counts, for example, his sources are limited and his use of them uncritical and lacking in analysis or interpretation.[113]

Furthermore, he appears to have made little use of original documents and his reference sources are often obscure. It is not at all clear, for instance, where he obtained his detailed information on Sir John Morley. There is no record of Morley's knighthood[114] although his brother, Thomas de Morley, the fourth baron, is known to have been made a knight of the Garter much later around 1411.[115] It must be assumed therefore that John Morley's title was an honorary one bestowed on him as a son and heir of a baron and as a member of the landed aristocracy.

That Morley had no other children suggests that he died a year or so after the birth of his daughter, Maud, but well before 1379.[116] As a vulnerable child and Morley's heir it is likely that Maud would have married at an early age to gain security. She is thought to have married Thomas ap Gwilym around 1384 (*see* earlier) placing her birth somewhere between 1363 at the earliest, to 1369 at the latest, when she would have been only fifteen years old. This suggests that Morley was living in the Marches in this era and was possibly resident there prior to his service in Spain under John of Gaunt.

One of Morley's seats at Tre Adam lay within a mile of White Castle, one of the 'Three Castles' or 'Trilateral' which also included Grosmont and Skenfrith, all originally built in the Monnow valley as part of the Norman conquest of south Wales and later used as defences against the attack of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd on the southern March.[117] In the fourteenth century they were owned by

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109 Blomefield, 'Hundred of Forehoe: Morley', *Hist. Nor.*, vol. 2 (Norwich, 1805) 476–82. The entry under 'The Manor of Morley Hall' for Sir Robert Morley, the half-brother of Baron William Morley, states 'this *Robert* was often in the *French* wars, and *died in 1385*, leaving Sir *Robert de Morley*, Knt. his son'. [URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=78100&strquery="robert morley"; date accessed 28 June 2012]. Copinger, W. A., *The Manors of Suffolk. Notes on Their History and Devolution. The Hundreds of Thingoe, Thredling, Wangford, and Wilford*, vol. 7 (Manchester, 1911) 143. The entry under 'Framsden' states 'Sir Robert de Morley died seised of the manor in 1390, when it passed to his son and heir, Sir Robert'. [URL: http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924092579600/cu31924092579600_djvu.txt].

110 Jack, 'Hastings, John, thirteenth earl of Pembroke (1347–1375)', *Ox. Dict. Nat. Biogr.*

111 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2b the Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 2)*, 317.

112 Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*, 103.

113 Davies, E.T., *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': an assessment* (Abergavenny, 1986).

114 Shaw, W. A., *The Knights of England*, vol. 1 (London, 1906) [URL: http://www.archive.org/stream/knightsofengland01shawuoft#page/n7/mode/2up].

115 *See* the 'List of Knights and Ladies of the Garter' in Wikipedia [URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Knights_and_Ladies_of_the_Garter].

116 His younger brother Thomas succeeded to the baronetcy following the death of their father, William de Morley, that year (*see* text).

117 Davies, R. R., *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales 1282–1400*; *idem*, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063–1415*.

Henry of Grosmont, duke of Lancaster and following his death in 1361, they were inherited by John of Gaunt, who had married Henry's coheir and daughter, Blanche. John of Gaunt became duke of Lancaster in 1362 and he was by then well established, owning at least thirty castles and estates across England and France. These could not be managed by him alone and it is suggested that Morley may have been chosen as his representative to administer the 'Three Castles' which were centres of local authority in the Welsh Marches. His family were well-known to Edward III and also to John of Gaunt, the king's third son, because both William de Morley, the third baron and Robert de Morley, the prominent second baron (John Morley's father and grandfather respectively), had served the king loyally in the French wars. It is possible therefore that John Morley, who resided in the Welsh Marches, was responsible for raising Welsh forces for John of Gaunt in late 1366 for the Spanish expedition. If Morley returned from this campaign, the estimated date of his death, around 1367–70 corresponds with that period of time when a natural calamity befell that area of Gwent where he resided.

A few years after Morley was born, the plague or Black Death had swept through England and Wales on several occasions.[118] Norfolk was very badly affected because of its sea ports and the population there was decimated in many places and many fled the shire to live elsewhere.[119] In Wales, the first wave of the epidemic had reached Carmarthen and Abergavenny by March 1349, followed by a second wave in 1361. However, the upper Gwent area where Morley lived, was subject to a further wave of the plague in 1369 and such was the severity on this occasion that it became known as the Second Pestilence.[120] The number of people killed is difficult to estimate as records of the manorial rents collected in this period (the only form of population measurement) tended to be merged with those still outstanding from the previous epidemic. Nonetheless, it is known from the rent accounts in 1369 for Trellech, that this town which lay only five miles or so east of Raglan castle and which was one of the largest in Wales,[121] lost nearly one-third of its citizens, with a similar reduction in the local population at the 'Three Castles'.[122] While these manorial records show that the death rate was always higher amongst the poor, the rich and the powerful also perished.[123] It is possible therefore, that Morley and perhaps his wife may have been victims of this pandemic which their daughter Maud survived. This may explain why no further records of him exist either in the Welsh Marches or in Norfolk.

Alternatively, the likelihood that Morley died during or after the battle of Najera in northern Castile or in a battle during one of the subsequent engagements of the Hundred Years War cannot be

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118 Rees, William, 'The Black Death in Wales', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th series, III (1920) 115–135; Davies, John, *A History of Wales*, 186.

119 It has been claimed that Norwich alone lost 57,374 inhabitants out of an estimated population of 70,000, *see* for example Gasquet, Francis Aidan, *The Black Death of 1348 and 1349* (London, 1893, republished 2008), 149–153.

120 Rees, 'The Black Death in Wales', 124.

121 In 1288, this town had 378 burgages making it the second and possibly even the largest, town in Wales at that time. *See* TNA, Special collections: ministers' and receivers' accounts, SC 6/1247/21); Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech*.

122 Rees, 'The Black Death in Wales', 124–5.

123 For example, Edward III's second daughter, Joanna, died of plague in Bordeaux while on her way to marry Pedro, the heir of Castile. In England, the archbishop of Canterbury, John Stratford, died in August 1348, his successor died in May 1349 and the next appointee three months later. Sir John Pulteney, master draper and four times lord mayor of London was a victim, as was Sir John Montgomery, governor of Calais (*see* the electronic book Tschanz, David W., *Medieval Life & The Hundred Years War*, 1994 [URL: http://www.hyw.com/Books/History/Plague.htm].

discounted. For example, in 1370, John of Gaunt was sent with one English army into Gascony and Sir Robert Knolles (Knowles) with another into Calais, following rebellions by the French against English rule in Aquitaine and elsewhere the previous year. Knolles's expedition was unsuccessful following dissent in his ranks and part of his army was defeated at the battle of Pontvallain in 1370 with heavy losses, bringing to an end the thirty-year reputation of English invincibility in open battle.[124] Nonetheless, if Morley was indeed involved in any of these campaigns in France, it is surprising that no record of his death appears to exist considering the importance of his family at this time.

In conclusion, evidence has been presented in this account to unequivocally link Sir John Morley of Llansantffread and Tre Adam to the Morleys of Norfolk. He is thought to have been the elder son of William de Morley, the third Baron Morley of Norfolk and he would have succeeded to the baronetcy in 1379 had he lived. His grandson, William ap Thomas, appears to have retained the connection with the Norfolk family as he served at Agincourt under the command of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, along with Thomas Morley, who is thought to have been his second cousin and who later became the fifth Baron Morley. There seems little doubt that William ap Thomas and his son, William Herbert, used this maternal connection with the Morleys of Norfolk to further their quest for power and influence and this association almost certainly contributed to their rise to fame under both Henry VI and Edward IV.

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[124] Tout, T. F., *History of England From the Accession of Henry III to the Death of Edward III* (London, 1905) 411–15. [URL: http://archive.org/stream/historyofengland00toutuoft#page/410/mode/2up].

QUARTER SESSIONS AND THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

By Tony Hopkins

Three or four parsons, three or four squires
Three or four lawyers, three or four lyars,
Three or four parishes bringing appeals,
Three or four hands, and three or four seals,
Three or four bastards, three or four whores,
Tag, Rag and Bob-tail, three or four scores;
Three or four bulls, three or four cows,
Three or four orders, three or four bows,
Three or four statutes not understood,
Three or four paupers, praying for food,
Three or four roads that never were mended,
Three or four scolds – and the Sessions is ended.

'A Country Quarter Sessions', *Ladies' Magazine,* 15 Dec. 1750[1]

Even in its comedy this Hogarthian portrait suggests the scope of quarter sessions proceedings. Many justices may have struggled with some of the statutes at their disposal and their application of the law may have been less than perfect but sure enough, for the historian, 'here is God's plenty'. All strata of society were involved at the sessions for some reason or another. Squires (or the local gentry) served as JPs empanelled for the occasion; before them passed an array of people from all walks of life: thieves, vagabonds, whores and for a myriad reasons. The quarter sessions was in origin a court of law whose powers were extended during the Tudor period to include administrative functions relating to the county; the sessions became also a court of appeal to which, for example, parishes brought disputes over the removal of paupers; and not only people were on parade: the reference to bulls and cows reflects the power of justices to order the slaughter of distempered livestock when severe bovine plague swept the country. Farcical though it might sound, the verse suggests that condemned animals were brought before the justices by their owners pleading their good health.

Quarter sessions lasted for over 400 years in Wales and even longer in England and until 1889, was responsible for both the civil and judicial administration of the county. Its functions were wider and more authoritative than those of present day councils and its supervision of other local authorities such as the parish, more direct. In many respects the quarter sessions formed the eyes and ears of central government at local level and channeled information to and from central departments.

Origins

The beginnings of quarter sessions can be traced to the fourteenth century in England when an act of 1361 obliged justices of the peace to hold their sessions four times a year. Almost two centuries were to pass, however, before such sessions were introduced into Wales. Their arrival in the 1530s was a measure both of Tudor administrative prowess and the lawlessness that had become endemic throughout the country. The parliament of 1534 passed several statutes dealing with the problem of crime in the March and also empowered justices of the peace in neighbouring English shires to

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[1] Reprinted in Redstone, Lilian J. and Steer, Francis,W. (eds), *Local Records: their Nature and Care* (London, 1953) 120.

extradite known offenders from the marcher lordships and bring them back to their own shires for trial. The logical sequel to this was the act passed in 1536 which established JPs in the principality of Wales and in the royal lordships of Glamorgan and Pembroke. The office was extended to the rest of Wales by the first Act of Union of 1536. Before this act, Henry VIII had done no more than to continue his father's policy of restraining the excesses of the marcher lords. What was needed, however, was to 'turn the March into shires and introduce there the English judicial and administrative systems'.[2] The county of Monmouthshire thus came into being in 1536 and its administrative body, as in the other Welsh shires, was to be the quarter sessions presided over by justices of the peace. The introduction of the sessions into Wales thus put control of law and order into the hands of the leading local gentry and in so doing 'did much to create a sense of community among the county elite'.[3]

While quarter sessions in Monmouthshire are mentioned in the act of 1536, it is unlikely that they came into operation before the new shire was divided into hundreds. The earliest known appointment of a clerk of the peace for Monmouthshire is 1540 while cases tried in quarter sessions at Usk are mentioned in 1542.[4] These are probably the first sessions held in Monmouthshire.

Despite this early activity, the survival rate of quarter sessions records is poor. No proceedings of the county's sessions exist prior to the eighteenth century, with one exception: among the Tredegar estate papers in the National Library of Wales is a roll of the quarter sessions and gaol deliveries covering the years 1576–7.[5] It was found amongst the papers at Tredegar House and was probably preserved among the Morgan archives because it contained the enrolment of a deed of bargain and sale relating to the estate.[6]

The roll is a record of quarter sessions proceedings held at Caerleon, Usk, Newport, Monmouth, Crick, Raglan, Abergavenny, Usk and Monmouth respectively, both sessions at Monmouth including the delivery of the gaol there. It is rare to find the two courts recorded on the same roll for each had its own clerk normally.[7] Since most of the roll is written in the same hand it is conceivable that the same clerk served both courts for a time. The roll is a detailed illustration of the Tudor sessions at work. The number of JPs at each sessions varied with the volume of business. Only two attended the short Crick sessions while, at the other extreme, the bench for both the more substantial Monmouth sittings included six named justices plus 'others' not named as well as one of the barons of the exchequer and a serjeant-at-law, whose expertise was presumably required for delivering the gaol. Answering to the justices was the sheriff whose task it was to get people to court. The Caerleon sitting that opens the roll shows the work of the sheriff, Christopher Welshe, in summoning the jurors and a host of local officers to perform their specific duties at the court.[8] Underpinning the court system was a range of writs issued for specific purposes. A writ of summons (or precept) issued fifteen days before the sessions required the sheriff to call various people to attend the court. Another, the writ of *venire facias*, ordered the sheriff to cause persons accused of misdemeanours

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2 Howell, Ben, *Law and Disorder in Tudor Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1995) xvi.

3 Robinson, W.R.B. and Gray, Madeleine, 'The Making of Monmouthshire', *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780* (University of Wales Press on behalf of Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2009) 1–18, p. 10 for quote.

4 Davies, James Conway, 'Second Report of the Records of the County of Monmouth' (June, 1940, typescript in Gwent Archives, hereafter GA).

5 National Library of Wales (hereafter NLW) Tredegar 148; microfilm in GA; Howell, Ben, *Law and Disorder* for transcript and detailed introduction.

6 Howell, Ben, *Law and Disorder*, 1. The paragraphs that follow owe much to this invaluable edition.

7 *Ibid*.

8 *Ibid*., 6.

and trespasses to appear. The court usually opened with the sheriff reporting on his execution of the writs he had been served prior to the sessions.[9] If litigants failed to appear, a new order was issued and the sheriff instructed to summon them to the next sessions.[10]

The Tredegar roll is a remarkable survival illuminating life in the county just forty years after its formation. Here is a top-down world from earl to pauper and it is a predominantly rural one: disputes over land are conspicuous with a number of cases relating to forced entry, the ejection of landowners and the destruction of hedges. The gentry appear not only as law-enforcers but as law-breakers and beneath them yeomen, many of them alehouse keepers involved in affrays.[11]

Justices of the peace in quarter sessions, like assize judges, had the power to inflict capital punishment and the roll records several felons receiving the death sentence before the court. During the Newport sessions such was the fate of two labourers convicted of stealing a purse containing £3; a similar verdict was passed upon another labourer for the theft of a bay gelding valued at four marks. At the second Usk sessions John Williams, the elder, a yeoman of Estavarney was found guilty of stabbing John Williams the younger to death. He too was sentenced to death.[12] The law recognised two categories of criminal offence: felonies and misdemeanours. Felonies, as we have just seen, were capital offences which could lead on conviction to hanging; they included murder, manslaughter, rape, counterfeiting, burglary, arson and theft of goods worth one shilling or more (grand larceny). Misdemeanours included trespass, riot, affray, assault, vagrancy, illegal assembly, forcible entry, contempts and the theft of goods worth less than one shilling (petty larceny). Such offences were punished by whipping, being put in the stocks or pillory, imprisonment, being fined, mutilated, or a combination of any of these. The most common punishment recorded in the roll was the fine, which was the penalty for a variety of offences including defaulting jurors, selling ale without a licence, the non-appearance of parishes (summoned to answer for not repairing highways for which they were responsible), assault and affray and forcible entry. Another regular penalty was whipping, usually imposed on those found guilty of petty larceny and vagrancy though occasionally on others. It was carried out in public, usually on market day when the offender was tied either to a whipping post or to the end of a cart. Public whipping continued until the end of the eighteenth century. As late as 1786, David Thomas, found guilty of a felony, was ordered at the adjourned sessions at Monmouth on 16 August, to be taken to Pontypool on the following Saturday and there 'publicly whipped at the cart's tail from Mr Tanner's house to the market house and then discharged'.[13] The punishment has an impressive precision and must have been inflicted by justices with local knowledge. Every village was required to have stocks, a wooden structure which held the feet of the offender and in which he or she was subjected to the public gaze, and probable ridicule and assault. It was used mainly for minor offences. Like all other public punishments, its purpose was severalfold – to punish, to deter and to demonstrate that community values had been transgressed.[14]

Juries played a key role in both the quarter sessions and assize courts. The grand jury was a jury of inquiry drawn from the forty-shilling freeholders within the county.[15] Twelve men were empanelled from a body summoned, as we have seen, by the sheriff. The bulk of the grand jury's findings were based on presentments or draft indictments called bills. Its task was not to convict

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9 *Ibid*., 27, for example.
10 *Ibid*.
11 *Ibid*., xxv, 31, 57.
12 *Ibid*., xciv.
13 GA, Q/MB/3.
14 Parry, Glyn, *Launched to Eternity: Crime and Punishment 1700–1900* (Aberystwyth, 2001) 30.
15 Increased to 80s. in 1585: Howell, *Law and Disorder*, lxxxvii.

but to decide if there was a case to answer. If there was, the jury found a 'true bill' and the bill then became an indictment endorsed with *billa vera*. When they were not satisfied they endorsed the bill with *ignoramus* (we do not know). The petty or trial jury consisted of twelve men. It was empanelled when a prisoner pleaded not guilty and sought trial by 'God and the Country', the indictment being marked *po[nit]se [super patriam]*, 'he puts himself [on the country]'. Three alternative verdicts were at the jury's disposal: guilty, not guilty or guilty of a reduced charge. Such 'partial' verdicts reflect the discretionary power the juries had to apply the law as they thought fit. Juries also played a part in protecting prisoners from the severity of the criminal code: it could find the accused not guilty or it could under-value stolen goods in order to reduce the offence from grand to petty larceny, in other words from an offence punishable by death to one for which the penalty was public whipping.[16]

By the 1570s, such was the volume of business dealt with by JPs that special sessions were being arranged between the quarterly ones. Justices were also active out of sessions; a justice acting alone (often in his own parlour) was empowered to conduct the preliminary examination of suspects and witnesses in cases of felony, take recognizances, commit felons to prison and bind over the unruly to be of good behaviour. Two or more justices acting together had yet wider powers. They could consider cases of maintenance and riots, fix poor rates, supervise the repair of highways, take bail, grant alehouse licences and regulate the weights and measures.[17]

There is, then, a level of judicial activity below the quarter sessions. There were also strata operating above them. Monmouthshire's Elizabethan roll contains three cases which were transferred from quarter sessions to queen's bench by writ and also cases referred to the sessions by the council in the Marches of Wales whose judges supervised the justices.[18] Monmouthshire's quarter sessions were also closely connected to the Oxford assize circuit whose judges, like those of the council, had supervisory powers over the lower tier court. Monmouthshire's inclusion in the circuit probably dates from July 1541, when a commission was issued appointing two judges of assize for this and the other counties in the circuit. The assize judges probably sat for a couple of days exercising their criminal jurisdiction alongside the local JPs. The sittings in the great hall of Monmouth castle were also great occasions for the commercial life of the town creating much business for innkeepers especially. [19]

Initially their judicial business was virtually interchangable but by the reign of Elizabeth a clear division was emerging between the courts of assize and quarter sessions. The latter dealt with misdemeanours and left more serious offences – felonies – to the assize judges. The distinction was one that was still evolving, however and as we have seen, the Tredegar roll records several felons sentenced to death including John Williams, mentioned earlier.[20] By the eighteenth century, felonies were almost invariably tried by assize judges but there remained a considerable overlap between the two courts. In 1707, at the autumn assizes, for example, Joseph Lewis of Abergavenny was put in process for 'selling blowed meat which he had corrupted with his breath by blowing and puffing it up' while in 1737, a similar case came before the quarter sessions when Judith James, a widow and butcher, also of Abergavenny, along with thirteen other butchers of the town was presented for 'unlawfully blowing and conveying her breath into sheep, calves, lambs and other beasts which

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16 *Ibid*., lxxxvii–lxxxviii.
17 *Ibid*., lix–lx.
18 *Ibid*., xli, xliii–liv.
19 Robinson and Gray, 'The Making of Monmouthshire', 10–11.
20 Howell, *Law and Disorder*, xciv.

she kills and exposes to sale ...'.[21] The crime of 'tainting' meat and displaying it for sale was a breach of market regulations and clearly on occasions such cases were dealt with *ad hoc* by both the assizes and quarter sessions, presumably to prevent the judicial workload building up. That the Oxford assize judges' expertise was frequently exercised in relatively minor cases can be seen in the circuit's process book for 1708–14. In 1704/5, John Whitney was presented at the assizes for 'a nuisance in making a dunghill in Monmouth High Street'.[22] Quarter sessions heard a similar case in 1765, when a 'nuisance' was caused by a farmer in Bryngwyn. He showed his contempt for the law by removing the stocks 'out of its proper place' before 'making a dunghill where it was'.[23] At the spring assizes in 1708, the inhabitants of the parishes of Grosmont, Llantilio Crossenny, Skenfrith and Llanishen were in turn presented for not repairing their highways.[24] Oversight of a parish's responsibilities for the highways passing through it was normally entrusted to justices in quarter sessions. There is clearly a considerable overlap in the jurisdictions of the two and, as the above examples show, the records of the assizes help to fill the void left by missing quarter sessions. The earliest records of the Oxford Circuit themselves have not fared well, however and they do not begin until the 1650s.[25]

The Justice of the Peace

There had been those opposed to the introduction of JPs into Wales, among them Rowland Lee, president of the council in the Marches of Wales. He reported to Thomas Cromwell that few of the Welsh gentry reached the required £20 *per annum* property qualification for office and, moreover, that their integrity was doubtful since they lived 'nigh the Welshry'. In the event, the property qualification was waived for Wales. The new system was radical and the vital external control was provided by the privy council and the council in the Marches of Wales which supervised its introduction.[26] The earliest references to justices of the peace in Wales are found in October 1541 and these relate to Glamorgan and Caernarvonshire.[27]

As we have seen, the justice was the key figure in the operation of the quarter sessions. His duties were placed on him by statute and by the commission of the peace. By 1603, as many as 309 statutes weighed upon his shoulders, even if many of them were rarely enforced.[28]

The commission of the peace was issued out of chancery under the great seal of the crown and it bore the names of those JPs authorised to act within the county. While the justices were therefore appointed by the lord chancellor, it was on the lord lieutenant's recommendation. The first commission for Monmouthshire was issued on 16 March 1542.[29] It was headed by the lord chancellor and the three other senior officers of state and, like the other Welsh commissions, it included members and officers of the council in the Marches of Wales. Two justices of assize for the

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[21] The National Archives (hereafter TNA), Assi 4/17, process book; cited in Davies, 'Second Report of the Records of Monmouth', 165, where the date given is 6 Anne (1707) even though the volume is 1708–14. GA, Q/PB/1 for James.

[22] TNA, Assi 4/17 cited in Davies, 'Second Report', 166.

[23] GA, Q/PB/1.

[24] TNA, Assi 4/17, cited in Davies, 'Second Report', 166.

[25] Cockburn, J.S., *A History of English Assizes* (Cambridge, 1972) 36, for overlapping jurisdictions; TNA, 'Assizes Records' , Records Information Sheet 26, for dates.

[26] Robinson, W.R.B., 'The English Revolution in Welsh Government: its effects on gentry participation', *The English Historical Review*, 103, no. 406 (Jan. 1988) 18–9; Howell, *Law and Disorder*, lvi–lvii, for the quote.

[27] Robinson, 'The English Revolution', 14.

[28] Howell, *Law and Disorder*, lvii.

[29] Robinson, 'The Tudor Revolution', 14 n.5.

Oxford circuit completed the *ex officio* membership, indicating the county's early inclusion within the circuit's jurisdiction. Henry, earl of Worcester and Sir William Morgan of Pencoed, led a further group of nineteen members of the commission with strong local connections, a group which would have been more active within the county.[30] A new commission issued on 9 February 1543, included a similar number of 'local' justices, a number that exceeded all other Welsh commissions that year. The commission's quorum clause ensured the presence in and out of sessions of at least one justice possessing knowledge of the law.[31] The Act of Union of 1543 limited the number of justices who could be included in a commission to eight, a limit set to restrict appointment to the county's more substantial gentlemen. The figure was immediately and almost invariably exceeded in every Welsh county.[32] Eleven JPs had been acting in Monmouthshire between January and June 1542; this had more than trebled by February the following year. The commissions issued for Monmouthshire continued to vary in size for the rest of the century. Thirteen JPs were empanelled in 1561, rising to forty-one nearly twenty years later. The opening forty years of the next century saw greater numerical stability, though dismissals from the bench were common enough. William Rawlins of Tregaer enjoyed a particularly see-saw career on the bench, commissioned in 1598, dropped in 1601 and restored the following year. It is not clear in many cases why the crown withdrew its support for a justice but there are known examples of JPs failing to attend the assize judge to be sworn.[33] During the reign of Elizabeth the court of star chamber saw a number of cases in which JPs defended themselves against accusations of corruption and misdeamours. Amongst the charges against William John ap Roger of Wernddu and John Jones of Treowen in 1592 were 'corrupt impanelling of a jury' in a paternity case; David Price in 1566 was another JP accused of misdemeanours in office while the charges against William Powell in 1580 are myriad: he was accused of 'misdemeanours towards the people of Monmouthshire, accusing people of felony to secure their lands ... assaults and illegal imprisonments, stealing tithe corn, stealing a poor man's lease of a parcel of land, and forcing the sale of land at half its value'.[34] The court's verdict in these cases is not known and there is no evidence that these particular justices were decommissioned for their behaviour but clearly some JPs drew the wrong sort of attention to themselves.

The abundant Caernarvonshire records of the period indicate that most gentlemen appointed to the commission played their part in some at least of its work – though the county may not be typical.[35] There is also evidence that some of this first generation of gentlemen JPs were only too aware of the elevated status conferred upon them by their appointment. The case against David Price above included the accusation that he had become a JP 'for greatness sake'.[36] A justice of the peace had no fixed term of office and could lose his position simply by being omitted from a new commission; neither were justices waged but they received a fee from the revenues of the court's proceedings. In 1545–6, ten Monmouthshire justices and the clerk of the peace, John Walter, were thus remunerated by the sheriff, John Kemys, from the fines and amercements arising out

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30 Robinson and Gray, 'The Making of Monmouthshire', 10.

31 Phillips, J.R.S.(ed.), *The Justices of the Peace in Wales and Monmouthshire 1541–1689* (Cardiff, 1975) xiii; Howell, *Law and Disorder*, lvi.

32 Robinson, 'The Tudor Revolution', 17.

33 Roberts, Stephen, K., 'Local, Regional and National Politics to 1642', *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire* (hereafter *GCH 3*) 36.

34 Edwards, Ifan ab Owen (ed.), *A Catalogue of Star Chamber Proceedings Relating to Wales* (Cardiff, 1929) 102, 95.

35 Robinson, 'The Tudor Revolution', 17.

36 Edwards, *Star Chamber*, 95.

of the sessions held in that period. Each justice received four shillings a day, John Walter two shillings.[37]

The leading JP was the *custos rotulorum*, who brought essential legal training to the work of the justices. As the 'keeper of the rolls', he was also nominally responsible for producing the records when required although from the sixteenth century the actual custodian tended to be the clerk of the peace. Sir William Herbert was *custos* in 1583 when serious complaints against him and his family were made in star chamber. After allegedly committing murder, Edward Herbert and his men were harboured by William, his brother, at his house; the subsequent indictment was made null and void when Sir William 'prevailed' upon the justice of assize. Amongst the charges brought by Thomas Morgan of Machen, JP, was the plea that someone else be appointed to keep the 'county rolls'.[38]

The commissions of the peace issued for Monmouthshire in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries indicate a particular concern for the towns, if the distribution of the 'local' justices is anything to go by. Newport and Abergavenny saw a conspicuous concentration of JPs empanelled with, by contrast, a much lower representation from the west and north-west of the county where the population was, as yet, sparse. The areas around Monmouth and Chepstow seem likewise to have been a priority. Indeed, keeping the peace may have been a principal factor in the granting of royal charters to Monmouth, Newport and Abergavenny in 1605, 1623 and 1638 respectively. In the case of Monmouth and Newport, certainly, there were fierce factional disputes prior to the issuing of their charters.[39] Although the right to hold quarter sessions is not specifically mentioned in their charters both boroughs held sessions from the time of their issue. Monmouth's charter of 1605 was granted at the request of the mayor and commonalty in order that the town and borough should '... be and remain a town and borough of Peace and Quiet, to the example and terror of the wicked and reward of the good'.[40] A survey of the territories of the duchy of Lancaster just four years later stated that the mayor and bailiffs of the borough, 'being justices of the peace there, have time out of mind used to keep four quarter sessions yearly within the said town...', suggesting that Monmouth's quarter sessions may pre-date its Stuart charter – although 'time out of mind' is more likely to be common form.[41] Newport's charter of 1623, granted by James I, required four of the leading officers within the borough, including the mayor, to serve as JPs to investigate offences against the king's peace. Their jurisdiction was limited to the borough and excluded felonies – serious crimes having to be tried before a jury in the county's assize court or before a royal justice. The borough's 'general sessions' thus granted may have embraced quarter sessions.[42] Quarter sessions were held in Newport throughout the eighteenth century but intermittently, as gaps in the minutes from 1761–3 and 1764–9 indicate; and neither were they quarterly for in practise they were held only in April and October each year. The irregularity of the court in Newport must have hastened its demise given the delays this would have meant for litigants. Its end came 'almost unnoticed' in 1813, 'a fittingly inglorious end to its chequered career'.[43]

Evidence for the relationship between the county JPs and those of the two boroughs is scant though the powers of county justices in the boroughs were disputed elsewhere.[44] On one occasion,

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37 Robinson and Gray, 'The Making of Monmouthshire', 10.
38 Edwards, *Star Chamber*, 104.
39 Roberts, 'Local, Regional and National Politics', 36, 39.
40 Kissack, Keith, *Monmouth: The Making of a County Town* (Chichester, 1975) 24.
41 Rees, William (ed.), *A Survey of the Duchy of Lancaster Lordships in Wales, 1609–1613* (Cardiff, 1953) 4.
42 *Idem* (ed.), *The Charters of Newport* (Newport, 1951) xxi, 37.
43 Jones, B.P., *From Elizabeth I to Victoria* (Newport, 1957) 59.
44 Redstone and Steer, *Local Records*, 119.

in Newport in the mid-eighteenth century, a county magistrate was asked to sit at the borough's quarter sessions. The need had arisen when neither of the two senior aldermen, who were *ex officio* the borough's justices of the peace, were able to sit. One had been made mayor while the other was non-resident.[45] It was stated in 1836, that Monmouth's quarter sessions had usually been held the week following the county's, suggesting that they were timed to avoid a clash.[46] Otherwise the authority given the justices within their borough appears to have been much the same as that given the JP acting for the county. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 seems to have been a *terminus ad quem* for quarter sessions in both boroughs.

It is not clear how regularly the court of quarter sessions met in Monmouthshire during the period of the civil wars in the mid-seventeenth century. County administration was ostensibly unaffected during the 1640s with the king continuing to issue commissions of the peace. After the fall of Raglan in 1646, parliamentarian government gained more control over the county. County administration after the First Civil War until the restoration in 1660 rested on the customary commissions of the peace in conjunction with the local committees created by Interregnum governments. All of Monmouthshire's JPs served on at least one of the local committees though the accent was on central rather local concerns. The period was indeed one in which central government policies dominated local interests.While there was a degree of continuity from the pre-war county administration, in the main Monmouthshire was run by new men during the Interregnum: only four of the nineteen justices appointed in 1640 were re-appointed in 1649. The new governing elite, moreover, was of lower social status and in this Monmouthshire echoed its counterparts in much of England and Wales. This was not a sign of fundamental social change, however, for the Restoration reinstated the established county gentry at the apex of the local community.[47] If anything the judicial elite was not elite enough for some and there were perennial complaints that too many unsuitable men were climbing onto the bench of county justices. A JP was usually required to be resident in the county while calls for the property qualification of at least £20 annual income to be applied in Wales were regularly made. This was increased to £100 in 1731 and from 1745, a prospective JP had to swear a 'qualification oath'. While this extended the JP's qualification to Wales it may not have been applied with immediate effect. The earliest surviving oaths for Monmouthshire are as late as 1803.[48] Neither was local administration necessarily improved in Wales by the measure. The number of minor squires admitted to the commission of the peace actually increased, non-residency among justices grew more frequent and low attendance at the sessions was the result. In Monmouthshire as few as two or three JPs could be mustered at times.[49]

Eighteenth and nineteenth century developments

During the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, a spate of legislation added considerably to the responsibilities of justices in quarter sessions. In religious matters the Test Act of 1673 obliged all office-holders to deliver a sacrament certificate to the court. The Toleration Act of 1688 allowed for protestant dissenters to register their meeting houses on application to the sessions court. Also entrusted to the justice was the enforcement of statutes covering such disparate activities as poaching (the Preservation of Game Act, 1706) and swearing (the Profane Oaths Act, 1745). From 1792

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45 Jones, *Elizabeth I to Victoria*, 47.
46 GA, D10/1/75: Monmouth Borough, counsel's opinion on the holding of quarter sessions.
47 Matthews, Robert, 'Civil War and Interregnum, 1642–60', *GCH 3*, 87–8, 98.
48 GA, Q/OD.
49 Jenkins, Geraint, H., *The Foundations of Modern Wales 1642–1780* (Oxford and Cardiff, 1987) 324.

onwards, promoters of parliamentary bills for public schemes had to deliver detailed plans to the clerk of the peace. To these duties can be added administrative responsibilites such as the maintenance of roads and bridges, the regulation of prices, the making of a general rate to be assessed on each parish and licensing of public houses.[50] The levying of the county rate was a delicate balancing act and the justices seem to have taken care on occcasions not to overburden the inhabitants of the county. In 1787, when the new county gaol was to be constructed, £600 was ordered to be raised towards the project.[51] Just two years later, Caerleon bridge needed to be rebuilt after it had been damaged by ice and flood – four of its piers having been 'carried away'. While it was decided to rebuild it in stone, the sum of £3,000 needed was to be raised by subscription rather than a rate because of the heavy burden already placed on the county by the new gaol.[52] With their authority extended into all manner of administrative areas the JPs gained even greater influence on the economic, religious and social life of the county; cultural activities too came within their ambit: at the Chepstow sessions in July 1788, for example, Henry Masterman was licensed to 'perform all manner of plays, tragedies, comedies and operas at Abergavenny ... for 4 months from 12 September next'.[53]

In the Tudor period the clerk of the peace was the only professional official but the burgeoning administrative role of the quarter sessions meant that during the eighteenth century the clerk was joined by other officers such as the treasurer and the surveyor. A county's financial affairs were dealt with *ad hoc* until the passing of the County Rates Act of 1739 which regularised the office of treasurer, requiring the person appointed by the justices to keep proper records and submit his accounts to quarter sessions.[54] The series of treasurer's account books for Monmouthshire does not begin until 1789. The office clearly existed before this but may not have come into existence for some time after the act. References to a county surveyor likewise appear with some regularity in Monmouthshire's records during the 1780s and this may be the period when the office was regularised in the county.

The JPs supervised a network of local officials such as overseers of the poor, surveyors of the highway and constables. Two high constables normally served each hundred and beneath them were petty constables serving the parish. Such offices were usually only held for a year and since their duties often conflicted with the local interest they were undertaken with reluctance.[55] In 1763, for example, the petty constable of Trevethin presented one man 'for abusing me and calling me out of my name on two successive Sundays' and another 'for chasing me and calling me names and threatening to draw me to pieces if he caught me in the wood'.[56] Indeed some put themselves at the mercy of the court rather than take office: in July 1679, David Thomas of Abergavenny was presented at assizes when he refused to take his oath to serve as chief constable for the lower division of Abergavenny hundred.[57]

While evidence for Monmouthshire is lacking, in other counties it appears that by the close of the seventeenth century the justices made little distinction between their ciminal and administrative work. It may have been the mounting administrative burden upon them that induced JPs to draw

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50 Glamorgan Record Office, *Glamorgan 1536–1974: Aspects of a Changing County* (Cardiff, 1974) 16–7 for a concise summary.
51 GA, Q/MB/3, 58; Kissack, *Monmouth*, 216 for the gaol.
52 GA, Q/MB/3, 122–3.
53 *Ibid*., 92.
54 Emmison, F.G., and Gray, Irvine, *County Records* (Historical Association edn, 1987) 8–9.
55 Jenkins, *Foundations of Modern Wales*, 168.
56 GA, Q/PB/1.
57 TNA, Assi 2/2; Davies, 'Second Report', 155.

a ‘rough distinction’ between the business requiring the presence of a jury, hearing the parties and listening to counsel, which usually took place in public and that which the JPs could settle themselves in private. After the trials were over and appeals settled, the justices adjourned to do the ‘county business over walnuts and wine at a favourite hotel’.[58] This was certainly true of Monmouthshire by the eighteenth century. The earliest surviving minute book of the quarter sessions records adjourned sessions reconvened at the *New Inn*, Llanarth in 1772 and the *Three Salmons* in Usk the following year. Also in 1773, were adjourned sessions at ‘John Hanbury’s, esq., Pontypool’. The *King’s Head*, Newport was a venue in 1774 while Mrs Martha Loftus’s premises in Chepstow played host in 1775.[59] The latter was the *Three Cranes*, an important building in the town which amongst other things, hosted meetings of the Chepstow turnpike trust and was the destination of the coach arriving from London.[60] Inns and private dwellings continued to welcome adjourned sessions in the early nineteenth century, amongst them the *Hanbury Arms*, Caerleon, the *Red Lion* in the parish of Christchurch and Benjamin Waddington’s house at Llanover.[61]

Seven towns had hosted quarter sessions in Monmouthshire in 1576–7. Assizes were more exclusive. The great hall in Monmouth castle was their principal location before the eighteenth century with the castle’s gaol occasionally delivered at Abergavenny during Elizabeth’s reign. Chepstow hosted assizes in the late sixteenth century too.[62] There is no indication which buildings were used for the earliest quarter sessions. By the mid-seventeenth century, sessions in Caerleon were held in its market hall, which can be traced to 1622 but may have been built earlier. A sessions house is recorded in the town in 1587 and this may have been the same building or a predecessor of it. Monmouth acquired a new court house and market hall in 1571 and it is likely that in other towns market halls doubled as court houses.[63] A town’s capacity for holding sessions, therefore, would have depended on its economic fortunes to some extent. A market hall is recorded in Raglan in 1632, for example, but its market declined mid-century.[64] It does not figure prominently among the sessions towns in the eighteenth century. Inadequate premises were indeed a feature of quarter sessions administration throughout the period. In Monmouth, an agreement between the county justices and the town’s common council led to the new shire hall being built in 1724 to replace the Elizabethan market hall. The new building was to house the county’s courts as well as the town’s market hall. Construction of the latter fell short, however and the council had to seek financial support from the duke of Beaufort to repair it.[65] Later in the century it was the county’s judicial share of the building that needed attention. In the quarter sessions held at Caerleon in April 1786, the justices ordered that Robert Salusbury be paid a sum not above £7 for:

> Making a boarded fence at the Crown barr at Monmouth with doors, iron spikes at the top from the prisoners’ barr on each side of the court to the walls and a chair for the cryer and undersheriff with a door for the Grand Jury box and for making the like fence at the *nisi prius* barr from both pillars to

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58 Bowen, Ivor, ‘Grand Juries, Justices of the Peace and Quarter Sessions in Wales’, *Trans. Hon. Soc. of Cymmrodorion* (1933–35) 69.
59 GA, Q/MB/1.
60 Waters, Ivor, *Chepstow Parish Registers* (Chepstow, 1955) 104, 110.
61 GA, Q/MB/4.
62 Cockburn, *History of English Assizes*, 36; Baker, W.H., ‘The Shire Hall’, *Presenting Monmouthshire*, 23 (spring, 1967) 7; Edwards, *Star Chamber*, 95 for Chepstow.
63 Baker, ‘Shire Hall’, 7–8; Courtney, Paul, ‘Towns, Markets and Commerce’, *GCH 3*, 262 for a list of market halls.
64 Courtney, ‘Towns, Markets and Commerce’, 252.
65 Kissack, *Monmouth*, 295–6.

> the walls on each side of the court with a door to be placed on the cryer, witnesses and interpreter's box and a chair for the cryer and undersheriff.[66]

The 1724 agreement for building the hall had provided for 'two courts of judicature, and also a room proper and convenient for the use of the Grand Jury at Assizes and Sessions',[67] but Salusbury's brief aimed at greater differentiation of court room space. There is no certainty that this work was carried out and even if it was, it does not seem to have satisfied the authorities who, in July 1788, resolved that quarter sessions were to be held in the town of Usk 'until there is a proper place for holding same in the other market towns in the county'.[68] The jibe was probably justified: Caerleon's market house seems to have been in bad repair for much of the period, for example.[69]

Thus by the end of the eighteenth century the holding of the quarter sessions had become established in the town hall at Usk, a building leased from the duke of Beaufort. The settling of the sessions at Usk was a considerable boon to the town: they lasted several days and attracted a host of people involved in the proceedings. Several Usk inhabitants drew their income directly from the sessions. In 1849, for example, 10s. was paid to the constable of Usk while Revd Kenyon Homfray received £50 as chaplain to the house of correction there. Elisha Read was paid £2 2s. for winding the town hall clock, Samuel Lucas £2 6s. 4d. for repairing Usk bridge and James Boulton £20 as surgeon to the house of correction.[70]

Well before the end of the eighteenth century the impact of industrialisation began to make a substantial social and economic imprint on the county with the growth in population an early effect. The resultant increase in the number of vagrants and 'sturdy beggars' was acknowledged by the justices at their sessions on 5 April 1769, when they issued an order for their apprehension.[71] Another clear demographic consequence was the movement away from agriculture to the industrialised west of the county, a tendency identified by Monmouthshire's justices as early as 1779. On 14 April, at their Usk sessions, they ordered a table of wage rates to be printed and distributed 'in all public places' in the county and warned that anyone 'offending against the same' (that is, paying wages below the prescribed rate) be fined 'according to the statute in that case made and provided'.[72] The statute cited was that of 1562 which empowered the justices in sessions to assess and regulate wages on an annual basis. The table is headed by the 'servants in husbandry' amongst whom the ploughman was pre-eminent and who was to receive £6 10s. a year and 'meat, drink, washing and lodging'; many of the other occupations are connected with the land, including hedgers, mowers, threshers and reapers and while such other specified craftsmen as masons, bricklayers and carpenters could equally have been employed in industry, there is a strong sense that this measure is an attempt to stabilise a rural world under threat. It is uncertain, nonetheless, whether these wage rates were ever paid.

Even if they were, they did not halt the industrial tide. For the next century or more, both immigration and in-migration was rampant and quarter sessions records illustrate this: the reports of both the chaplain of the house of correction at Usk and the governor of the county prison there

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[66] GA, Q/MB/3, 19.
[67] Kissack, *Monmouth*, 295.
[68] GA, Q/MB/3, 94.
[69] Eija Kennerley, 'Caerleon Market Hall', *Gwent Local History*, 37 (spring, 1974) 24–5.
[70] Lewis, David R., *Early Victorian Usk* (Cardiff, 1982) 43–4.
[71] GA, Q/MB/1; Davies, 'Second Report', 14.
[72] GA, Q/MB/1; Baker, W.H., 'Eighteenth century wages in Monmouthshire', Monmouthshire Local History Council, *Bulletin*, no. 2 (Sept. 1956) 6–8.

are especially revealing. In 1854, the chaplain reported that of the 802 prisoners in the former, only 242 were born in Monmouthshire; in 1872, the governor noted that only 295 out of 1,022 prisoners in the gaol had been born in the county, 213 of whom had been born in Ireland.[73] The reports of the constables submitted to the clerk of the peace record the unrest during the 1850s when railway navvies tended to create friction with local residents, especially when the railwaymen had been paid and drink was involved.[74]

If the socio-economic climate was in transition so too were politics. Radicalism found violent expression in the Chartist attack on the *Westgate Hotel* in Newport on 3 November 1839. The event is amply recorded in the quarter sessions which include the calendar of the prisoners to be tried at the special commission at Monmouth on 10 December 1839.[75] The treasurers' accounts contain the costs of the riots including the apprehension of fugitive rioters, the conveyance of prisoners and witnesses and the provisioning of special constables.[76] Eye witness descriptions of the uprising can be found in the depositions against two chartist rioters Richard Rorke and Wright Beatty while the clerk of the peace's correspondence includes a petition of Henry Vincent and others against their hardships in Monmouth gaol. It expresses their belief that theirs is 'the first case where men imprisoned for their political opinions have been subject to such rigorous treatment'.[77]

The care and custody of the records[78]

The quarter sessions records in official custody for Monmouthshire survive only from 1719. The Tredegar roll, while historically invaluable, cannot be counted among the county's official records since it left the custody of the clerk of the peace. The reasons for their poor survival rate apply equally in Monmouthshire and many other counties. First was the tendency in the early period for the records of the sessions to be left in the charge of the clerk of the peace who came to regard them as his personal property. Second and closely bound up with this, there was no repository for their storage. As in neighbouring Glamorgan and elsewhere, the sessions were held in turn in several different towns and the records would have travelled with the clerk. This made them vulnerable to accident and sometimes deliberate destruction.

There is also evidence that in Monmouthshire the sessions were not always recorded or conducted properly. At the assizes in July 1679, for instance, the grand jury presented Herbert Jones, clerk of the peace, for 'neglecting his duty' in entering the quarter sessions orders in a book to be kept for the purpose and further for not recording the proceedings of the said court.[79] The county's principal administrative building was likewise neglected: in 1717, the county's under-sheriff was presented at assizes for not keeping the shire hall in Monmouth watertight 'so that the judge could not sit dry there'.[80] In the summer assizes in 1723, the inhabitants of the county were presented for 'suffering' the shire hall at Monmouth 'to be very ruinous and much out of repair and very dangerous for the judges, grand and petty juries and other persons to meet there to perform the

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[73] Davies, 'Second Report', 14.

[74] *Ibid*., 15.

[75] GA, Q/Cal of P/2; and *see* Gibson, Colin, 'Chartism: a guide to sources at Gwent Record Office' (2009 revision).

[76] GA, Q/misc PT acc. 3/1–33; 4/37–8.

[77] GA, Q/D/32/15–16 (Rorke); Q/D/34, 28 (Beatty); Q/C of PC/4/15 (petition).

[78] Baker, W.H., *Guide to the Monmouthshire Record Office* (Newport, 1959) 7–12, is indispensable.

[79] Davies, 'Second Report', 155–6.

[80] TNA, Assi 2/6; Davies, 'Second Report', 163.

business of the Assizes'.[81] At the spring assizes, 1718, the sheriff's bailiff was fined 20s. for not keeping the court quiet.[82]

The itinerant nature of the sessions is in itself a reflection of the fact that until the late eighteenth century there was no generally accepted administrative centre to the county. Monmouth became the main town for assizes and the site of the county gaol but county administration failed to centralise there because it was geographically remote and, besides, it was a borough with considerable jurisdiction of its own. The administration of Caernarvonshire, by contrast, settled quickly in the county town and it was in Caernarvon that quarter sessions were held. It is no coincidence that its records survive from their beginnings in 1541.[83]

There was no established repository for Monmouthshire's records until they were stored in the extended town hall at Usk in about 1816. Even then they were vulnerable and further alterations to the hall in 1840 left them in a confused state. The following year a resolution was passed empowering the clerk of the peace to report on any county records 'which it might be convenient to destroy'. This suggests that the volume of records exceeded the storage capacity of the town hall. By the 1850s, however, the hall was proving inadequate as the number of trials increased. Plans to replace or extend the town hall were abandoned with the passing of the Criminal Justice Act of 1855 which extended summary jurisdiction (that is, trial without jury) to larceny if the sum involved was less than five shillings. This transferred much of the quarter sessions workload to petty sessions.

By 1852, the clerk of the peace reported to the registrar general that no records prior to 1719 were to be found. The completion of the new court house at Usk in 1878 offered a new home to the quarter sessions records.[84]

The Last Phase

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was clear that the machinery of quarter sessions was unable to cope with the administrative demands placed upon it and it began to shed functions to bodies established to deal with specific areas. The most important of these was the poor law which was reformed in 1834 with the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act. With the Local Government Act establishing county councils in 1888, the sessions lost virtually all of its administrative functions, though licensing was retained. The reign of the justice of the peace over the county's administrative business was over. The transfer of authority from quarter sessions to county council required the formation of a standing joint committe comprising twenty members from each.[85] As far as its administrative history was concerned, however, the days of the quarter sessions were over. The measure was not universally approved for the JPs were appreciated in some quarters. The *Monmouthshire Merlin*, for one, applauded their management of the county finances.[86] But the JPs were, after all, unelected and lacked accountability and indeed the county rates had in the recent past been a contentious issue. In 1870, a large crowd of angry ratepayers had gathered at Usk while the sessions was sitting and urged the justices 'to economy in spending the public money, asking them not to increase salaries or vote pensions, and to publish more detailed accounts'. They sought a say

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81 TNA, Assi 4/18; Davies, 'Second Report', 175.
82 TNA, Assi 2/6; Davies, 'Second Report', 163–4.
83 Williams, W. Ogwen, *Calendar of the Caernarvonshire Quarter Sessions Records, vol I, 1541–1558* (Caernarvon, 1956) xx–xxv.
84 Baker, *Guide*, 10.
85 GA, C/M/1.
86 Croll, Andy, 'Local Government', *The Gwent County History. Volume 4. Industrial Monmouthshire 1780–1914* (University of Wales Press on behalf of Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2011) 303.

in the expenditure of county rates, a voice they were not to have until the arrival of elected county councils.[87]

In 1889, Monmouthshire county council took up its duties. In 1905, the council asked J. Hobson Matthews to report on the county records, after which a joint committee with Newport borough was formed. It was nearly thiry years later that a county records committee was established. This seems to have had little impact for in 1938, the recently appointed clerk of the peace recorded his concerns about the storage conditions of the records at Usk. The report prompted the appointment of J. Conway Davies as consultant archivist to the county in June of the same year. Davies's survey of the records is startling. Their storage was divided with the county council's records at the shire hall in Newport and quarter sessions housed at the Sessions House in Usk. Here the records were in a:

> deplorable state of confusion, neglect and dirt ... a fair proportion was so perished and obliterated by damp that it was almost impossible to separate the individual documents from the coagulated mass ... the floors of the muniment room were littered by burst sacks and bundles of records. The sacking had perished and portions of the jute adhered firmly to the documents. At some period the hot water system had leaked with the result that some, even of the comparatively recent records, had been reduced to a brownish pulp.[88]

At Newport conditions were no better. Even so, the report met with little response – although the outbreak of war may account for this. A fire in the Sessions House in 1944, while it left the records untouched, prompted their removal to the new record office in shire hall, Newport, in 1952. Here they remained until 1974, when they were moved to county hall, Cwmbran. The court of quarter sessions, meanwhile, was abolished by the Courts Act of 1971.[89]

Late in 2011, the records moved to their new home on the site of the former Ebbw Vale steelworks. As part of a multi-million pound project, they are now housed in the purpose-built, state of the art strong rooms which they have long deserved.

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87 *Ibid*., 303–4.

88 Baker, *Guide*, 11–2; anon. (J. Conway Davies), 'Report on the records of Quarter Sessions of the county of Monmouth in the muniment rooms, the Sessions House, Usk', 2 (typescript in GA).

89 Burge, Gordon, 'Some reflections on the abolition of the court of quarter sessions in Monmouthshire', *Presenting Monmouthshire*, 35, vol. 3, no. 5 (spring, 1973) 25–32.

This paper is the first of two based on an MA dissertation entitled *Early Modern Networking: The social capital of Monmouthshire mercers, 1668–1738*. There are plans to publish the second paper in a future edition of this journal.

EARLY MODERN NETWORKING – PART 1: THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738

By Helen Forshaw

Introduction

> ... it went over the whole street that such a one was broke ... and from thence into the country, among all his dealers ... if he had not had very good friends ... he had inevitably been ruined ....[1]

Whilst this warning, issued by Daniel Defoe, highlights the danger of unfounded remarks by tradesmen, it also underlines the contribution of sound relationships to business success.

Through reference to social capital theory and using evidence from probate documents, this paper will explore the importance of different types of relationships to early modern Monmouthshire mercers. The study also tests the theory that extensive relationship networks result in financial success. The study is informed by key social capital texts, such as Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*.[2] In addition, early modern urban business networks are explored in articles and books by historians, including Jon Stobart.[3]

The primary sources for this study are probate documents for Monmouthshire mercers proved between 1668 and 1738. Documents for mercers from Abergavenny, Caerleon, Chepstow, Monmouth, Newport and Usk were used because these towns were the largest in Monmouthshire in the early modern period.[4] Only documents for those who identified themselves, or were identified by others, as mercers were included. (*See* Appendix A for a list of forty-five documents included in this study).

Using probate documents to measure the financial success of a mercer's business raises some issues. For example, not all records contain an inventory valuation (*see* Table 1). Meanwhile, valuable items may be mentioned in a will but not included in the final estate valuation.[5] However, whilst bearing such concerns in mind, it has been suggested that probate valuations can offer 'an insight into the financial framework of our ancestors' lives'.[6]

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1 Defoe, D., *The Complete English Tradesman* (Alan Sutton Publishing, Gloucester, 1987) 135.

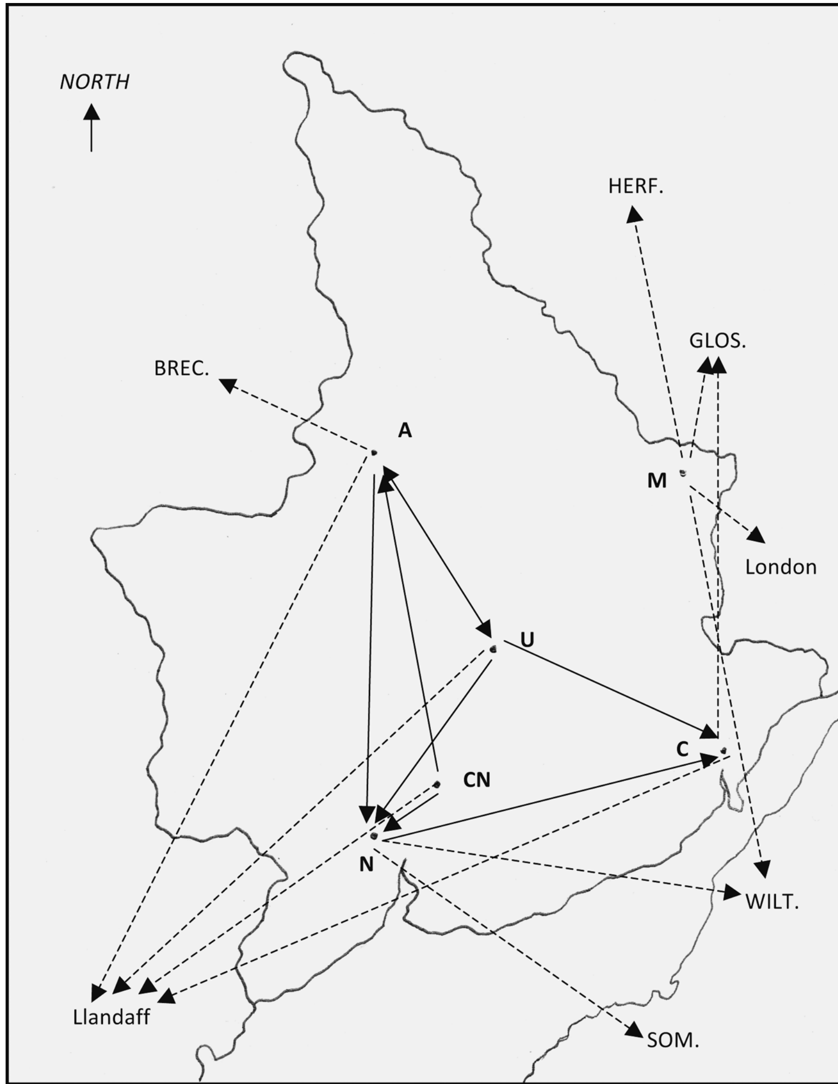
2 Putnam, R.D., *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, New York, 2000).

3 For example: Stobart, J., 'County, Town and Country: Three histories of urban development in eighteenth-century Chester' in Borsay, P. and Proudfoot, L. (eds), *Provincial Towns in Early Modern England and Ireland: Change, convergence and divergence* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002) 171–94.

4 Courtney, P., 'Towns, Markets and Commerce' in Gray, Madeleine and Morgan, Prys (eds), Griffiths, Ralph A. (general ed.), *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780* (University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2009) 252, 255.

5 Spufford, M., *The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty chapmen and their wares in the seventeenth century* (Hambledon Press, London, 1984) 40.

6 Cox, N. and Cox, J., 'Valuations in probate inventories: Part II', *The Local Historian*, 17 (1986) 2: 85.



SCALE: 0 _________ 5 miles

KEY: Solid line = links within Monmouthshire
Broken line = out of county links

A = Abergavenny
C = Chepstow
CN = Caerleon
M = Monmouth
N = Newport
U = Usk

BREC. = Breconshire
HERF. = Herefordshire
GLOS. = Gloucestershire
SOM. = Somerset
WILT. = Wiltshire

Fig. 1. Map showing mercers' contacts between the main county towns and beyond Monmouthshire.

Town	No. of mercers' probate documents proved 1668–1738	No. of documents including probate inventory valuations
Abergavenny	10	2 (20%)
Caerleon	4	2 (50%)
Chepstow	11	4 (36%)
Monmouth	9	0
Newport	7	1 (14%)
Usk	4	4 (100%)
TOTAL	**45**	**13 (~28%)**

Table 1. Distribution of probate documents for Monmouthshire mercers proved 1668–1738.

For the forty-five men in this study, only thirteen inventory valuations are available (Table 1). Nevertheless, an attempt was made to value the remaining mercers' estates using details of cash bequests, as follows. When these bequests were for small sums of money, left to be paid weekly or yearly, an allowance of one year's payment was included.[7] In all cases, charitable bequests were excluded because these were usually nominal amounts, for example one shilling left to Llandaff cathedral.[8] As only three documents included land valuations, these values were omitted to ensure consistency across the sample. Within these parameters, estate valuations were attempted for twenty-three mercers. As a result, it was possible to rank thirty-six valuations by inventory or estimated estate value (*see* Appendix B).

Finally, the personal contacts named by each mercer were totalled. These were broken down into the following categories. 'Family' contacts refer to those named as relations by the deceased and/or sharing their surname. 'Servant' contacts include individuals described as such by the testator. 'Legal' contacts were persons named as executors, overseers, trustees or legatees (other than those counted as family or servants). Lastly, 'contractual' contacts were those with whom the mercer had had business dealings, for example through property transactions. Totals for each type of contact are listed alongside individual estate valuations in Appendix C.

Bonding Social Capital: the family relationships of Monmouthshire mercers

Like other forms of social capital, bonding social capital is based on an expectation of reciprocity between the individuals involved.[9] This idea may have appealed to early modern mercers, keen to develop successful family businesses. Furthermore, it will be proposed that bonding social capital, in the form of family support, was highly valued by early modern Monmouthshire mercers.

Initially, the term 'family' will be interpreted as the testator's wife and children. However, the discussion will broaden out to consider whether bonding social capital was also established with a mercer's extended family: that is, those related by shared blood, created by marriage or through spiritual links, such as god-parents.[10]

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7 For example: Edward Packer (National Library of Wales, hereafter NLW: wills proved at the consistory court of Llandaff, 1568–1857; NLW/LL/1734/24).

8 For example: James Body (NLW/LL/1668/2). For consistency, the larger charitable bequest of £50, left by John Jones of Chepstow (The National Archives, London, hereafter TNA: wills proved at the prerogative court of Canterbury, 1384–1858; TNA/Prob/11/681) was also excluded.

9 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 22.

10 Houlbrooke, R.A., *The English Family 1450–1700* (Longman, London, 1984) 39.

At this stage, it is worth acknowledging the potentially problematic approach of theorising the 'natural sociability of men'.[11] It may seem perfectly normal, indeed understandable, that a man should provide for his family after his death. However, it will be suggested that early modern Monmouthshire mercers were becoming increasingly family-focused.

Principally, the importance of family networks to Monmouthshire mercers is apparent from the efforts made to secure the financial position of immediate family members. For example, twenty-four out of a possible twenty-six wills in this study include bequests made direct to the deceased's wife.[12] Meanwhile, one further will states that the wife should receive her settlement from the executors. In only one will is the wife mentioned solely because of her role as executrix.[13] Therefore, in 96% of wills in which a wife is mentioned, she is one of the main beneficiaries.

In addition, wives were often residuary beneficiaries of their husbands' estates. However, bequests were frequently accompanied by a provision that children should inherit on the wife's death. For example, Henry Williams' lands were to pass from his wife to his daughter on the death of the former.[14] Thus, whilst securing a wife's financial position, such provisions also demonstrate a desire to protect the position of any surviving children.

In five wills where no wife is mentioned, children are the principal beneficiaries (indicating that the testators were widowers).[15] Therefore, in thirty out of thirty-one wills (96%) the wife and/or children are legatees.[16] This could simply be seen as affirming a natural desire, or duty, to provide for one's dependents. Nevertheless, the high percentage indicates that bonding social capital was important to Monmouthshire mercers.

Stobart found a similar prioritisation of immediate family in English towns. Indeed, citing Richard Vann, Stobart has suggested that family was 'likely to be more important in towns', because of 'heightened social dislocation' resulting from people moving in from the countryside.[17] This increasing urban population was evident in some Monmouthshire towns: Abergavenny was one of Wales's main market towns and Caerleon one of the leading ports in the area; whilst Monmouth grew progressively over the period covered by this study.[18]

Whilst the bequests of some Monmouthshire mercers suggest that these men wished to consolidate the financial position of their immediate family, thirteen (41%) of the thirty-one wills which mention a wife and/or children also include bequests to other relations.[19] This figure contrasts with evidence from Monmouthshire wills dated 1560–1601, in which over 66% contain bequests to

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11 Muldrew, C., *The Economy of Obligation: The culture of credit and social relations in early modern England* (Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1998) 123.

12 For example: the will of Thomas Richards (NLW/LL/1711/133).

13 John Jenkins (TNA/Prob/11/691); Edward Waters (NLW/LL/1719/9).

14 TNA/Prob/11/377/381.

15 For example: the will of Francis Pettingall (NLW/LL/1726/117).

16 The remaining eight wills in this study do not mention a wife or children, suggesting these mercers were either bachelors or widowers with no surviving close family.

17 Stobart, J., 'Social and geographical contexts of property transmission in the eighteenth century' in Stobart, J. and Owens, A. (eds), *Urban Fortunes: Property and inheritance in the town, 1700–1900* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2000) 109.

18 Jenkins, G.H., *Literature, Religion and Society in Wales, 1660–1730* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1978) 247; Roberts, S.K. (ed.), *The Letter Book of John Byrd 1648–80* (South Wales Record Society, Cardiff, 1999) xxvii; Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 252.

19 For example: Walter Davis left 40s. a year to his brother Thomas (TNA/Prob/11/574).

extended family members.[20] This suggests a shift in attitudes in Monmouthshire towards privileging immediate family in wills by the second half of the seventeenth century.

However, two of the five widowed mercers with children left the majority of bequests to extended family. For example, five out of eight bequests left by John Phillpott were to his grand-children, with the remainder going to his daughter and two nephews.[21] This suggests that extended family continued to be significant for some Monmouthshire mercers, indicating that they were aware of the social capital which a wider kinship network might bring.

The eight unmarried mercers in this study also appear to have been keen to protect the financial position of their close family members. Three bachelors in this study each left a bequest to their mother.[22] For example, a legacy of £120 was left by Thomas Phillipps to be used to purchase an annuity for his mother.[23] In such instances, the mother has taken the place of a wife and children as a bachelor's immediate family.

However, the bequests of some bachelor mercers resulted in their property being distributed amongst family in its wider sense. For example, Henry Stephens left books to one nephew, money to a cousin and a house to another nephew.[24] Such a singling out of nephews and nieces was typical in the bequests of unmarried men at this time.[25] Ilana Ben-Amos has suggested that this '[r]eciprocity with kin was based on greater symmetry than the parent–child exchange ... it provided trusted networks that could be mobilized and relied upon'.[26]

Meanwhile, seventeen out of twenty-eight of the legatees of John Jones, a bachelor mercer from Chepstow, were relatives, including a god-son and the god-daughters of his sister.[27] McCrum remarks that 'the larger family circle was particularly important for the unmarried'.[28] Thus, bequests by bachelor mercers suggest that they had accrued extensive bonding social capital within their extended family circle, which they took care to recognise in their wills.

Other ways to consolidate a family's financial position are suggested by the limited nature of charitable bequests, when compared with those left to family members. For example, Richard Morgan from Chepstow left one shilling to Llandaff cathedral and the majority of his remaining estate, valued at £660, to his wife.[29] Indeed Houlbrooke suggests that the early modern period saw a reduction in charitable bequests in favour of family.[30] This supports the view that the creation of bonding social capital was of increasing importance at this time.

Without information about earlier Monmouthshire mercers' charitable bequests, it is difficult to say whether such legacies found in this study show any marked decline. However, bequests from

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20 Jones, J. (ed.), *Monmouthshire Wills Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1560–1601* (South Wales Record Society, Cardiff, 1997) 32.

21 TNA/Prob/11/572.

22 For example: Phillip James (NLW/LL/1727/13); Thomas Jones (TNA/Prob/11/419).

23 TNA/Prob/11/373.

24 TNA/Prob/11/342.

25 Stobart, 'Social and geographical contexts', 128.

26 Ben-Amos, I.K., 'Gifts and Favours: Informal Support in early Modern England', *The Journal of Modern History*, 72 (2000) 2: 309.

27 TNA/Prob/11/681.

28 McCrum, A., 'Inheritance and the family: the Scottish urban experience in the 1820s' in Stobart, J. and Owens, A. (eds), *Urban Fortunes: Property and inheritance in the town, 1700–1900* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2000) 171.

29 NLW/LL/1678/23.

30 Houlbrooke, R., *Death, Religion and the Family in England 1480–1750* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000) 134–5.

Monmouthshire wills proved between 1560 and 1601 indicate that this may have been the case. For example, over 50% of these late sixteenth-century testators left bequests to a cathedral.[31] In contrast, only 17% of mercers in the current study did the same, suggesting a lessening in priority of this type of legacy.

Furthermore, mercers' wills suggest that they sought to preserve their families' stocks of bonding social capital by maintaining good relations between family members. This is illustrated by the equitable distribution of moveable goods. For example, the will of William Macklen includes a schedule with precise details of the bequests to his children. He left four children two silver spoons each, with the fifth and first-named, receiving three – probably as the eldest child.[32] Such precision indicates a father's desire to foster family harmony after his death. This is implicit recognition of the importance of social capital within the family. Indeed, Lena Orlin suggests that whilst testators 'may have had sentimental favourites among their heirs ... there were powerful reasons to suppress them in the interest of amity among the heirs.'[33]

The degree of social capital which existed within a family may have dissipated after a father's death. However, it appears that Monmouthshire mercers sought to ensure this did not happen by trying to control their families' affairs 'from beyond the grave'. For example, in thirty-nine wills, twenty-five mercers (64%) named wives and/or children as executors of their estates.[34] This suggests that testators, such as Lewis Body, sought to keep family affairs under the control of immediate kin.[35] A similar preference for the wife to be the executrix was seen in early modern London.[36]

In only two wills were people other than relatives named as executors. One of these wills named a lawyer and the other named two friends.[37] These choices would not have been exceptional at this time in urban north-west England, where testators named far more non-kin as executors.[38] Stobart suggests that this may have been due to the wider choice of potential executors available in towns.[39] However, this was not the case in Monmouthshire's principal towns: here mercers preferred immediate or extended family to act as executors. This again indicates the strength of bonding social capital developed by these men, as well as their keenness to control this kinship network.

If mercers in this study tried to retain some level of posthumous control over their families, in order to protect accumulated social capital, the extent of such capital is also evident in the language used in their wills. For example, Lewis Body referred to his 'trusty and well beloved wife'; whilst David Price similarly described his wife as 'trustie'.[40] Such language is not common across the wills in the study, suggesting a deliberate decision when it was used. This confirms Houlbrooke's view

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31 Jones, *Monmouthshire Wills*, 19.

32 TNA/Prob/11/478.

33 Orlin, L.C., 'Empty Vessels,' in Hamling, T. and Richardson, C. (eds), *Everyday objects: medieval and early modern material culture and its meanings* (Ashgate, Farnham, 2010) 307.

34 The wills of Edward Packer (NLW/LL/1729/73) and William Rogers (NLW/LL/1668/126) do not mention executors.

35 TNA/Prob/11/397.

36 Earle, P., *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, society and family life in London 1660–1730* (Methuen, London, 1989) 316, Table 11.2.

37 Charles Green (TNA/Prob/11/455); Thomas Phillipps (TNA/Prob/11/373).

38 Stobart, J., 'The Economic and Social Worlds of rural craftsmen–retailers in eighteenth-century Cheshire', *The Agricultural History Review*, 52 (2004) II: 153.

39 *Ibid*., 153.

40 TNA/Prob/11/397; TNA/Prob/11/360.

that these adjectives 'were never applied consistently to all people in a given category.'[41] Therefore, the inclusion of such language highlights the perceived value of bonding social capital.

Equally affectionate terms were occasionally used of children. For example, William Addams referred to his 'beloved' son Adam; whilst Francis Pettingall described his daughter Mary as 'beloved'.[42] These adjectives are used in the context of the children being made sole executor/trix. The epithets suggest the loving nature of the parent–child relationship. In addition, the choice of language indicates the strength of a family's social capital and the significance that these mercers placed on it.

The high level of social capital accrued by some Monmouthshire mercers is also suggested by their bequest of heirlooms. These objects served as both indicators and transmitters of bonding social capital. Indeed, William Macklen appears to have deployed heirlooms to this effect. He left the following to his three oldest children: Adam was to have the brass andirons 'that my Mother gave', as well as the 'best ffire shovell and Tonges that my aunt gave'; whilst Frances received the damask tablecloth and napkins 'that my aunt Williams gave' and Elizabeth acquired the 'large brass pot that my aunt gave'.[43] These bequests indicate a desire to keep treasured items within the family. In so doing, as Martha Howell suggests, these gifts 'forged a link between giver and receiver', demonstrating the value which was placed on the network within which the items were retained.[44]

Meanwhile, mourning gifts could be interpreted as being perhaps more significant indicators of bonding social capital than monetary bequests. For example, the mercer Edward Prichard's sole cash bequest was of a gold guinea for his sister 'to buy her a mourning scarfe'.[45] Such bequests of reminders of the deceased were not uncommon at this time.[46] Indeed, Miles Lambert comments that legatees 'inherited ... post-mortem, the emotional or sentimental capital vested in the gift'.[47]

It appears that testators were well aware of the significance of mourning gifts amongst relatives: Cressy cites the bequest of gloves to family members in 1677, which was accompanied by the request that recipients 'assis[t] one another with their mutual counsels and best advice.'[48] Indeed, Richard Morgan, the Chepstow mercer, indicated the strength of his feelings for his adult children because the five shillings left for each to buy gloves must have been a sizeable sum in 1678, given that two pence was the cost of each pair of chamois leather gloves distributed at a funeral in 1759.[49] Such items would have united the Morgan children as recipients of similar gifts. Furthermore, the gloves would have been tangible symbols of their close family network, visible to the whole community. Therefore, such bequests by Monmouthshire mercers can be seen as demonstrating the value they placed on their bonding social capital.

Initially, the total number of family and servant contacts, related to estate valuations, seems to support social capital theory: two of the four most valuable estates show high numbers of these

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41 Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family*, 143.
42 TNA/Prob/11/379; NLW/LL/1726/117.
43 TNA/Prob/11/478.
44 Howell, M.C., 'Fixing Movables: Gifts by testament in late medieval Douai', *Past and Present*, 150 (1996) 39.
45 TNA/Prob/11/395.
46 Cressy, D., 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present,* 113 (1986) 60–1.
47 Lambert, M., 'Small presents confirm friendship': the "gifting" of clothing and textiles in England from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century', *Text*, 32 (2004–5) 31.
48 Cressy, 'Kinship', 60
49 Vaisey, D. (ed.), Turner, T., *The Diary of Thomas Turner 1754–1765* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985) 78 .

contacts – fourteen and twelve respectively (Appendix C). This affirms the view that extensive bonding social capital equates to financial success. However, of the thirty-six estates, the most extensive family contacts (twenty-five and eighteen) are for valuations ranked twelfth and thirteenth respectively. Equally, other estates with similar high numbers of contacts (twelve, thirteen and sixteen) appear in the lower half of the valuation range.

These apparent inconsistencies may be due to the estimated nature of many estate valuations. Perhaps what must also be remembered is that bonding social capital is useful for simply 'getting by'.[50] Therefore, extensive family and servant contacts may have been less significant in terms of business success than social capital theory might suggest. However, the most valuable estate has a known value and yet only five family contacts. Contrarily, this implies that a small family circle was the key to business success. Meanwhile, this exception may simply indicate a mercer's understandable desire to keep his considerable wealth within his immediate family. On the other hand, wills may not show the full extent of the deceased's family: a mercer may have made pre-mortem gifts to family members who were not mentioned in his final will. Therefore, his bonding social capital may have been more extensive than is now apparent.

Thus far it has been demonstrated that family networks and the bonding social capital they generated, appear to have been important to early modern Monmouthshire mercers. Moreover, that this view was worth affirming even in, what may have been, a man's last hours.

Bridging Social Capital: the business relationships of mercers

The previous section explored the recognition of the value of bonding social capital by Monmouthshire mercers. Evidence suggests that they agreed with Samuel Pepys, who felt the need to keep on good terms with his relations because he may 'have occasion to make use of them'.[51] In contrast, Ralph Josselin, another seventeenth-century diarist, relied more on neighbours than kin for support.[52] By so doing, he recognised the significance of what was to be described centuries later as bridging social capital.[53]

It will now be proposed that early modern Monmouthshire mercers also actively developed networks of business contacts, both locally and further afield. Evidence of such bridging social capital, found in mercers' probate documents and other primary sources, includes high levels of trust, collective action and information-sharing.[54]

Trust, in the form of personal credit, underpinned early modern business. Indeed, credit has been described as 'the lubricant of commercial life'.[55] This reliance on credit is evident in the life of a seventeenth-century Oxfordshire mercer, Thomas Harris who died owing money to nine men, including a mercer and a grocer.[56] Such credit networks would have been particularly important for mercers who needed to obtain stock from a number of suppliers, as indicated by the range of items listed in their probate inventories. These goods included everything from costly fabrics to books to spectacle cases.[57]

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[50] Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 23.
[51] Quoted in Houlbrooke, *The English Family*, 56.
[52] Macfarlane, A., *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin: A seventeenth-century clergyman – an essay in historical anthropology* (W.W. Norton & Company, London, 1977) 149.
[53] Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 22–3.
[54] Ogilvie, S., *The Use and Abuse of Trust: Social capital and its deployment by early modern guilds*, 2 (http://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/18667/1/cesifo1_wp1302.pdf) [accessed 12 Oct. 2011].
[55] James, L., *The Middle Class: A history* (Little, Brown & Company, London, 2006) 87.
[56] Vaisey, D.G., 'A Charlbury Mercer's Shop, 1623', *Oxoniensia*, 31 (1966) 116.
[57] For example: Edward Earle (NLW/LL/1696/153).

Mercer	Town	Probate inventory value (down to nearest whole £)	Debts owed to deceased (down to nearest whole £)	% Debt to inventory value
Earle, Edward	Newport	£794	£390	49%
Evanes, Rice	Abergavenny	£76	£40	52%
Godwin, William	Caerleon	£745	£212	28%
Harris, James	Usk	£446	£189	42%
James, Phillip	Abergavenny	£313	£110	35%
Kemeys, William	Chepstow	£65	£50	76%
Meredith, William	Caerleon	£15	£10	66%
Morgan, John	Chepstow	£1990	£1456	73%
Morgan, Richard	Chepstow	£660	£306	46%
Morris, William	Chepstow	£319	£146	45%
Richards, Thomas	Usk	£110	£61	55%
Rogers, Charles	Usk	£46	Not recorded	–
Rogers, William	Usk	£48	Not recorded	–
Median Values		**£313**	**£146**	**49%**

Table 2. Value of probate inventories and debts owed to deceased mercers.

However, an offer of credit relied on trust, with judgments often based on personal recommendation.[58] The importance of recommendation and the obligation this placed on those concerned, is also demonstrated by Stout. In 1731, he undertook to pay the creditors of his shopkeeper nephew because ‘many of them were my own particular friends, and he my near relative, and I had recommended him to them’.[59] This comment demonstrates that a cycle of trust between traders, their suppliers and customers was vital for the whole credit system to work.[60] It was the creation of bridging social capital which nurtured this cycle.

Evidence of trust in business is found in the documents of Monmouthshire mercers: eleven of the thirteen inventories in this study record the debts owed to the deceased (Table 2).[61] These debts are indicators of the amount of credit and by implication, the trust extended by each mercer.

As a proportion of the Monmouthshire mercers’ estates, debts ranged between 28% and 76% (Table 2). Meanwhile, in Shropshire the range of mercers’ debts was from 3% to 60% of estate value; whilst in Cardiff debts ranged from between 8% to 58%.[62] The median debt figure for Monmouthshire was 49%, whilst those for Shropshire and Cardiff were 18% and 21%, respectively.

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58 James, *The Middle Class*, 86.

59 Harland, J. (ed.), Stout, William, *Autobiography of William Stout of Lancaster, Wholesale and retail grocer and ironmonger; a member of the Society of Friends* (Simpkin, Marshall & Co, London, 1851; re-issued by Kessinger Legacy Reprints, LaVergne, 2011) 120.

60 Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation*, 152.

61 Of the two estates which do not include details of debts: Charles Rogers (NLW/LL/1669/179) and William Rogers (NLW/LL/1668/126) – the latter appears to have retired from business as no shop inventory is included.

62 Trinder, B. and Cox, J. (eds), *Yeomen and Colliers in Telford: Probate Inventories for Dawley, Lilleshall, Wellington and Wrockwardine, 1660–1750* (Phillimore & Co. Ltd, London, 1980) 21; Bowen, P. (ed.), *Shopkeepers and Tradesmen in Cardiff and the Vale 1633–1857* (Peter Bowen, Cardiff, 2004) 93, 96, 97, 99, 104, 107, 108.

Comparisons of these percentages indicate that Monmouthshire mercers accrued higher levels of debt than their Shropshire and Cardiff counterparts. This may have been due to 'bad payers' amongst Monmouthshire consumers or poor judgements on the part of mercers. However, if viewed in social capital terms, the higher debt levels of Monmouthshire mercers suggest that they were part of a more extensive network of trust. This could be interpreted as meaning that they had developed greater levels of bridging social capital.

Meanwhile, the wide range of estate values listed in Table 2 is similar to those of other early modern mercers. For example, the Monmouthshire mercers' estates range in value from £15 to £1,990; compared with £19 to £768 for Shropshire and £122 to £1,360 for Cardiff.[63] However, the highest valuation from Shropshire is less than half that for Monmouthshire and just over half that for Cardiff. This suggests that early modern mercers in south Wales were more successful than their Shropshire equivalents. Perhaps there were better opportunities for mercers in the south to develop business contacts, thereby accruing bridging social capital.

Reference to credit, in the form of debts due to mercers also occurs in some Monmouthshire wills. For example, that of Richard Morgan from Newport refers to 'small papers mentioning any debts due to me'.[64] Other debts due include those recorded in the will of Walter Davis which lists mortgages totalling £925 and a bond of debt for £500; whilst that of William Macklen mentions mortgages owed to him totalling £120.[65] Although it is unclear as to whether these were business or personal loans their existence indicates the levels of trust between individuals. Furthermore, despite the high level of debts owed to some Monmouthshire mercers, it appears that they still had cash available to lend.

However, no details are included in inventories of the debts owed by any of the late mercers. Nevertheless, the will of Charles Rogers mentions 'a debt due unto Henry Stephens of Abergavenny'.[66] Rogers' will is dated 1669 and Henry Stephens, an Abergavenny mercer, died in 1673.[67] Therefore, Rogers may have owed money to Stephens for stock. These limited examples offer a glimpse into the network of trust which existed between Monmouthshire mercers: a system of credit and debt which 'served to lock them into local and regional webs of trust and mutual obligation.'[68]

If trust was evident in the granting of credit, it is also apparent in the issuing of trade tokens. These tokens were issued unofficially by tradesmen in Wales between 1656 and 1672 because of the lack of small coin to use for change in individual transactions.[69] For the system to function, levels of interpersonal trust between issuers were required, for example in relation to alerts about counterfeit tokens.[70]

However, none of the documents in this study refer to the issuing of tokens by mercers. Nevertheless, there is other evidence of tokens being circulated in Monmouthshire, most commonly

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[63] Trinder and Cox, *Yeomen and Colliers*, 280, 289, 308, 321, 358; Bowen, *Shopkeepers and Tradesmen*, 93, 95, 97, 99, 107, 108.

[64] NLW/LL/1690/116.

[65] TNA/Prob/11/574; TNA/Prob/11/478.

[66] NLW/LL/1669/179.

[67] TNA/Prob/11/342.

[68] Stobart, 'The Economic and Social Worlds', 152.

[69] Token Corresponding Society, *17th Century Tokens*, 2010. (http://www.tokensociety.org.uk/topics/c17/index.shtml) [accessed 27 Dec. 2011].

[70] Muldrew, C., ' "Hard Food for Midas": Cash and its Social Value in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 170 (2001) 103.

by mercers.[71] For example, a token was issued by 'Richard Morgan of Chepstowe'.[72] This may be the eponymous mercer who died in 1678 and whose will and probate inventory are included in this study.[73] Other mercers who issued tokens included Phillipp Morgan from Abergavenny, William Meredith from Caerleon, as well as William Davis and Walter Morgan from Chepstow.[74] They may also be mercers in this study, given the time period when trade tokens were issued.

Meanwhile, the spread of tokens across Monmouthshire suggests that mercers were part of a network which linked together a number of tradesmen who issued tokens. Based on research published in 1973, these included a glover in Abergavenny, grocers in Abergavenny and Chepstow and a chandler in Monmouth.[75] This use of tokens by different types of tradesmen demonstrates the potential extent of mercers' business networks, as well as indicating the amount of trust necessary for the token system to work effectively.

Thus far, the evidence of business trust built up by Monmouthshire mercers suggests that mercers established high levels of bridging social capital. Another indicator of this type of social capital is the undertaking of collective, civic-minded activities, for example serving as alderman. Fulfilling such roles would have brought together networks of tradesmen in 'multiplex relationships'.[76] Furthermore, H.R. French suggests that, in the early modern period, those engaged in these networks tended to be wealthier.[77] This indicates that complex social networks positively impacted on commercial success. Indeed, sound business reputations were probably formed through the shared experience of collective decision-making.[78]

Instances of other civic-minded actions include administering a deceased person's estate. It is possible to see this in the lives of some Monmouthshire mercers: Jacob Jones from Newport was appointed as one of two overseers of the will of the mercer Thomas Jones (died 1694), from Caerleon.[79] Jacob is probably the mercer included in this study who died in 1733.[80] In all likelihood, he would have known the other overseer – Charles Morgan, an Abergavenny mercer – whose probate documents were not located. This suggests possible trade connections, with Thomas Jones being the interface between the two men.

Similarly, Francis Pettingal [*sic*], possibly the Newport mercer who died in 1726, was named as an overseer in the will of James Harris (died 1692), a mercer from Usk.[81] Pettingall's signature, together with that of Jacob Jones, is on the intestacy documents of John Jones (died 1722), another Newport mercer.[82] Therefore, it is possible that the four men knew each other through shared

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71 Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 256.

72 Boon, G.C., *Welsh Tokens of the Seventeenth Century* (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1973) 100.

73 Another Richard Morgan, who traded in Chepstow as an apothecary, died in 1682 (NLW/LL/1682/32). Therefore, it is possible that he issued this token. However, as most Monmouthshire tokens were issued by mercers, this half-penny was probably issued by Richard Morgan, mercer (NLW/LL/1678/23).

74 Boon, *Welsh Tokens*, 82, 90, 101.

75 *Ibid*., 81, 100, 121.

76 Aslanian, S., 'Social Capital, "trust" and the role of networks in Julfan trade: informal and semi-formal institutions at work', *Journal of Global History*, 1 (2006) 385.

77 French, H.R., *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England 1600–1750* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007) 112.

78 Stobart, J. 'Information, Trust and Reputation: Shaping a merchant elite in early 18th-century England', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 30 (2005) 3/4, 303.

79 TNA/Prob/11/419.

80 NLW/LL/1733/130.

81 NLW/LL/1692/185.

82 NLW/LL/1722/130.

business interests and were brought closer together through estate administration. Thus, bridging social capital could have been perpetuated through the repeated selection of the same individuals for this task.

As noted above, another civic duty which may have been undertaken by Monmouthshire mercers is that of alderman. Indeed, Francis Pettingal [*sic*] signed the Newport Ordinances in 1711, as an alderman of the town.[83] It is probable that Pettingall is the mercer in this study because the signatures on his will and another ordinance, dated 1717, appear similar.[84] Therefore, the surviving ordinances further demonstrate the scope of his public service.[85]

In addition, John Jones, who may have been one of the Newport mercers who died in 1722 or 1735, also signed both the above ordinances.[86] Thus, aldermen mercers, like Pettingall and Jones, could have been 'community brokers', bringing together the different tradesmen who served alongside them.[87] Moreover, mercers who served their community in whatever role must have been regarded by local residents as principled, trustworthy men. This view would have reinforced mercers' stock of bridging social capital.

The putative business networks of Monmouthshire mercers discussed thus far, would have allowed for information flow, perhaps in relation to another's creditworthiness, intelligence about new stock, or problems with the quality of goods, etc. This sharing of information would have helped build trust based on a sound business reputation, thereby contributing further to an individual's reserve of bridging social capital.[88]

Indicators of information-sharing networks are suggested in some mercers' probate documents. Whilst there are no explicit examples of information transfer, some mercers appear to have wanted their families to utilise the networks they had developed because thirteen of them left shop goods or businesses to wives or other relatives. Houlbrooke notes that running a shop 'could more readily be entrusted to a wife, commonly a close partner in the business'.[89] Therefore, these women would have been well placed to make use of their husband's existing network of trade contacts.

Furthermore, in four wills the mercery businesses were left to male relations. For example, James Morgan left his son George 'all my shopp wares and goods ... and all implements to my said shop or warehouse as to my trade of mercer'.[90] Such bequests offer the expectation that the legatees would carry on the mercery trade, reaping the benefits of the deceased's business connections. In addition, these bequests hint at the late mercers' aspirations for a dynastic business founded on bridging social capital.[91]

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83 Williams, D.H., 'Newport Ordinances, 1711', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 27 (2011) 101.

84 NLW/LL/1726/117; Gwent Archives [hereafter GA], /T1100/T0001.

85 Given that Pettingall also appears to have acted in estate administration (discussed above), his family may be an example of a 'dynastic family' because of the range of civic-minded activities undertaken by Francis. *See* Mitson, A., 'The Significance of Kinship Networks in the Seventeenth Century: South-west Nottinghamshire' in Phythian-Adams, C. (ed.), *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580–1850* (Leicester University Press, London, 1993) 50–5.

86 NLW/LL/1722/130; TNA/Prob/11/674.

87 d'Cruze, S. 'The Middling Sort in Eighteenth-Century Colchester: Independence, social relations and the community broker' in Barry, J. and Brooks, C. (eds), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, society and politics in England, 1550–1800* (Macmillan, London, 1994) 194.

88 Aslanian, 'Social capital', 384–5.

89 Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family*, 137.

90 TNA/Prob/11/362.

91 Berger, R.M., *The Most Necessary Luxuries: The Mercers' Company of Coventry 1550–1680* (Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania, 1993) 244.

Town	Number of mercers	Total number of connections	Own town connections	Monmouthshire connections (excl. own town)	Connections outside Monmouthshire
Abergavenny	6	31	9 (29%)	16 (51%)	6 (20%)
Caerleon	3	12	4 (33%)	8 (66%)	0 (0%)
Chepstow	7	43	22 (51%)	13 (30%)	8 (18%)
Monmouth	7	45	18 (40%)	13 (28%)	14 (31%)
Newport	2	8	1 (12%)	5 (62%)	2 (25%)
Usk	3	10	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	0 (0%)
Totals	**28**	**149**	**57 (38%)**	**62 (41%)**	**30 (20%)**

Table 3. Number and location of mercers' contacts mentioned in their wills.

Attempts to create information-sharing networks for future generations are also suggested by five wills which left money to establish the mercers' children, or in one case a nephew, as apprentices. Apprenticeships were recognised by contemporaries, like Defoe, as an excellent way to make business connections with the master's suppliers and clients.[92] They gave young people a base upon which to build their 'own commercial webs.' [93]

In this study, Phillip James left £10 each for his two sons to be apprenticed as house carpenters.[94] Meanwhile, David Price left twenty shillings *per annum* to be paid to the master of John, his son.[95] Interestingly, none of the children were apprenticed to mercers. This supports Nancy Cox's findings that most apprentices registered with the Mercers' Company of Shrewsbury did not have a mercery background.[96] It is, of course, possible that children were not apprenticed as mercers if the family business was being passed to another relative with whom they would have had to compete for trade. However, the desire of some mercers to establish their children as apprentices, suggests that these men recognised the value of links with other tradesmen and the benefits such connections could offer.

The most tantalising hints of mercers' information-sharing networks come from an examination of the range of locations mentioned by mercers in their wills. Twenty-eight documents in this study contain such information.

Analysis shows a range of connections within Monmouthshire, as well as with other Welsh and some English, counties (Table 3). These connections may have been the result of land ownership, for example Thomas Phillipps, from Monmouth, held land in Garway in Herefordshire, as well as Grosmont and Skenfrith in Monmouthshire.[97] Indeed, Jones found similar connections based on land ownership in records from the end of the sixteenth century.[98]

Examination of the contacts for each town is interesting. For example, 25% of Newport mercers' links and 31% of those for Monmouth mercers, were with places outside Monmouthshire. In the case of Newport, this was perhaps due to the town's role as a port.

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92 Cox, N., *The Complete Tradesman: A study in retailing, 1550–1820* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, Farnham, 2000) 173.

93 Stobart, 'Information, Trust and Reputation', 300.

94 NLW/LL/1727/13.

95 TNA/Prob/11/360.

96 Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, 164.

97 TNA/Prob/11/373.

98 Jones, *Monmouthshire Wills*, 52–4.

Meanwhile, the high percentage for Monmouth is not surprising given the proximity of the town to the Welsh/English border. One such connection was with 'Chipingham' – possibly a mis-transcription of Chippenham. Perhaps John Phillpott, the mercer concerned who died in 1720, had an interest in horses because race meetings began there in 1718.[99] If this were the case, it suggests Phillpott enjoyed his leisure in the company of likeminded people with whom business contacts could have been cultivated and information shared. The connections of other Monmouth mercers spread out from the town in all directions: within the county, into Breconshire (now part of Powys), Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Wiltshire and as far as London.

The place with the most 'Own town' connections is Chepstow with 51%, which suggests a good business network in the town. This is supported by the large number of trade tokens known to have been issued there, compared to other Monmouthshire towns.[100] However, twelve (54%) of these connections relate to one mercer: John Jones.[101] His associations are spread out around Monmouthshire and into Gloucestershire. D'Cruze has suggested that it took time to 'manage a network of social contacts and husband the store of social capital.'[102] Thus, Jones's apparent success at establishing contacts may be explained by his employment of up to four staff: building relationships was easier for a gentleman with servants, who could be left to run the business in their master's absence.[103]

Mercers in Usk and Caerleon had high numbers of contacts within Monmouthshire, probably due to their central, inland locations. A study of inter-town contacts shows that five of the towns were linked to at least two of the other towns, with a two-way connection between Usk and Abergavenny (Fig. 1. Map showing mercers' contacts between the main county towns and beyond Monmouthshire). The exception here is Monmouth, again probably due to its liminal position.

The extent of mercers' contacts demonstrates their potential to develop multi-stranded business networks. In turn, this gives some indication of the amount of bridging social capital available to Monmouthshire mercers. Such linkages could have enabled mercers to connect into wide information-sharing networks through 'chains of association' linking one tradesman to another.[104]

How these networks were established or kept going is open to question. Given the condition of the roads in early modern Monmouthshire, travel between towns would have been difficult and time-consuming.[105] It is possible mercers used the postal service, because Caerleon, Chepstow, Monmouth, Newport and Usk were postal towns by the mid-seventeenth century.[106]

However, links between mercers may have been maintained informally, through the network of pedlars or chapmen who operated in Monmouthshire at this time. Indeed, the probate documents for Peter Reeve, a chapman from Magor, were signed by Thomas Hull, a mercer from Caerleon and William Godwin (possibly the mercer in this study), which confirms this potential avenue.[107] Such a network would have been of particular use to mercers in Usk due to the central location of the town.

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99 Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 257.
100 *Ibid.*, 256.
101 TNA/Prob/11/681.
102 d'Cruze, 'The Middling Sort', 194–6.
103 *Ibid.*, 196.
104 Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation*, 191.
105 Weeks, R., 'Transport and Communications' in Gray, M. and Morgan, P. (eds), *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2009) 241.
106 Weeks, 'Transport and Communications', 244.
107 NLW/LL/1706/11.

It seems that chapmen could also have provided connections to places beyond Monmouthshire, given that the will of an Abergavenny chapman referred to goods due from London.[108]

At this time, links beyond Monmouthshire would have been easier to maintain if they were accessible by ship. For example, Caerleon had a more extensive inward shipping trade than Newport and Chepstow; whilst the latter had a large maritime export trade.[109] Indeed, Defoe described Chepstow as the 'sea port for all the towns seated on the Wye and Lug, and where their commerce seems to centre.'[110] He also recognised that Newport was also 'a place of very good trade'.[111] However, further inland Monmouthshire's rivers were less useful for transport due to the prevalence of weirs.[112]

By land, Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth would have been the main points of entry to the county; the latter two benefitting from their connections to England. Meanwhile, Paul Courtney has suggested that the triangle formed by the towns of Caerleon, Newport and Usk was also significant.[113] This view is supported by this study which shows possible inter-connections between these towns, focused on Newport. There is also evidence of 'triangles of association' between Abergavenny, Newport and Usk, as well as Chepstow, Newport and Usk (Fig. 1).

The range of occupations mentioned in mercers' probate documents further demonstrates the extent of their business networks which would have facilitated information-sharing. Thirteen different occupations are mentioned, including an innholder, nailer, maltster, dyer, pewterer and glover. Doubtless some of these men would have supplied goods or raw materials to the mercers. For example, William Godwin's inventory was appraised by Thomas Edwards, maltster.[114] The inventory lists 'Hopps', as well as the contents of a brewhouse which include 'Brewing utensils, Casks, etc', suggesting business links between the two men.

At this period, other sources of business information for mercers would have been trade guilds. Indeed, a mercers' guild was established in Monmouth around 1605.[115] However, none of the town's mercers included in this study appear to have belonged to it. Furthermore, there are no records of trade guilds in the other five towns.[116]

However, if there were few, or no, formal trade networks within Monmouthshire, Geraint Jenkins has shown that some mercers acted as agents selling books for the Welsh Trust, for example in Abergavenny.[117] This could have resulted in connections between the mercers engaged in this trade. Indeed, books such as primers and 'instructing books' are listed in the shop inventory of Edward Earle of Newport, as well as that of James Harris of Usk, which includes 'a parcell of Small bookes'.[118] Furthermore, books may have also linked mercers to local chapmen, given that the will of one – Edmond Rosser from Llanwenarth Citra – included bequests of books.[119]

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108 Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 254.
109 *Ibid*., 264, Table 23.
110 Rogers, P. (ed.), Defoe, D., *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, 1971) 375.
111 *Ibid*.
112 Weeks, 'Transport and Communications', 247.
113 Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 256.
114 NLW/LL/1734/61.
115 Courtney, 'Towns, Markets and Commerce', 261.
116 *Ibid*.
117 Jenkins, *Literature, Religion and Society*, 247.
118 NLW/LL/1696/153; NLW/LL/1692/185.
119 The books were not included in the accompanying inventory (NLW/LL/1707/124), suggesting that items may have been omitted from estate valuations.

Evidence for the widest business network is available for John Jones of Chepstow. His will mentions Thomas Griffith, cooper and John Morgan, innholder.[120] One may assume that the cooper could have provided the barrels for the innholder, who both knew the Chepstow mercer. They may well have known others named in Jones's will, such as Henry Mason, nailer and John Weston, shoemaker. The will also refers to Francis Morgan, a Chepstow mercer, who could likewise have had business dealings with Jones's contacts.

Stobart suggests that trade links may have been cemented *post mortem* by legacies.[121] Indeed, John Jones left money to the son and daughter of Thomas Griffith, the cooper.[122] Furthermore, the mercer's shop would have served as a focal point in Chepstow, enabling Jones to act as a 'community broker'.[123] Thus, his business would have brought together a variety of individuals and groups, amongst whom information could have been shared.

Comparing the sum of legal and contractual contacts named in Monmouthshire mercers' probate documents, against the value of their estates, produced interesting findings. For example, high numbers of such contacts were spread across the range of estate valuations. Meanwhile, the most valuable estate had only three legal and contractual contacts, compared to an estate ranked twelfth in value with twenty-five legal and contractual contacts (Appendix C). In fact, a number of estates with large numbers of legal and contractual contacts have low estate valuations.

A similar pattern appeared when the analysis was restricted to estates with known valuations (Appendix D). Such evidence is contrary to social capital theory, which proposes that a large network of contacts results in a more successful business. Nevertheless, there may be reasons for this apparent anomaly. For example, most of the valuations are estimates and may not reflect the mercers' true worth. However, this could only apply to estates without inventories, yet results for both forms of estate valuations are broadly similar.

Another possible explanation is that many mercers held their wealth in land – perhaps with aspirations of joining the landed gentry – and it was not possible to value this asset here. For example, John Jones from Chepstow, owned considerable amounts of land and silverware at his death and also enjoyed a wide range of contacts.[124] However, no inventory was available for him. Therefore, his estimated estate value has been based on his cash bequests and does not reflect the value of the land he owned. Another explanation is that mercers had given money to people before making their final wills, thus giving a skewed valuation, based only on what money remained.

In conclusion, it has been possible to demonstrate a range of real and putative business links for Monmouthshire mercers. These connections are indicated by the trust, collective action and information-sharing evident in the lives of some mercers. Taken together with the range of locations of mercers' contacts, this evidence suggests that mercers developed multi-stranded networks.

Conclusions

This study has used probate documents to discuss the social networks of early modern Monmouthshire mercers by exploring evidence of their bonding and bridging social capital.

It has been argued that Monmouthshire mercers placed particular value on family support, which they expressed in a number of ways through their wills. Whilst it may seem natural to

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120 TNA/Prob/11/681.
121 Stobart, 'Information, Trust and Reputation', 301.
122 TNA/Prob/11/681.
123 d'Cruze, 'The Middling Sort', 196.
124 TNA/Prob/11/681.

provide for one's family, it has been suggested that, unlike previous generations, early modern urban Monmouthshire mercers had begun to make more bequests to their immediate family. Indeed, Houlbrooke found a similar trend amongst early modern English families.[125] This implies that individuals were beginning to look more to their families for support, rather than relying on providence.

Probate documents also show that the mercers in this study proactively developed networks of business associates, within and beyond Monmouthshire. The reach of these networks depended on the location of each mercer's business. Some mercers developed multi-stranded networks, with contacts extending into England, as well as to other parts of Wales. Such an outward-looking approach to business was probably influenced by Monmouthshire's distinctive geographical and legal situation – on the English/Welsh border, yet subject to English law.

This study found that high levels of bonding or bridging social capital, demonstrated by large numbers of contacts, did not necessarily equate to extensive *post mortem* financial resources. These results suggest that some social capital theorists, such as Lyda J. Hanifan and Ben Fine, were perhaps correct in not attributing material benefits to reserves of social capital.[126] However, possible explanations for these anomalies were considered in the study.

Social capital could be dismissed as merely intellectualising a natural human activity: 'people need people'. However, evidence of social capital, found in the probate documents of Monmouthshire mercers, indicates some recognition of the value of different types of support networks.

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125 Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family*, 145.

126 Farr, J., 'Social Capital: A conceptual history', *Political Theory*, 32 (2004) 1: 11 (he cites Hanifan); Fine, B., 'Eleven Hypotheses on the Conceptual History of Social Capital: A response to James Farr', *Political Theory*, 35 (2007) 1: 49.

APPENDIX A: MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738

Name		Probate Date	Town	Document Ref.	Document Type
ADDAMS	Adam	1719	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/571	Will
ADDAMS	William	1685	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/379	Will
BODY	James	1680	Abergavenny	NLW/LL/1680/2 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/346693	Will
BODY	Lewis	1689	Abergavenny	TNA/Prob/11/397	Will
DAVIS	Walter	1720	Chepstow	TNA/Prob/11/574	Will
DAVIS	William	1670	Chepstow	TNA/Prob/11/334	Will
EARLE	Edward	1696	Newport	NLW/LL/1696/153 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/769257	Bd & Inv.
EDWARDS	Thomas	1731	Newport	NLW/LL/1731/154 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/643793	Bd & Intest. Dec.
EVANES	Rice	1669	Abergavenny	NLW/LL/1669/6 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/525109	Will & Inv.
GODWIN	William	1734	Caerleon	NLW/LL/1734/61 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/468227	Bd & Inv.
GREEN	Charles	1700	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/455	Will
HARRIES	James	1682	Caerleon	TNA/Prob/11/370	Will
HARRIS	James	1692	Usk	NLW/LL/1692/185 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/898487	Bd, Will & Inv.
JAMES	Phillip	1727	Abergavenny	NLW/LL/1727/13 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/576402	Will & Inv.
JENKINS	John	1738	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/691	Will
JONES	Jacob	1733	Newport	NLW/LL/1733/130 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/1031808	Bd. & Will
JONES	John	1722	Newport	NLW/LL/1722/130 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/157454	Bd & Intest. Dec.
JONES	John	1735	Newport	TNA/Prob/11/674	Will
JONES	John	1737	Chepstow	TNA/Prob/11/681	Will
JONES	Nathaniel	1730	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1730/41 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/413448	Will
JONES	Thomas	1694	Caerleon	TNA/Prob/11/419	Will
KEMEYS	William	1707	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1707/32 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/407976	Bd & Inv.
MACKLEN	William	1704	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/478	Will
MEREDITH	William	1694	Caerleon	NLW/LL/1694/112 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/290291	Bd, Will & Inv.
MORGAN	James	1680	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/362	Will
MORGAN	Phillipp	1673	Abergavenny	TNA/Prob/11/343	Will
MORGAN	Richard	1678	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1678/23 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/166021	Will & Inv.

APPENDIX A: MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738 *(continued)*

Name		Probate Date	Town	Document Ref.	Document Type
MORGAN	Richard	1690	Newport	NLW/LL/1690/116 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/1037226	Will
MORGAN	Walter	1693	Chepstow	TNA/Prob/11/415	Will
MORRIS	William	1694	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1694/36 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/482594	Bd & Inv.
PACKER	Edward	1729	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1729/73 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/10865	Bd. & Will
PACKER	Edward	1734	Chepstow	NLW/LL/1734/24 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/658139	Will
PETTINGALL	Francis	1726	Newport	NLW/LL/1726/117 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/92949	Will
PHILLIPPS	Thomas	1683	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/373	Will
PHILLPOTT	John	1720	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/572	Will
PRICE	David	1679	Abergavenny	TNA/Prob/11/360	Will
PRICHARD	Edward	1689	Monmouth	TNA/Prob/11/395	Will
RICHARDS	Thomas	1711	Usk	NLW/LL/1711/133 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/145088	Bd, Will & Inv.
ROGERS	Charles	1669	Usk	NLW/LL/1669/179 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/516439	Will & Inv.
ROGERS	William	1668	Usk	NLW/LL/1668/126 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/100308	Will & Inv.
SCOTT	Richard	1711	Abergavenny	NLW/LL/1711/6 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/760887	Will
STEPHENS	Henry	1673	Abergavenny	TNA/Prob/11/342	Will
WATERS	Edward	1719	Abergavenny	NLW/LL/1719/9 http://hdl.handle.net/10107/867698	Will
WILLIAMS	Henry	1684	Abergavenny	TNA/Prob/11/377/381	Will

Key

Bd = Probate Bond
Intest. Dec. = Intestacy Declaration
Inv. = Inventory

APPENDIX B: RANKED ESTATE VALUATIONS FOR MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738

Name		Probate Date	Town	Estate Valuations*
MORGAN	John	1686	Chepstow	**£1,990**
ADDAMS	Adam	1719	Monmouth	£1,455
DAVIS	Walter	1720	Chepstow	£1,002
HARRIES	James	1682	Caerleon	£1,000
EARLE	Edward	1696	Newport	**£794**
GODWIN	William	1734	Caerleon	**£745**
MORGAN	Richard	1678	Chepstow	**£660**
HARRIS	James	1692	Usk	**£446**
JONES	Thomas	1694	Caerleon	£331
MORRIS	William	1694	Chepstow	**£319**
JAMES	Phillip	1727	Abergavenny	**£313**
JONES	John	1737	Chepstow	£250
ADDAMS	William	1685	Monmouth	£244
PETTINGALL	Francis	1726	Newport	£215
PHILLPOTT	John	1720	Monmouth	£190
PRICE	David	1679	Abergavenny	£137
RICHARDS	Thomas	1711	Usk	**£110**
PHILLIPPS	Thomas	1683	Monmouth	£100
BODY	Lewis	1689	Abergavenny	£100
MACKLEN	William	1704	Monmouth	£100
JENKINS	John	1738	Monmouth	£100
EVANES	Rice	1669	Abergavenny	**£76**
KEMEYS	William	1707	Chepstow	**£65**
WATERS	Edward	1719	Abergavenny	£60
ROGERS	William	1668	Usk	**£48**
ROGERS	Charles	1669	Usk	**£46**
STEPHENS	Henry	1673	Abergavenny	£32
JONES	Nathaniel	1730	Chepstow	£20
MORGAN	James	1680	Monmouth	£15
MEREDITH	William	1694	Caerleon	**£15**
JONES	Jacob	1733	Newport	£8
MORGAN	Richard	1690	Newport	£8
PACKER	Edward	1734	Chepstow	£6
MORGAN	Walter	1693	Chepstow	£5
PRICHARD	Edward	1689	Monmouth	£1
PACKER	Edward	1729	Chepstow	5s

Key

* Amounts are rounded down to nearest pound.
  Actual inventory valuations are shown in bold.

APPENDIX C: CONTACTS LISTED AGAINST RANKED ESTATE VALUES FOR MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738

			Estate Value	Family Contacts	Servant Contacts	Legal Contacts	Contractural Contacts	Total Contacts
1	MORGAN	John	£1.990.00	4	1	3	0	8
2	ADDAMS	Adam	£1,455.00	11	3	3	10	27
3	DAVIS	Walter	£1,002.00	6	0	3	7	16
4	HARRIES	James	£1,000.00	12	0	8	3	23
5	EARLE	Edward	£794.00	1	0	6	0	7
6	GODWIN	William	£745.00	1	0	3	0	4
7	MORGAN	Richard	£660.00	5	3	5	3	16
8	HARRIS	James	£446.00	4	2	7	0	13
9	JONES	Thomas	£331.00	14	2	3	0	19
10	MORRIS	William	£319.00	1	0	4	0	5
11	JAMES	Phillip	£313.00	6	0	5	0	11
12	JONES	John	£250.00	21	4	11	14	50
13	ADDAMS	William	£244.00	16	2	3	4	25
14	PETTINGALL	Francis	£215.00	8	0	3	0	11
15	PHILLPOTT	John	£190.00	8	0	3	4	15
16	PRICE	David	£137.00	9	0	3	1	13
17	RICHARDS	Thomas	£110.00	4	0	5	0	9
18	MACKLEN	William	£100.00	12	0	5	6	23
19	PHILLIPPS	Thomas	£100.00	7	0	12	5	24
20	BODY	Lewis	£100.00	3	0	4	11	18
21	JENKINS	John	£100.00	6	0	4	0	10
22	EVANES	Rice	£76.00	13	0	4	8	25
23	KEMEYS	William	£65.00	0	0	4	0	4
24	WATERS	Edward	£60.00	3	0	3	0	6
25	ROGERS	William	£48.00	2	0	10	0	12
26	ROGERS	Charles	£46.00	12	0	9	7	28
27	STEPHENS	Henry	£32.00	15	1	3	2	21
28	JONES	Nathaniel	£20.00	4	0	3	0	7
29	MORGAN	James	£15.00	8	0	6	7	21
30	MEREDITH	William	£15.00	2	0	3	0	5
31	JONES	Jacob	£8.00	7	0	8	1	16
32	MORGAN	Richard	£8.00	10	1	3	0	14
33	PACKER	Edward	£6.00	3	0	3	0	6
34	MORGAN	Walter	£5.00	6	0	3	2	11
35	PRICHARD	Edward	£1.00	2	0	3	0	5
36	PACKER	Edward	£0.25	2	0	3	0	5

APPENDIX D: CONTACTS LISTED AGAINST RANKED INVENTORIED ESTATES OF MONMOUTHSHIRE MERCERS, 1668–1738

			Estate Value	Family Contacts	Servant Contacts	Legal Contacts	Contractural Contacts	Total Contacts
1	MORGAN	John	£1.990.00	4	1	3	0	8
2	EARLE	Edward	£794.00	1	0	6	0	7
3	GODWIN	William	745.00	1	0	3	0	4
4	MORGAN	Richard	£660.00	5	3	5	3	16
5	HARRIS	James	£446.00	4	2	7	0	13
6	MORRIS	William	£319.00	1	0	4	0	5
7	JAMES	Phillip	£313.00	6	0	5	0	11
8	RICHARDS	Thomas	£110.00	4	0	5	0	9
9	EVANES	Rice	£76.00	13	0	4	8	25
10	KEMEYS	William	£65.00	0	0	4	0	4
11	ROGERS	William	£48.00	2	0	10	0	12
12	ROGERS	Charles	£46.00	12	0	9	7	28
13	MEREDITH	William	£15.00	2	0	3	0	5

THE MATHER-JACKSONS AT LLANTILIO COURT

By Julian Mitchell

Introduction

Llantilio Crossenny is about halfway along the old main road between Abergavenny and Monmouth. The village has many substantial old farms and used to include a 400-acre park, part of the enormous holdings of the earls of Worcester at Raglan. White Castle stands on a hill above the village and next to the modern road below, you can inspect the moat which is all that remains of a fortified house which once belonged to Sir David Gam. But there does not seem to have been a 'Great House' or 'Ty Mawr' until the early seventeenth century. Then William Storrell or Sterrell, secretary to the earl of Worcester, built a new house, close to the church and in January 1611, Walter Powell of Penrhos took a lease on it. This later became known as Great House. In 1645, Powell, by then a leading figure in the Worcester entourage, bought the house outright. His diary, edited by Bradney, is of considerable local interest, especially about the civil war period.[1] Few details are known of the house itself, except what can be found in *The True Anti-Pamela*, the scandalous memoir of James Parry, published in 1741. It had, for instance, a great staircase, for it was at the foot of it that Parry was discovered *in flagrante* with Walter Powell's great-grand-daughter Mary; the *Hostry*, the local pub at which Parry got extremely drunk, then stood at its gates. Mary later married John Lewis of Llwyn Ffortun in Carmarthenshire and they had four children. After she died in 1760, Lewis pulled down Great House and built a large but rather plain house in its stead, incorporating in the cellars and back parts some thick walls of the original.[2] Perhaps with a nod to Hen Gwrt this later became known as Llantilio Court. Lewis's eldest son Richard lived there until 1836, famous for his pack of hounds. He had two daughters, neither of whom had children. The last of these, known as Madame Taddy, died in 1846, when the house came *via* the descendants of Richard's sister Eliza, to Colonel Morgan-Clifford, 'the last representative in the unbroken male line of the Morgans of Tredegar',[3] who lived at Perrystone in Herefordshire and already owned the Argoed and Pant Glas in Monmouthshire. Though he was MP for Hereford from 1847–65, he now moved to Llantilio, standing unsuccessfully in a contentious Monmouthshire election in 1868. He sold most of his property in the 1860s and in 1872, put Llantilio up for auction, when it was bought by Sir William Jackson on behalf of his son Henry Mather Jackson. This article deals with life at the Court during the Mather-Jacksons' ownership and is based on papers now in the possession of Susan Legouix Sloman, especially two unpublished family memoirs.[4] I am extremely grateful to Dr Sloman for allowing me such generous access to her family records.

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[1] Bradney, Sir J.A. (ed.), *The Diary of Walter Powell of Llantilio Crossenny, 1603–54* (Bristol, 1907).

[2] Bradney, Sir J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1904, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1993) 96. Gwladys Palmer (*see* below) says the oldest part of the house was the dining room with the bedroom above and beyond that a sprawling back part of staircases and small rooms where the servants slept. For James Parry and *The True Anti-Pamela*, *see* Mitchell, Charlotte and Mitchell, Julian, 'The True Anti-Pamela', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 27 (2011) 111–25.

[3] Bradney, Sir J.A., *op. cit. Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1913, reprinted by Academy Books Ltd, London, 1992) 144–5.

[4] A hyphen was added between the Mather and the Jackson in 1886, although its use was never consistent.

The first of the memoirs is 'A Life of Henry Mather Jackson' by his widow, Elizabeth, *née* Blackburne. It is referred to here as EB. It was written in long-hand over several years[5] and finished on 18 August 1893 (p. 171). At some later point Elizabeth had it typed up, although her children did not know this and the typescript was only discovered more than twenty years later.[6] It is now available on line. It has a page of introduction by her daughter, two pages with photographs of Henry and Elizabeth (i–iii), then 171 numbered pages, with ten of further matter (letters a to k) and four of photographs (letters l to o). It contains a detailed description of the life of a very busy barrister and MP in London and of how and why his father came to buy Llantilio Court for him, against his own and his wife's inclination. It also records the first eight years of the Mather Jacksons' possession of the estate.

The second reminiscence is a Collins Ideal Index Book, 8¼ × 5⅞ inches, almost completely filled with the manuscript memories of Gwladys Ada Palmer (1888–1987), the grand-daughter of the first and eldest daughter of the second Sir Henry Mather-Jackson. Although she wrote in her nineties, referring occasionally to notes made earlier, she had a clear mind and a very clear hand. The memoir was written for her niece Rosemary, who married Stanley Legouix. It is unpaginated. Although there are references to events as late as 1926, it concentrates deliberately on the period before 1914, when the writer was a child and young woman growing up at Llantilio.

EB begins with a brief history of the family whose founder was Dr Peter Jackson of Warrington. In 1791, at the age of nineteen, he married a Lancashire heiress called Sarah Mather. They had eleven children in twenty years, but the males of the family, although very fertile, seem never to have been very healthy and the doctor himself died at thirty-nine. His widow moved to Liverpool to find opportunities for her seven sons, the eldest of whom became a barrister, but soon died of consumption. One or two of his younger brothers went to Africa as representatives of Liverpool merchants, but 'being of sickly constitutions' succumbed to fever. The eldest surviving son, William, born in 1805, decided to leave school at the age of thirteen or fourteen and go to work for a merchant in the docks. After a couple of years he borrowed money from his mother and went into business on his own account. He was soon so successful in the West African trade that he was able to provide for his mother and siblings and in spite of almost permanent bronchial trouble, to expand his business in several directions, his chief interests being the Northern Railway of Canada and Clay Cross collieries. In 1830, he married Elizabeth Hughes of [?] Kinoul, north Wales, with whom he had fourteen children of whom the eldest son, born on 23 July 1831, was Henry (Fig. 1). The family settled in Birkenhead.

As well as being a dynamic entrepreneur, who found time to be a Liberal MP as well, William seems to have been a demanding and authoritarian father. Henry later complained that it was no fun at all being the eldest in the family, as he was blamed for everything and frequently and painfully punished for things he had not done. Along with his two next brothers he was sent to boarding school at an unusually early age and had to stay there for a particularly cold Christmas, with no fire in the school-room and chilblains on hands and feet, while his parents were in Pisa, avoiding the English winter for the sake of William's health. But in spite of this apparent indifference to his offspring, William was most anxious to establish a line. He provided Henry with a tutor and then sent him and his other sons to Harrow. From there Henry went on to Trinity College, Oxford, then the Chancery bar. He was encouraged to spend his vacations in European travel and in 1852, while

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[5] She writes of an old gardener 'still in 1885 at work' (p.98).

[6] In an anonymous introductory note dated 8 Feb.1932, it is described as 'only quite recently' found. The type-script is full of typing errors, which I have silently corrected.

still at Oxford, he went with his father to the USA and Canada where he was introduced to the world of international business. Henry had a private motive for going as well. He had fallen in love with Elizabeth Blackburne, from another Birkenhead family and she with him and before committing themselves, they wanted to test the strength of their affection. Absence having made their hearts satisfactorily fonder, on 8 December Henry wrote a somewhat apprehensive letter breaking the news to his father.[7] There seems to have been no objection and Elizabeth and he were married in August 1854, going to live in a small house in Barnes, towards whose furnishings William gave £500. He also continued Henry's allowance of £300 *per annum*, while Mr Blackburne stumped up another £200 for Elizabeth. The first of their six children was born there in October 1855, just before Henry was called to the bar.

The 1855 winter was extremely severe and Henry told his father that in some places the road had to be cut through drifts of frozen snow more than six feet in height and the river was a mass of floating ice, 'making it not at all like an English scene'. Perhaps it was that, or simply the tedious commute to Lincoln's Inn, but the young Jacksons soon moved to the first of several houses in more convenient central London. William himself was later to give his Birkenhead house to one of his other sons and move to Portland Place, one of the most opulent streets in the capital. But Henry never shared his father's grander ambitions. He was an extremely hard-working young man, who sat up late reading law books and briefs and was often ill. As well as his legal work, he was deeply involved in his father's businesses, being chairman of the Northern Railway of Canada for many years. But there were always long holidays either abroad or at seaside places in England. There were political ambitions, too. William, who had been MP for Newcastle-under-Lyme for eighteen years, moved in 1865 to North Derbyshire, which included Clay Cross. At the same election Henry was invited to stand at Birkenhead (in William's place, says EB, erroneously). Ever since the start of the American Civil War, the Liverpool cotton trade with the Southern states had caused bitter political division, so Henry lost. But he won a bye-election at Coventry in 1867, only to be unseated on petition. However he regained the seat in 1874 and kept it until his death. Meanwhile, at the 1868 general election, William lost his new seat, but was rewarded for his services to the Liberal party the following year when Gladstone offered him a baronetcy. It is here that the clash of values between the less educated self-made man and his public school, Oxford and Lincolns Inn son first became clear. Henry was 'most anxious that the honour should be declined, as he could not see any benefit to arise from it to either his father or himself as his successor. Such, however, was not the intention of the father who looked upon himself as the founder of his family and the baronetcy, therefore, as a suitable recognition of his success'. In November 1869, he became Sir William Jackson of the Manor House, Birkenhead.

Henry was earning good money at the bar now and in May 1870, with £4,175 of savings, he and Elizabeth bought Ladham House, near Goudhurst in Kent, for summer holidays and Christmases. It had thirty-five acres, later extended to fifty, with 'lovely grounds', grass walks in the kitchen garden instead of gravel; there were also apple and cherry orchards all around. They soon became very fond of it and although it needed much doing up, it was so convenient for London, that Henry would often run down there for swift visits during the legal term times. He was still working very long hours, for which he had his own reward, being elevated to QC in March 1872. This was satisfactory in itself and meant some slight alleviation of his legal workload. But it was not enough for his father. Although he spent his winters at Cannes or mild English resorts such as Torquay, William wanted his eldest son to be a country gentleman, with a proper seat and a large estate. He told Henry that Ladham was

[7] The original is in the Sloman papers and there is a copy in EB (j–k).

not big enough for him and it did not have enough scope for his future. He told him to go and look at two larger properties near Clay Cross (where the collieries were managed by Henry's younger brother, John). 'The idea of leaving the snug and pretty house of Ladham was very distasteful to [Henry] and also to his wife, but the wish was so unselfish and the desire on the part of Henry's father so very distinct that they could not refuse to go'. That 'very distinct' gives an idea of just how domineering the founder of the family could be, but it is clear that when Henry and Elizabeth visited the grander places he recommended, they did so with a determination to find as much wrong with them as possible. When they got to Overton Hall, for instance, on which the baronet was especially keen, they 'found it an impracticable house in dilapidated condition and a pretty country, but almost all the views spoiled by the heaps of wood and refuse of old mines'. Perhaps in celebration of its failure to please, Elizabeth bought a barouche out of her own savings which made the autumn stay at Ladham even more enjoyable than usual.

But while Henry was in Canada on railway business, taking his own eldest son as his father had taken him, Sir William and Lady Jackson came to stay with Elizabeth. Her satisfaction at their visit:

> … had been a little ruffled by the constant allusions of her father-in-law to the smallness of the house and surroundings and the desire and intention he had to see his son settled in some more permanent manner… It was therefore as if a knife entered her soul, that she heard Henry's parents talk of a wish for change and as far as she was able, or thought it becoming, she constantly disabused their minds of the notion that there was any call or desire for anything more ambitious in the form of landed property or more exacting in the nature and extent of their responsibility.

It was no good. As soon as Henry returned, his father resumed the attack, with a list of new estates he wanted him to inspect. Henry's attitude was 'There can be no harm in looking if you wish it, but we are very happy and quite contented at Ladham'. It was now that Colonel Morgan-Clifford heard that his one-time Liberal colleague in parliament was looking for a country estate and offered him Llantilio Court. Sir William was enthusiastic, though he had never seen it. Henry, procrastinating, told his father he would go and look at it when he had time from his legal work – which would not be for some months. He privately 'hoped that during his absence the Estate would be purchased by others'. No-one, however, came forward and when Clifford advertised it for sale by auction in October 1872, unable to put their inspection off any longer, Henry and Elizabeth went down to look. They dawdled on the way, spending Monday 6 October in Hereford and getting no further than Monmouth on the Tuesday, because it was such a wet day. On the Wednesday, 'feeling quite sure that nothing would come of the expedition and that they must give up as little time as possible to it', they drove the eight 'rather hilly' miles to Llantilio. Although the road was rough, the views were lovely, the timber magnificent, the autumn tints just beginning and Henry turned to Elizabeth in rapture at the great beauty of the area. While she inspected the house with its sole inhabitant, the Irish Roman Catholic housekeeper, Henry was shown round the estate by the bailiff, carpenter and woodman.

Henry wrote to his father on his return to London:

> As you know … I was prepared to like the place – Indeed one of my reasons for not caring to go to it was the certainty that I should like it. But I was not prepared for what I saw. The situation is simply perfect. I never saw anything like it. The House is old but in good order and has evidently been occupied by people of position. But the real charm and surprise to me is its being so manageable. From what Lake[8] had told me I thought it would be beautiful but altogether beyond compass. I find

[8] Clifford's agent, *see* below.

> however that while it would be enough for an Earl, it would not be the least too much for a QC let alone a baronet… The one fault, or more accurately drawback, is the proximity of the Church, but this is a mere fancy and is a very common feature in similar properties.

The second page of the letter is, alas, lost.

Was Henry being hypocritical? His wife's recollection of the visit is much less enthusiastic; they spent about an hour and a half at Llantilio:

> and came away much impressed with the natural beauties and the complete retirement of the district, but with little desire to become its proprietors and with no other feelings than that they had carried out the wishes of their parents by coming to look at it.

They went on to Tintern, saw the abbey by moonlight and were soon back in London, then Ladham.

On 13 October, Henry wrote to his father again:

> I have ascertained from Lake that there are only 3000 acres & there have never been more for years past. You must therefore be mistaken in thinking there were 5000. The rental is about £4500 exclusive of the House. If this is valued at £500 that makes the £5000 a year. Lake tells me that they intend to go to auction & that he expects to get more than £200,000 for it. I don't believe that, but I am sure it will not fetch less than £175,000. I suppose it is too big for us, for I should not care for it as a family estate unless it were free and if your limit is £125,000 it could only be managed with a mortgage for £50,000; this would reduce the income to £2500 a year as the mortgage would take £2000. And this would be quite insufficient.

This is much less enthusiastic than his first letter and two days later he was even less so. If his father was not going to go beyond £125,500, 'there is no good thinking about Llantilio, as it can't be bought for the money & will hardly do if mortgaged. There is no harm done and I have had the pleasure of seeing one of the loveliest spots on the earth'. He explains his reasoning about the price again and ends 'I shall think no more about it'. That sounds definite enough.[9]

But Sir William was not so easily put off. After further discussion with Henry, he decided he was prepared to go up to £160,000. This can be seen as a triumph for his son, meaning a mortgage would not be necessary; or, as the figure was less than he thought the estate would go for, that they wouldn't get it anyway – father and son both thought it was unlikely the auction would produce a buyer. Perhaps Sir William was looking forward to haggling with Colonel Clifford. But to everyone's surprise and no doubt to the much greater delight of father than son, Llantilio was knocked down to them for their £160,000. One can only guess at the feelings of Henry and Elizabeth when, after Christmas with Sir William at Portland Place, they went down next day to Llantilio for a fortnight, to find out just what they had been given (Fig. 2).

If the Jacksons thought they had got a bargain, they were mistaken. Welsh agriculture had been booming up to 1870, but in 1874, a general and long-lasting agricultural depression began, caused by competition from foreign imports of corn, meat and dairy produce. It lasted until almost the end of the century and even then, although prices picked up, the heights of the 1870s were not reached again before 1914. There were particularly bad harvests in 1878–9 and 1893–4 to add to rural woes.[10]

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[9] These three MS letters from Henry to his father are amongst the Sloman papers.

[10] Howell, David W., *Land and People in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1978) 7–9.

Historians are unclear on the detailed local effects of the depression, as the drop in prices was to some degree relieved by the demands of the growing industrial population for food. But rents, which had been rising in the 1860s, certainly fell, or were abated, and many landowners chose to sell their farms to the farmers.[11] Why Clifford had sold so much property when he did is not known: his only son had died while at Oxford, but he had a married daughter, Lady Dunboyne. Perhaps, as a man who knew about country life, which the Jacksons did not, he was clever enough to see the depression coming. But this seems unlikely. He had owned Llantilio for twenty-seven years, but Elizabeth wrote: 'It is well known that no one is willing to let old family property [go], until compulsion stares them in the face. So it had been with Colonel Clifford. Wages had been unpaid, roofs un-mended and small holdings neglected for many years'. One of the farms had been 'void', i.e. uncultivated, for three years, the farmhouse and buildings were 'all out of repair' and the fields overgrown with thistles and weeds. The roof of the Court itself needed to be taken off and the timbers replaced. Most of the rooms needed redecoration and the barns and stables had to be completely renovated, the laundry moved and new cottages built. Sir William in fact bought a rather run-down property at a bad moment and Llantilio was always to prove a financial burden to his son and grandson.

As a QC and MP, Henry had quite enough to do without seeing to two country properties far apart and although Elizabeth, who managed the Jackson finances, wanted to let Ladham, with the idea that it would eventually become a home for their second son, the boy was only nine and they decided reluctantly to sell it. There were, too, problems with Llantilio that Henry cannot have anticipated. It was, to start with, impossible to get up and down from London in the day, so he had to base himself at the *Imperial Hotel*, Malvern, while dealing with the estate and starting to learn about local farming. At Easter, when he wanted to begin work on the house, Clifford begged him to leave the interior as it was, as Mr Clifford[12] hoped to be able to pay it a final visit. Then there was disagreement about the furniture. Elizabeth was scornful of its quality, but Clifford valued it at £900 and said if Henry didn't agree to the figure, it would have to go to auction *in situ*, which would cause another delay. Then the timber was separately valued at £20,000. Cost was piling on cost and Ladham failed to reach its reserve price at auction. In spite of these difficulties and it being an exceptionally busy summer for him at the bar, Henry was anxious to spend the long vacation at Llantilio and to entertain his father there, for the latter had still not seen it. Because he was so busy, it was Elizabeth, clearly a very competent manager, who oversaw the removal from Ladham. The furniture came cross-country in three vans and with Clifford's remnants 'it was easy to make many

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[11] The depression may have been worse for landowners than tenants, as rentals fell steadily in Wales throughout the period. *See* Morgan, Kenneth O., *The History of Wales Vol. 6 Rebirth of a Nation Wales 1880–1890* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1981) 82. Ian Pincombe states that Monmouthshire rents fell by 16% during the depression. *See* Pincombe, Ian, 'The Rural Economy' in Williams, Chris and Williams, Sian Rhiannon (eds), Griffiths, Ralph A. (general ed.), *The Gwent County History. Volume 4. Industrial Monmouthshire, 1780–1914* (University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2011) 39–40. J.E. Vincent prints the answers of eleven Monmouthshire landowners who replied to his questions about their recent reductions in rents. (Sir Henry was not, alas, amongst them). At Dingestow, rents had been reduced by more than 29%, Rockfield by 30%, The Hendre by 25% and Wyesham by 50%. From Talycoed, Colonel Bradney, friend and neighbour of the Mather-Jacksons replied: 'On most of the farms the rents have been permanently reduced, so much so that no abatement has since been applied for by any tenant, and none has been given. Most of the farms have been purchased since 1880'. *See* Vincent, J.E., *The Land Question in South Wales, a Defence of the Landowners of South Wales and Monmouthshire* (The Landowners Association of South Wales and Monmouthshire, Westminster, 1897) 106–8.

[12] It is not clear who this inconvenient relation was. The colonel's father had died in 1814. 'Mr' is probably a mistake for 'Mrs'.

rooms habitable, as soon as they could be wrenched from the tardy hands of the Hereford builders', a hazard familiar to everyone moving house throughout the ages. Then there was the livestock. 'It was Midsummer Day of a very hot summer when the cavalcade of cows, pigs and horses came up the hill … after a two day journey from Paddock Wood by Reigate and Reading to Monmouth'. The journeys of the furniture and animals cost about £20 and £22 respectively. By the end of July the family was installed and Sir William and his own Elizabeth, with his sister and two servants, came for a six weeks' stay. The weather was good, there was plenty of shade, the lawns were level, the drives in the countryside delightful and Henry's mother spent a happy time mushrooming. Many friends followed. The Mather-Jacksons had arrived.

By the end of October, the family was back in London for the beginning of the law term, but they returned to Llantilio for Christmas, when severe frost made skating possible on the lake. Sir William was expected, but Lady Jackson had been taken ill and he stayed in London. When Henry and Elizabeth got back there after the holidays they were horrified by her decline. (EB illustrates time and again the utter incompetence of the fashionable London doctors whom the family consulted). Before the end of January 1874, the death-bed scenes recorded in detail, Lady Jackson had died of cancer of the liver. The body was taken by train to Birkenhead, with the family in a specially attached saloon carriage. Sir William, as part of his notion of what was right and proper for a baronet, had been preparing a family vault there for the last few years, imagining that he would himself be its first occupant, but being too ill with bronchitis, he could not attend the funeral. His grief and sickness meant Henry now spent as much time with him as he could, adding yet another burden to an already over-extended life. With parliament often sitting all night and legal work next morning, he was becoming exhausted. When parliament rose for the Easter holidays, instead of going down to the country with the younger children, he and Elizabeth took their two eldest daughters and son to Paris. However the whole family went to Llantilio in the summer vacation and entertained many friends there, though Elizabeth does not mention any of the Monmouthshire gentry among their guests. Sir William, who had been at Malvern, came over at the beginning of September, losing his servants and luggage at Hereford on the way. He was still chairman of the Imperial Credit Company, which seems to have been the centre of his financial operations; Henry was on the board. William's 'great grasp of financial questions and his courage made him an excellent administrator', says Elizabeth, 'and the Share Holders of the companies in which he interested himself always felt confidence in his administration'.

Henry left the management of Llantilio almost entirely to his wife, who used to go down once a month, remaining a day or two to see to it. 'By leaving town at 5 o'clock on Friday evening and returning by the last train on Saturday, much business could be attended to and the work regulated and special payments kept in order'. Henry went down for Christmas, but his father was sinking and on 31 January 1875, almost exactly a year after his wife, he died. The disposition of his property had been an absorbing topic to him in the later years of his life and he always carried with him a copy of his most recent will, to which he was continually summoning his solicitor son, also William, to make alterations. He had taken against another son, Edward, because his wife had failed to show the family adequate affection, but Henry vigorously opposed a reduction in his portion and in the end the property was equally divided amongst the five sons, with £50,000 each for the daughters. There was some argument about the contents of Portland Place, where Henry decided to go and live. What with that, his briefs and his parliamentary work, a daily visit from the manager of the Clay Cross company and now the settlement of his father's estate, he was 'quite knocked up' by Easter, when a trip to Holland was taken. However much he may have sometimes resented Sir William's domination, he never got over his grief at his father's death; an over-conscientious, overburdened

eldest son, with his devotion to 'harness' and his political ambition, he seems the victim of a powerful need to please that overbearing shadow.

His only spare time seems to have been Sunday afternoons and he cannot often have been at Llantilio. When he did go, in August, he provided himself with a drag – a long open carriage with transverse or side seats – and drove down with three men and six horses, driving four and sending two on each day. Since he kept going back to London for court work, the journey took a little more than a week. Once again the Court was used to entertain friends and neighbours, there was an agricultural show to attend and he relaxed with family trips to Raglan, the Sugar Loaf and the Usk valley. He also attended quarter and petty sessions. But he kept going away – to his constituency at Coventry, to Clay Cross, to the Birmingham festival to hear 'Elijah'. One fine October morning, he set off for Abergavenny in the drag with his wife, three daughters and a maid and footman, the coachman and groom, when the horses suddenly shied and the carriage overturned. No one was killed, but Henry was severely hurt and the accident, his wife thought, contributed to his early death, although he quickly recovered from his bruising. The packing up after the holidays and return to London took four days. The family was down there again with friends at Christmas and 'the party went through the very worst weather, and with the horses breast-high in the floods' to the fancy ball at Monmouth, although Henry, who didn't enjoy dancing, excused himself. Perhaps he was beginning to feel the beginning of the serious attack of gallstones which he suffered in January 1876. A very fussy eater, he was 'under the severest discipline both as to quantity and quality of his food'. He even put Post Office scales on the table so he could weigh how much he ate.

In February 1875, Henry and Elizabeth went down again to see to building work, which included the change of the billiard room into a morning room and more importantly, the covering of the outside of the house with a new coat of cement. At Easter, the place was still in great disorder with all the windows barricaded, so the family went to Dieppe. However it was Llantilio again in August and the children now growing up – a son at Trinity, Cambridge and a daughter at Girton – there were many young visitors and dowsing was practised to notable effect. There is mention of Monmouthshire neighbours now, including the Herberts of Llanarth and Mrs Stretton, widow of first Captain de Winton and then of Major Stretton, late master of the Monmouthshire Hunt. In October 1877, in spite of Henry's dislike of dancing, the Jacksons gave a ball attended by 140 of their neighbours and friends, including Mrs Rolls of Llangattock. The Jacksons were being accepted, although they were still only Christmas and summer visitors. Henry enjoyed the country and sometimes spoke of giving up the law and concentrating on parliament, where he spoke often, hoping to become solicitor general. But he always ended by saying no man under fifty ought to give up harness. A pattern was now set: the family lived mainly in London; the parents spent Easter abroad, often with one or two of the elder children, while the younger went to Llantilio with their governess; the whole family went there for August and September, although Henry now often came later than the others, while he took the waters abroad; and everyone returned to Monmouthshire for Christmas, 'always a very busy time … as so many Estate arrangements had to be made for the ensuing year, and accounts analysed'.

Though he was chairman of the Monmouthshire Liberals and had been made a deputy lieutenant in June 1876, it could not be said that Henry ever treated Llantilio as his real home. But Elizabeth has a passage which shows how much it was dominating his life, even if he made so little use of it. Each visit:

> … arrangements had to be made with the agent, Mr Graham, for new tenants and various repairs, to say nothing of new cottages and other building operations…. Each year much more than the

> results which came in were expended on repairs and improvements on the farms, and in fact, all the fees which were earned by the sweat of the brow were laid out on the Llantilio Estate for the first eight years after Henry [was] installed as possessor [i.e. for the rest of his life]. All this continued outlay …. swallowed up all that came in from all quarters during these years and so often caused great mental anxiety, for Henry felt conscious that he ought to have been laying aside for his younger children. He was, however, perfectly helpless, as the Estate was in a very bad condition and unless it was set right no tenants could be secured or any kind of return looked for.

Henry was liberal as well as Liberal, being against capital punishment – under the influence of Elizabeth – and deploring excessive penalties for minor offences. He was also a supporter of women's suffrage. But when, after the general election of 1880, the post of solicitor general went to another, he was very disappointed and felt, after all his political work, slighted. His health got worse, with more all-night sittings and a 9.15 or 9.30am start in chambers, although his casually cheerful doctor said there was no need to reduce his workload. He and Elizabeth spent a full month at Karlsbad that summer, but its 'lowering treatment' left him not only low but sometimes too weak even to take a walk; leaving his elder children in charge, he did not go to Llantilio until September. Like his party leader, he liked chopping down trees and kept an axe in his study for any sudden urge for exercise. At Christmas he spent two or three days going through the woods and shrubberies and over-tired himself. When parliament met again in January 1881, the Irish question was fiercely debated night after night and Henry remained in his seat until the very early hours; on 1 February, the House sat uninterruptedly for a parliamentary session of forty-one hours. Henry felt he was dying of exhaustion. Another equally casual and cheerful doctor was brought in who also said there was no need to make any change in his way of life; Henry should not retire from either parliament or the bar.[13] A visit to Brighton did no good; the wind was cold; Henry looked haggard; he became more and more ill and after his last visit to the Commons on 21 February, was in such pain that Elizabeth went early next morning to beg the doctor to visit. He said he was too busy with other patients, gave her a prescription and did not call until the afternoon. Apparently taking Henry's illness seriously for the first time, the doctor began to come two or three times a day, calling in Sir William Jenner for a second opinion. Jenner said the pain was caused by a gallstone which had not passed. Henry's eldest son asked if was not possible to perform an operation to remove it, but the doctor said 'You do not know where the gall bladder is, or you would not ask such a question – it would be quite impossible'. (He was absolutely wrong and four years later, admitted it was now 'quite a common operation'). On 2 March, Henry's pain was eased, at least temporarily, by the news that he had been made a judge, something he had long been hoping for. But six days later, not yet fifty, he was dead.

Life at Llantilio Court

Sir Henry II (Fig. 3) was twenty-five when he inherited Llantilio Court and the Blackburne genes must have improved the Jackson stock, for he was an unusually healthy member of the family, who lived to be eighty-seven. In August 1886, aged thirty, he married – and his grandfather would have been extremely pleased, one can be sure, that his bride was a great-grand-daughter of the duke of Beaufort. She was Ada Frances (1861–1949), daughter of General Arthur Somerset and she had grown up at Troy House, Monmouth. It was at this time that the hyphen joined Mather to Jackson.

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[13] The type-script leaves out, although it clearly implies the 'not'.

Fig. 1. Sir Henry Mather-Jackson, 1st bart., referred to in the text as Sir Henry I (1831-81).
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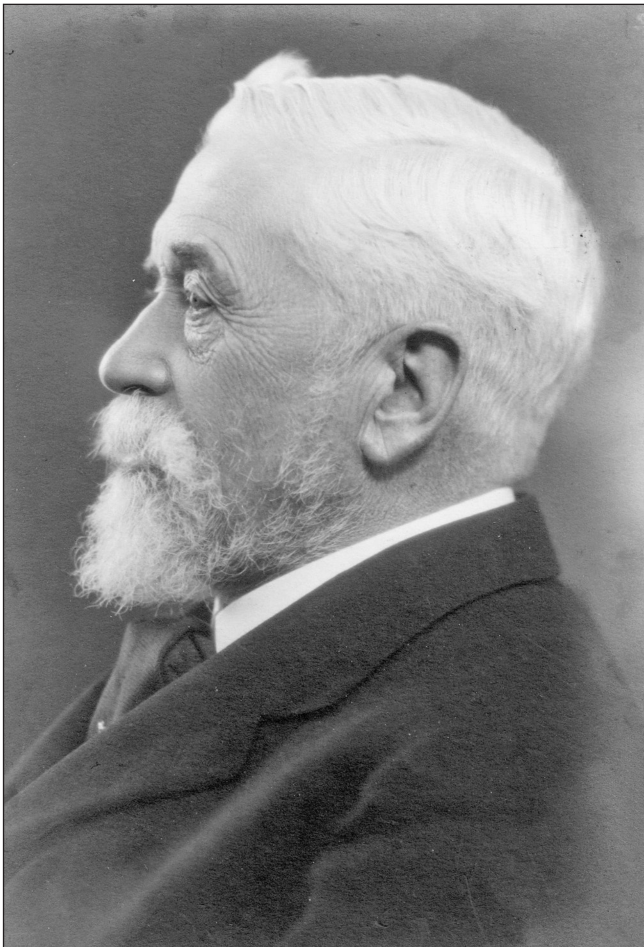

Fig. 3. Sir Henry Mather-Jackson, 2nd bart., a portrait in the Sessions House, Usk.
Copyright: Usk Town Council.
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Fig. 2. Llantilio Court with flag flying, a postcard illustration.
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Fig. 5. Llantilio church and Court, a postcard view.
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Fig. 4. Ada Mather-Jackson, wife of Sir Henry, 2nd bart., with her children Gwladys and Norah. Gwladys, later Gwladys Palmer (1888-1987), wrote memoirs on which this article is partly based.
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Fig. 6. Sir Henry Mather-Jackson, 3rd bart., a photograph taken about the time of his twenty-first birthday in 1915, when he was serving in France. He never lived at Llantilio Court.
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Sir Henry and Ada had two sons and three daughters and it is to the eldest of these, Gwladys, that we owe the description of life at Llantilio Court during the next forty years (Fig. 4). As she was not born until 1888 and EB stops with Sir Henry I's death in 1881, there is a gap of more than ten years in the story. Nor is there then a story as such: Gwladys divided her memoir into different aspects of life at Llantilio, as seen through the eyes of a generally happy child and young woman. She made notes over the years, especially about some of the local 'characters' of whom she was fond, but she did not have the same close interest in the economic problems of the estate as her grandmother and as she wrote over several years, there is sometimes repetition. I have therefore occasionally edited her memoir to make a more coherent narrative.

Something of a hypochondriac, who collected many pills and potions he never actually took, Sir Henry II did make Llantilio his home. Although he twice tried and failed to get into parliament (in 1885 and 1886), he took an active part in Monmouthshire politics, being a county councillor for many years. When he became lord lieutenant in 1934, it was to hold the office between members of the oldest families in the county, Lords Tredegar and Raglan, thus achieving his grandfather's dream of acceptance into the highest ranks of local society. His son, Henry III, considered his father was like a tin of mixed biscuits, he did so many different things. He was on the Monmouthshire County Council roads committee which freed the Usk suspension bridge from tolls and the first vehicle to cross freely was a four-wheeled dog-cart driven by Gwladys. He shared the chairmanship of the police committee with a Labour councillor, was chairman of the Monmouthshire Institute of Agriculture (now part of Coleg Gwent) and of both the Haberdashers Schools in Monmouth. He was chairman too of Usk quarter sessions and his portrait still hangs in Usk Sessions House, where his father's law library is also housed. More rewardingly, at least in financial terms, he was chairman of the Alexandra Docks in Newport and a director of the Ebbw Vale Colliery. When these were taken over by the Great Western Railway, he was put on the GWR board. He was also on the board of the Eagle Star Insurance Company and inherited the family interest in Canadian railways. A strong churchman, he was on the Llandaff diocesan conference and hoped, when the Monmouth diocese was created, that St Mary's, Abergavenny, would become the cathedral, but it was considered too isolated from the main population. He went to London almost every week for a night or two, taking the 9.27am from Penpergwm to Newport where he changed. He always travelled first class, but his children went second with their nannies and third when second was abolished. (A second class return ticket from Penpergwm to Paddington, at least up to 1914, cost one pound). When the whole family travelled together, to London or the seaside, a saloon was arranged, with a large compartment with seats and armchairs for the senior members and a smaller one for their attendant maids and nurses. In London, Henry stayed with his widowed mother at 56 Montagu Square, which he seems to have inherited on her death.

Ada too had a public life of good works in south Wales, being president of the Diocesan Mothers Union, creating the Monmouthshire Nursing Association to provide midwives and district nurses all over the county and establishing a home for what are now called one-parent families at Nantyderi House. She also imported a Finn to run a weaving school in Monmouth and had her own loom in the Llantilio drawing-room where she wove things for her girls. She was also an early woman magistrate, but only sat on the junior court in Abergavenny. She was made a CBE (Gwladys wrongly says DBE) in 1939.

All these interests and activities year after year could only have been managed, as Gwladys observes, because there were well-trained servants to carry on the work at Llantilio. And many of them there were, though she does not give full details. The 1901 census shows that there were in the house a cook, a butler and a footman, a lady's maid (the head housemaid had at one time to

take this role as well), a nurse and an under-nurse, three housemaids, a kitchen maid, a scullery maid, one female servant not further described and a groom. This makes thirteen living in.[14] A later addition to the household was 'Richie' Richardson, trained at Revells, the queen's dressmaker in Hanover Square, who acted as a sewing maid for the daughters' dance dresses, coats and skirts, as well as costumes for their amateur theatricals. Richie remained a close friend of the family until her death. So too did a head housemaid called Japonica (how and why Gwladys did not know). The housemaids sat in a pleasant room over the kitchen, with big cupboards which held linen which they had to mark and mend in the afternoons. Next to this room, up narrow stairs, was the store-room of which Ada kept the key. Here sugar, soap, candles and so on were all carefully weighed and measured out each week according to the number of people in the house. Stores were not bought locally; they came to Penpergwm by train from the Army and Navy stores in London and had to be collected, as did the fish and ice which came from Fennells in Newport and the sides of bacon from Bristol. Coal too came by rail from Clay Cross. It was considered so important for the running of the house that a special cellar-full was kept locked for emergencies and Sir Henry held the key. Bread was baked weekly. Tea was kept in a cupboard in the housekeeper's room, where the senior servants ate. The other servants ate in the servants' hall, on a literally lower level.

Amongst the servants living out, about whom Gwladys is slightly defensive, was a house boy, a 'boots' who also had to carry up meals to the schoolroom – the children never had to clean their own shoes. Perhaps he was one of the sons of Mr Hicks, the village blacksmith, who had a cottage close to his forge from which issued a stream of young Hicks, male and female, to work at the Court. They got a good training under the head servants, but not always a kindly one. The sharpness seemed strange, Gwladys says, for 'heads' had all been through it themselves. When one of the boys ran away and joined the army, Mrs Hicks considered it a disgrace. But Ada, being the daughter of one general and the grand-daughter of another, took the opposite view and told Mrs Hicks so in no uncertain terms.

Gwladys writes with great affection of the children's quarters in the top corridor of the house, hung with fire-buckets and ladders, where the nursery, night nursery and school-room were, along with bedrooms for the current governess and the older children as they grew up. Few houses, she says, could have had more cupboards. One at the far end of the corridor had a trap door in it, so they could drop down into a large cupboard in their mother's bedroom in case of fire. The children were allowed down to see their parents after tea for games and music, but the rest of the time they lived upstairs under the rule of their governesses, of whom there was a rapid turn-over, though Gwladys does not explain why, except in the case of Miss Bovet, who was engaged to a German. He was a Roman Catholic and so she decided to become one too. Henry said he would not have his children taught by an RC and she must leave. So she went, but the young man then threw her over and she became a nun. Governesses did not have much fun. They ate on a tray alone, unless Henry was away, when they were invited to supper downstairs to keep Ada company. Their teaching included the piano, which the children had to practise before breakfast. Gwladys also learned to play the violin with Miss Osman, daughter of the vicar of Llanarth and became good enough to play second violin in a small orchestra at Nantyderi House. There were too drawing lessons from a lady teacher who came especially from Newport. The boys were sent

14 The staff needs of a smaller country house were estimated to cost £2,600 a year for the wages of fifty-eight men, only six of whom were household servants. *See* Cornish, C.J., 'The Cost of Country Houses', *Cornhill Magazine*, new series, 2 (1897) 474–86, quoted in Mandler, Peter, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (New Haven and London, 1997) 119.

to prep schools, then Eton, although only after a dispute. Henry wanted his sons to follow him to Harrow, but the Somersets were Etonians and Ada prevailed. Eton could be seen as another sign of social achievement.

The gardens were extensive, with many beds and borders, fine trees, a croquet lawn, tennis court and nut walk. As well as a perry orchard for cider, there was an acre of kitchen garden, with greenhouses, a peach house, a grape house, a melon house, a fruit room and a potting shed. It supplied the coachman, the dairy, the laundry and the head gardener as well as the house. Head gardeners, like governesses, did not last long; one was caught selling vegetables and fruit to shops in Abergavenny. They were assisted by two young 'journeymen', so called because they came to gain experience, then journeyed on elsewhere. These lived in a bothy and did for themselves. Mobey, who lived at Monmouth Lodge, was a long-standing employee here and at the church, where he was verger, sexton, organ blower and grave-digger. He swelled his wages with tips from visitors coming to dress their ancestors' graves on flowering Sunday (Palm Sunday). Also in the garden was the simple-minded Davey, who lived with his mother Betsy Watkins or Brooks, no-one was sure which, in the park. He later married and said of his aged mother-in-law, 'She's got 'er pig and 'er man to look after' – she had to feed both, it seems, on a pension of five shillings a week. There were also grooms and waggoners and at least two game-keepers, a quarryman, a carpenter, a mason and probably others.

Some of these worked on the home farm, always busy. Across the stable-yard were the dairy and dairy-house where Mr and Mrs Clarke supervised the farm work and there was a long cowshed in the stack-yard with the names of the Jersey cows painted on their stalls. Mr Clarke milked them by hand and the milk was put through a separator, with fresh milk for the house and the rest for butter, made in a churn by Mrs Clarke. On the verandah window-sill the men put their tin cans for skim milk. (Gwladys was not sure whether they got it free or paid a penny a pint for it). Nearby were the pigsties, next to which was a loose-box for young calves. There was a further yard with three or four loose-boxes and the manure heap. Then there were Ada's hens, white at first, but later Orpingtons and Black Leghorns as well. Eggs were hatched in an incubator inside the dairy-house, the chicks then being moved to coops on the grass leading to the kitchen garden. Opposite the dairy-house were four loose-boxes for the three carriage horses and Ada's pony Nell, which she drove in a Raleigh car with black wickerwork and wheels with rubber tyres. There was also a donkey named Nappy for Napoleon and a changing number of ponies and hunters. Above the carriage house was a flat where the head groom Allaker lived with his wife, who had been a housemaid at the Court and four young daughters. In a corner below was the saddle-room with a delicious smell of leather polish and a bright fire burning, where bran mash was cooked for tired or sick horses. There were also three large coach-houses, sheltering at different times, the Raleigh, a governess cart, a heavy landau and a Victoria (both of which needed a pair of horses), as well as the smaller dogcart and a Beaufort cart. The number of horses kept and of men to look after them and drive the carriages, must have been a very great expense.

The village was small, but as well as the forge, there was a Post Office with shop. The post was delivered daily at 9am in a private bag, which cost one pound a year. The outgoing mail left between 2.30 and 3pm. There was also the *Hostry Inn*, which was the cause of some anxiety. Sir Henry II took it over so he could control the hours of opening. If he wanted to give an order to Allaker over the house telephone, his wife usually said 'he is down at the *Hostry* attending to the acetylene gas'. The installation of gas at the Court was supervised by Mr Crawshay of Llanvair Grange. Known as 'Coddy' and loved by the children, he stood on a step-ladder below the front stairs, stuttering badly as he gave instructions. The gas was made in an outhouse well below the back of the house and was

used to light most rooms, although Ada would not have it in her morning room or the drawing room, where lamps continued.

The church of St Teilo was, as Sir Henry I observed, rather close to the house and one of the few aristocratic perquisites which did not come with the estate was the gift of the living, which belonged to the archdeacon and chapter of Llandaff cathedral (Fig. 5). This could be annoying. The first parson Gwladys remembered was E.J. Lloyd, a very shy bachelor who was looked after by a housekeeper and a groom-gardener. If he met the children out for a walk he would rush past with a hasty 'good morning', or more likely, 'good evening', which was used all day in Monmouthshire. It was in his time, in 1894, that the old vicarage, a picturesque building in local stone, according to Bradney, was pulled down to make way for one of red brick. After Lloyd left in 1903, the living was twice sequestrated as the new vicar had a very extravagant wife. She also behaved foolishly over a young clerk employed on the estate accounts. After the second sequestration the vicar left, the clerk was sacked and thereafter Henry engaged women to do the estate office work and act as his secretaries. The affair obviously made a deep impression on the fifteen-year-old Gwladys, who was in the choir. With the discretion of age, she claimed not to remember the vicar's name. Bradney does not record this vicar at all.

In these years the church still had its very important place in family and village life. Henry read the lessons and Ada played the organ, took charge of the altar flowers and personally scrubbed the tiles of the sanctuary. Some parishioners walked a long way to attend Holy Communion at 8.30am, but most farmers, their wives and families came to Matins, while farm servants, both men and women and labourers, came at 6.30pm in the evening. Several farmers were Baptists and drove to the chapel at Llanvapley in the morning, but some might also come to the evening service in the church. Gwladys was a religious girl and records falling to her knees and offering a spontaneous prayer of thanks for the survival of family members after one of the quite frequent pre-motor traffic accidents, this one caused by a bolting horse. She was confirmed in the church with her sister Norah in 1904 and in 1923, married a clergyman, Reginald Palmer.

Llantilio was on the Monmouth to Abergavenny road, on which there were sometimes frightening tramps or Italian organ-grinders with shivering monkeys and once a brown bear. There were also drovers of sheep and cattle, a pair of whom always stopped at the back door on their way from market and asked for Ada. She would go and talk to them and sometimes give them a tip, but she wouldn't let them in as they smelt so bad. There were gypsies, too, but they were not encouraged. On Sunday afternoons there was the fine sight of Mrs Reginald Herbert of Clytha Park driving to Talycoed in a yellow chariot, drawn by a pair of piebald ponies and with a groom perched up behind. Talycoed was where Colonel Bradney lived, whom the family called 'Farmer Joe'; there was much interchange between the houses. The Mather-Jackson children walked over for nursery tea, or the Bradneys came over to Llantilio to put on plays in the drawing room, watched by long-suffering servants, gardeners and others. Granny Jackson lived on until 1907 and she and her sisters would move for the summer to Brynderi, the Llantilio dower house with superb views, another walk across the fields. She bought White Castle from the duke of Beaufort during his great dispersal sale of 1902 and gave it to Henry and there were picnics there and at Raglan – especially good for 'Hide and Seek' – as well as expeditions to Symonds Yat and the Skirrid, Llanthony and the Forest of Dean, Caerphilly and Hereford (for the theatre).[15] Once they took a rowing boat down the Wye from Monmouth to Tintern, a popular excursion until disaster met the Crawley family of Bryngwyn

[15] White Castle was given to the commissioners of works in 1922 and is now in the care of Cadw.

on a moonlit trip and several people were drowned.[16] On one occasion, the children were taken down a mine. In the winter Granny Jackson had them to stay at Montagu Square and took them to the pantomime. In the summer, they went to stay with Granny Somerset at Clevedon to which she'd retired and there were frequent visits there and to and from a plethora of uncles, aunts and cousins. Closer to home was the annual invitation from Mr Berrington of Pantygoitre to go with him along the Usk at the close of the fishing season, when salmon were netted from coracles and given to the farmers who had land along the banks.

The family was now very much part of the Monmouthshire social scene and knew 'everyone', although neither the Morgans of Tredegar nor the Hanburys of Pontypool are mentioned. Entertaining was lavish, but guests were not offered cocktails or sherry before meals, although the men could have whisky and soda. Henry hardly drank anything, except an occasional glass of port at the end of dinner, but Ada always insisted on a glass of claret for lunch for the good of her health. At dinner parties champagne was served and cider at summer lunches, with ginger beer or home-made lemonade for the children. For any special event, such as Christmas, the head servants would be given a bottle of port. Meals were enormous. There was a joint of meat for lunch, hot or cold, or liver and bacon, or rabbit pie, followed by milk pudding or boiled suet pudding filled with apple or suet jam roll, with Stilton or Caerphilly cheese on the side for Henry. In the evening, when they were alone, there was soup or fish, meat or game, in some form, jelly or soufflé, or a savoury such as angels on horseback. Then there was dessert with glass fingerbowls.

Gwyladys's account of Llantilio life is familiar from many Edwardian memoirs, although it lacks the spice and scandal of some. But she does also record in great detail some of the ordinary local people of whom she was fond and on whom she kept notes throughout the years. But by the time she stops her memoir in 1914, the estate and the family were in serious financial trouble. Eight years later there were no Mather-Jacksons at Llantilio, except in the churchyard and no Llantilio Court.

The end of the Mather-Jacksons at Llantilio

For the final years, the Sloman papers include two intriguing letters, one maddeningly incomplete, both badly type-written on both sides by Sir Henry II. One is to his eldest son, Henry III (Fig. 6), and seems to be the second page of a letter, so the date does not appear. The other is to his wife and is dated 8 December 1920. Both letters are touching *apologia*. He felt very guilty about the way he had handled the sale of the estate during the war and separately, the house after it. In his letter to Ada he says he is only telling her about things they had agreed long ago to do, but which he wants to convince himself are still right to do now. It is clear from both letters that the estate had been draining the family fortunes for years and the war made it impossible to continue to live there.

In the letter to his son, Sir Henry II confesses he has made mistakes 'and they are legion', but the worst has been not taking him into his complete confidence at an earlier stage. Relations between them had become tricky and Henry III's fiancée and later wife, a rich American named Flossie Garth, seems to have been responsible. (She was a well-known horsewoman who encouraged him in his ambition to be a racehorse trainer, which his father did not approve of).[17] Even if he had been able to sell the house without his son's leave, which he wasn't, Sir Henry says he would never have done anything which might have put him in an awkward position.

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16 For the disaster that befell Archdeacon Crawley's family in 1899, *see* Clark, J.H., *Reminiscences of Monmouthshire* (*County Observer* printing works, Usk, 1908) 149–50.

17 Information from Susan Sloman.

> Had we not been in the middle of all this War at the time you came of age [18] I should have gone into everything with you then and we could have decided – but you were in the trenches and what was more soon after you came home – sick [19] – and then came the engagement. My one desire all thro that time was to save you any worry that I could.

His father did not want him to know too much, 'as long as nothing was to be settled till after the war'. The only way he felt he could really help him and give him anything like an adequate income, was by giving him 'this up-feeling [,] quite sure that when you succeeded that you and she would live not here, but in the good hunting countries'. However, things had got so bad that Sir Henry had had, at some time in the 1900s, to take out a mortgage for ten years and the interest had been raised from 3¾ % to 5½ %, which made him decide that he must sell. He had had what he thought was a *bona fide* offer.

> In addition to that was the uncertainty I felt as to the future of land in this country, to the certainty of great increase in the cost of all repairs and to the increase of Tithes – which came out of the Rents. At that time there was no power to raise rents – it was specially provided against and I, knowing how difficult it had been to live here up to then, how often I had been hard put [to] find the interest on the mortgage when it became due and how the whole place was a constant source of expense[,] I thought in view of all the above that the offer ought to be accepted. It was a great trial to me – even then. I had spent all my life here and most of my money and I thought my position in the County was bound up in possessing it. But believing it to be the right thing to do I went straight for the sale. I was wrong – not in wishing to sell, but nevertheless in all that I did. We can, of course all be 'wise after the event'.

His timing was wrong. 'I did not know or anticipate that land would suddenly rush up in value or still more that Timber would, between the time I agreed to sell and the Sale took place, so little did the Purchaser that we had to take proceedings against him to carry out his contract'. He did not intend to keep the house as 'the chief reason for selling was the great cost of the upkeep of the house'. But he gradually realised he had made a big mistake. There was difficulty in finding anywhere else to live in the county, or a place that they could all agree on and £8,500, which is what the purchasers of the estate valued the house at, seemed so much less than it was worth, that he decided it was better to stay on, so he withdrew it from the sale. It meant they were living at a rent of £225 *per annum* after they had let the land, which was rather less than they would pay for a house elsewhere. However, 'the Gardens cost a good deal from which, so far, we have not succeeded in getting much back in the way of market produce'. The fragment of the letter ends sadly:

> The Fates decided on our staying here when it was the one part of the thing I did not mean to do, and if I had meant to go on here I ought to have sold off enough farms to pay off the Mortgage [20] and have kept the rest and have sold the Timber myself – which was the worst mistake of all and the one part of it your mother was against and she was right – as she generally is. There it is. I feel sometimes as tho I could not lift up my head again and that I who have a sort of reputation for business – which is probably wrong have made such a mess of things as to make me not …

The page ends, frustratingly, there.

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[18] *The Times* social column for 27 Feb.1915 announced his coming of age that day and that he was serving with the BEF.

[19] He had been badly gassed.

[20] Gwladys says that many farmers bought their farms when the estate was sold (*see* fn. 11).

The letter to Ada, who was clearly at Llantilio, is written from 56 Montagu Square. The estate had gone and he was disposing of the Court. Someone he had lunched with at his club had said he wasn't charging enough, but he thinks they are getting a fair price 'as things go'. He is anxious that Ada shall be settled comfortably before he himself dies; it is his first and greatest consideration. Second, Ada and his younger daughter Agatha are occupying a much larger house than they want,

> taking more Coals more servants more repairs than a smaller house, whilst on the other hand we get no one to stay with us and no one really to come and see us. Whilst the constant backwards and forwards work that we both do to the Station is both costly and tiring.

Third – and perhaps most upsetting – was the attitude of their elder son.

> We have to face the fact[,] however little we like it[,] that Henry, probably under Flossie's influence[,] is not as friendly as he was and is neither able nor willing in the future to go to LL, when his turn comes – so that we know that [the] time will come when not only would you have to go out, but they won't come in and will, after all the expense we are having of up-keep, only get rid of it at the best terms they then can which will most likely be less favourable than the present offer.

He, Ada and Agatha could stay on and let the future take care of itself, 'but though we do not know what the future may do we know what it won't, and we do know that we shall not be the better able to live there than we are at present'.

He is anxious to get the sale over and has got Henry III to agree a price. There follows a complicated explanation of the financial arrangements which, although no doubt comprehensible to Ada, is not clear to a modern reader without all her information. 'If my income was not dependent upon my work the position might be different – I could stay at home and "enjoy ourselves" but neither of us can and we must accept the fact'. Things are not so bad, though. Gwladys and he went to look at new motor cars and took a fancy to a Leon Boulee at £350. He ends by saying 'Ask her [Agatha] to meet me at 7.10 tomorrow and to bring my Mackintosh'. This suggests there was no chauffeur.

Henry sold Llantilio Court to the Blaenavon welfare committee (he called it the 'Soviet') which intended to use it as a convalescent home for colliers. The committee took on the existing bailiff to run the farm. He was a very poor one, Gwladys thought, but the men from the hills knew nothing of farming and were satisfied. They must have felt as foolish as her father when they looked at what they had bought, for they found it wholly unsuitable and pulled it down in 1922. Nothing now remains but some broken walls and bits of rubble and one or two trees. The kitchen table, cut from a single oak and the one in the servants' hall, also oak and the front stairs of narrow oak and mahogany rail were sold to the USA.

Sir Henry II did die before his wife, but not until they were both in their eighties. His position in the county had been unaffected by his move to St Mary Hill, Llanfair Kilgeddin; he became lord lieutenant in 1934. But his eldest son did not succeed him. Henry III, a heavy smoker in spite of having been gassed, died in 1928 and the title went to his younger brother, who died without male heirs. It was not the end of the baronetcy, which went to a Jackson cousin and is still extant, though no longer with any attachment to land in Monmouthshire. But it was the end of Great House and Llantilio Court and of Sir William's grand ambitions. In British upper-class life, at least since the sixteenth century, lawyers and merchants like the Mather-Jacksons had been able to buy their way to the top by acquiring enough land to sustain an aristocratic way of life and the political power

which went with it.[21] But by the time Sir William bought Llantilio, this was already ceasing to be so and by the time his grandson sold it, the way of life based on a country house and its agricultural revenue was over. The Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 and the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, much reduced the electoral influence of large landowners; and as a result of the agricultural depression 'every estate owner [in Wales] experienced a decrease in income in the last decades of the [nineteenth] century'.[22] When the Mather-Jacksons put Llantilio on the market, they were simply following the lead of the Beauforts, who sold up in the county in 1902. Over the course of the twentieth century, every large house in Monmouthshire was either sold, given away, or pulled down.

[21] 'Down to the 1870s and even beyond, ownership of land was all important in achieving political and social position'. *See* Howell, David W., *op. cit.*, 3.

[22] Davies, John, *A History of Wales* (London, 1993) 444–5 and 462.

THE COUNTY HISTORIES OF MONMOUTHSHIRE AND GWENT

By David Rimmer

Introduction

The article is not solely a survey of the histories of Monmouthshire and Gwent, but the mission statement identifies a second purpose; that this article is also a study in comparative historiography. A sample of four county histories used by the author at different stages of his education and professional life have been chosen: *The Victoria History of The County of Shropshire; The History of Northumberland;*[1] *The Victorian History of The County of Warwickshire* and *The Glamorgan County History*, as these comparators are based on sound knowledge, whereas a generalised description of the *Victoria County History* project would be difficult to apply as the parameters of this project have changed over the years. Early county histories such as William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated* (1656)[2] and William Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent* (1597)[3] have also been used.

What was once frequent practice, but has now fallen into disuse, was the devoting of a large part or all of the first volume of a county history to natural history, with chapters on subjects such as flowers, moths, zoology and insects. The opening volume of *The Victoria History of the County of Shropshire* is an example; the first part being devoted to geology and natural history, the second to early human history up to and including the Domesday Book, the third to some aspects of industrial history.[4] *The Glamorgan County History* has a different approach from *The Victoria County Histories*, as the first volume concerns natural history alone[5] and the subsequent volumes are chronological and do not relate to the hundreds and parishes, as do many of the later volumes of the *Victoria County Histories*.

Some publications also have been treated as county histories, yet do not fall within this remit. A classic example is W. E. Tate's excellent study of parish records *The Parish Chest*. It certainly includes many examples taken from Nottinghamshire's parish records, but equally, many examples from Shropshire and Staffordshire have been chosen.[6]

The same is true of *Warwickshire History* the journal of the Warwickshire Local History Society. Neither the annual bibliographies it produces, together with the unpublished catalogue of the Birmingham Central Library, amount to county histories.[7] Great care has to be exercised over the titles used in respect of the various published histories of Monmouthshire and Gwent.

There are issues concerning the history and identities of local authorities which now comprise the preserved county of Gwent. Firstly before 1536[8] no county existed and the area comprising

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1 Currie, C.R.J. and Lewis, C.P. (eds), *A Guide to English County Histories* (Alan Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1997); Freeman, Jane, 'Northumberland' in *A Guide to English County Histories*, 302–11.

2 Day, Christopher, 'Warwickshire' in *A Guide to English County Histories*, 396–410.

3 McKisack, May, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971) 133–6.

4 Pugh, W. (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Shropshire. Volume 1. Natural History and Early History to Domesday* (Constable, London, 1908). The natural history is described on pp. 1–204; the early human history, including the Domesday Book and some industrial history, on pp. 205–497.

5 Tattersall, Dr W. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History. Volume 1* (William Lewis Printers Ltd., Cardiff, 1936).

6 Currie and Lewis (eds) *A Guide to English County Histories*; Henstock, Adrian, 'Nottinghamshire' in *A Guide to English County Histories*, 312–22.

7 Day, Christopher, 'Warwickshire'.

8 Gray, Madeleine and Morgan, Prys (eds), Griffiths, Ralph A. (general ed.), *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780* (University of Wales Press on behalf of the Gwent County History Association, Cardiff, 2009) 1.

Monmouthshire from 1536 to 1974 and Gwent from 1974 to 1996 fell within the tribal area of the Silures, the Roman province of Britannia and the lordships and commotes of the medieval era. Secondly as volume 5 of *The Gwent County History* covers the entire twentieth century, it is essential that local government structures up to and including the year 2000 are acknowledged, bearing in mind the use of the title of Monmouthshire for two local authorities, the historic county which existed from 1536 to 1974 and the present unitary authority created in 1996, under the terms of the Local Government (Wales) Act, 1994.

The Early County Histories of Monmouthshire

The county histories of Monmouthshire started to be published late, the first, David Williams's *History of Monmouthshire* coming out in 1796.[9] Other Welsh county historians produced histories much earlier. George Owen (1552–1613), completed his *First Book of the Description of Penbrokeshire in general* in 1603.[10] Rice Merrick completed his *A Book of Glamorgan Antiquities* as early as 1578, yet it was only printed by Sir Thomas Phillipps 'the bibliomaniac' in 1825, long after the first two Monmouthshire county histories had been printed.[11]

County histories taking the form of surveys and perambulations which had been produced since William Lambarde produced his *Perambulation of Kent*, have already been described. The process which led to the writing and printing of Monmouthshire's first histories is well described by Philip Riden[12] and apply to Wales as well as England. 'What was new to English antiquarianism during the first generation of its "Romantic" phase was the emergence of the travel account as a distinct branch of topographical writing ...'. Others, such as William Bray's *Sketch of a Tour into Derbyshire and Yorkshire* (1782), are solidly antiquarian and provide with numerous engraved plates, descriptions not merely of churches but also of medieval domestic buildings, archaeological discoveries and much else.

Julian Mitchell in his account of 'Piercefield and the Wye Tour', indicates that the first Monmouthshire historians, David Williams and William Coxe were involved in the tour, although its popularity may have been increased by the isolation of Britain from the Continent, caused by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Julian Mitchell suggests significantly that even when the wars ended in 1815, people kept coming to the Wye writing about it and painting it.[13]

David Williams, Monmouthshire's first historian, who published *The History of Monmouthshire* in 1796, reflected the interests and tastes of the late eighteenth century. His description started with a 'top down' approach from Roman times to the sixteenth century, preceded by a general description of the district, definitions of names, an account of legends and fables and some prehistory. From the sixteenth century, the local element becomes more prominent, examples being: the link between the Seymours and Penhow castle, the Morgans of Tredegar and the siege of Raglan castle. The industrial revolution especially the iron and mining industries are well covered and there is a thorough account of agriculture in Monmouthshire. Although this book contains many good engravings, its itinerary is limited. It is, nevertheless, a competent first 'stab' at producing a county

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9 Williams, David, with illustrations by Gardenor, J., *The History of Monmouthshire* (H. Baldwin, London, 1796).

10 McKisack, May, *Medieval History In the Tudor Age*, 142–3.

11 Merrick, Rice and Phillips, Sir Thomas, Bt., *A Booke of Glamorgan Antiquities, 1578* (Middle Hill, 1825, Dryden Press, London, 1887 and D. Bowen and Sons, Ltd., Cowbridge, 1972).

12 Riden, Philip, *Local History – A Handbook for Beginners. Local History Today* (Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd., London, 1983) 16.

13 Mitchell, Julian, 'Piercefield and the Wye Tour' in Gray, M. and Morgan, P. (eds), *The Gwent County History. Volume 3. The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780*, chap.18, 393, 390.

history. Archdeacon William Coxe (1747–1828) rector of Bemerton and Stourton was very much a creature of the Enlightenment and could be described in the same terms as Philarete Chartes described Bougainville, the French explorer, 'plus orné, plus dix-huitieme siècle …'. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, becoming a fellow of Kings College after his ordination, he became a 'man of parts'; from 1775, he accompanied young aristocrats on the Grand Tour, he became a travel writer on countries such as Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Poland and Switzerland; produced publications on religious topics including an explanation of the catechism of the Church of England (1792) and some of his sermons. He was an early archivist, publishing in 1794 *A catalogue of the manuscripts of the Earl of Hardwicke*. His greatest academic achievements were probably his historical biographies, highly valued by more recent scholars such as Professor J. H. Plumb. Other interests of this universal man included archaeology. Coxe travelled around Monmouthshire with Sir William Colt Hoare, the owner of Stourhead and a gifted illustrator, in a series of journeys, the first through Abergavenny, staying at the *Angel Hotel* in that town, to Llanthony in 1793. Subsequent journeys in the autumn of 1798 from Chepstow through Raglan to Abergavenny, involved the development of the concept of *An Historical Tour*.[14]

Further visits followed in the spring of 1799, but detailed itineraries for a third tour which Coxe undertook alone do not survive. The tour of the spring of 1799 started at the New Passage and proceeded from Portskewett to Caerwent, where Coxe and Colt Hoare walked around the Roman walls and acquired a few Roman coins. The men went to Newport through Christchurch, diverting to Goldcliff, where the sea walls had been resurfaced. The building of a new bridge at Newport was noted and Twyn Barlwm was climbed. This second tour ended with a thorough account of Caerleon, where Coxe and Colt Hoare and their party were based at the *Hanbury Arms*. The third and final tour was of Monmouthshire's industrial uplands, Coxe and Colt Hoare visiting the Blaenavon ironworks. There were accounts of other industrial settlements such as Pontypool, Ebbw Vale and Nantyglo and of work processes such as the building of a railroad or tramway.

The most remarkable features of Coxe's and Colt Hoare's *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* were that it contains the first comprehensive account of the effects of the new industries of the county. Secondly, through employing the land surveyor Thomas Morrice of Cardiff, it is one of the first British books to be illustrated with professionally surveyed plans of archaeological sites[15] and this may have been influenced by General Roy's *Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain 1793*, as the model in the use of surveyed plans, Roy's book being perhaps the first British archaeological work to be illustrated with plans by a professional surveyor. The end result was that this well illustrated, interesting and fluent 'tour' or 'perambulation' was and still is amongst the finest of its *genre*. The next county history would be very different.

Joseph Alfred Bradney, 1859–1933

Bradney's reputation has long been overdue for a complete overhaul, given that he is the most important single figure ever engaged in writing the histories of Monmouthshire and Gwent; the present *Gwent County History*, is a 'team effort'.[16]

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[14] Coxe, W. and Colt Hoare, Sir. R., *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire … Illustrated with views* (2 vols., London, 1801, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, with an introduction and bibliography of Coxe by Knight, Jeremy, 1995) 10–29.

[15] Knight, Jeremy, 'William Coxe (1748–1828), historian and Church of England clergyman', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[16] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport* (South Wales Record Society, Cardiff; The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1993) vii–xi.

Joseph Alfred Bradney was an incomer to Monmouthshire, being born in the parish of Greet,[17] Shropshire, five miles south-east of Ludlow, of which village his father Joseph Christopher Bradney (1796–1868), was rector.[18] The salient point about Joseph Alfred Bradney was that he had 'great expectations'.

The Bradneys were a West Country family with estates in Somersetshire and Wiltshire. They had acquired also, substantial estates in the parish of Llanfihangel-Ystern-Llewern, near Abergavenny, through intermarriage with the Hopkins family, which had by the time of Joseph's birth on the 11 January 1859, died out in the male line. Now in devising entails, lawyers like to 'skip a generation'; the Bradneys were no exception to this practice and as Joseph Christopher was sixty-three years old at the time of his son's birth, the extensive family estates were devised in 'tail male' on Joseph Alfred Bradney, on his attaining his legal majority at the age of twenty-one. Joseph Christopher duly died at the age of seventy-one on the 19 February 1868. There were no other male Bradneys and Joseph Alfred Bradney's family consisted of his grandmother, mother and sisters. All seem to have been 'nurturing women'.[19]

Joseph Bradney's educational performance needs a more careful evaluation than has been undertaken hitherto. He seems to have been happy enough at his preparatory school, Park Hall.[20] He went up to Harrow in 1873, which was then one of England's leading schools and the celebrated head master Montague Butler, the grand uncle of R.A.B. Butler,[21] did partly succeed in reforming that school. In Bradney's time, from 1873 to 1877, Harrow offered a narrow curriculum: classics, mathematics, modern languages and natural sciences. The school was therefore more interested in boys 'cloned' to be princes of the church, eminent barristers, august civil servants and top academics, rather than boys without any aptitude for the classics, yet who nevertheless, possessed a good natural intelligence. Bradney of course fell into the latter group and amongst his near contemporaries he was in good company, including Winston Churchill[22] and Stanley Baldwin.[23]

Latin was apparently Bradney's strongest not his weakest subject, but this was from a pretty poor set of results, taken overall. His Latin report for 24 March 1877 reads 'Latin very good, has prepared good work'. An earlier report of 3 July 1876 refers to his 'Improvement in Cicero'. Other reports, however, refer to his Latin prose as 'fair' and classics as 'very poor'. As Joseph Bradney went into the Sixth Form, his behaviour became worse, culminating in two letters. The first was from his housemaster H. G. Hart, dated 7 July 1877, stating that 'It appears to be that your son has deliberately chosen his side in the house, and though he is in the Sixth Form, he has not chosen the side of order ...'. A second more emollient letter from Montague Butler to Mrs Bradney, dated 31 July 1877, showed that he still had a liking for Joseph and 'my good wishes will follow him to

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17 Bagshaw, S., *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Shropshire* (1851).

18 Bradney, Sir J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1904, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991) 129.

19 Bradney's loving family circle is evidenced by amongst other things, a series of letters to young Joseph from 'Grandma' J. E. Jones from 1867 to 1876. Gifts included an eiderdown and pair of muffs. *See* Gwent Archives, hereafter GA, Bradney Papers, D55.108.

20 *Ibid*., D556.31.

21 R. A. Butler, during Churchill's wartime administration steered the Education Act, 1944 through parliament, so using the 11-plus examination to open the grammar and high schools to clever boys and girls from all backgrounds. Montague Butler went on to become master of Bradney's college, Trinity College, Cambridge. The Butlers seem to have been a dynasty of educationalists.

22 Jenkins, Roy, *Churchill* (Pan Macmillan, London, 2001) 18–21. Churchill was in the Army (non Latin) form.

23 Middlemass K. and Barnes, J., *Baldwin A biography* (Macmillan, London, 1969) 4–10.

Cambridge, but greatly trust he will never sink to this level of a mere lounger and idler'.[24] Madeleine Gray refers to his

> Interest in local history [that] began while he was still in his teens and may even have originated in a rebellion against the sterile classicism of his public-school education ... His school reports also criticise his fondness for doing other work in school time, which may well be a reference to his growing passion for antiquarian history and genealogy ... By the time he was 15, he was reading Dugdale's *Warwickshire* and the publications of the Camden Society and looking through the back numbers of the *Annual Register* for obituaries.[25]

Joseph Bradney at Harrow School, whilst on the one hand seemingly acquiring a lifelong love of local history, also developed into a noisy, unruly youth, more like Fielding's *Tom Jones* than Hughes's Tom Brown of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. All of this is far removed from the description of him as 'an assiduous plodder' in a recent evaluation.[26]

Bradney's youthful career seems to have been mirrored by that of Stanley Baldwin, who was also identified at Harrow as being no friend of order and for a schoolboy offence received a flogging.[27] The parallels between Bradney's and Baldwin's 'achievements' continued into university. Both went to Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1877 to 1880 and 1885 to 1888 respectively, both did well to start with, getting firsts in part one and seconds in part two of their tripos, yet finishing with an ordinary degree in classics in Bradney's case[28] and a third in history with Baldwin.[29] It is known that history was available to Baldwin in 1885, but not for Bradney to read in 1877. If history had been an available option for Joseph Bradney, there is no certainty that he would have done any better. Baldwin's and Churchill's conversions to the paths of 'righteousness', the first as apprentice in his father's foundries at Bewdley, Worcestershire and Panteg, Monmouthshire and the second through his success at Sandhurst, followed by his self-imposed education, whilst serving in India are so well known that they need no further explanation. Bradney's 'conversion on the road to Damascus' was far less public and cannot be traced with any certainty.

Joseph Bradney came into the family estates in Monmouthshire, Wiltshire and Somersetshire after he graduated in 1880. From this point on his actions showed the judgement and maturity of a much older man. He possessed already a small estate at Llanfihangel-Ystern-Llywern. Adding to this, in 1880, he started to design and build his large country house he named Tal-y-Coed. A second factor could well have been Joseph's decision to marry Rosa Jenkins, daughter and sole heiress of Edward Jenkins of the Grove, Nant-y-Groes, Radnorshire.[30] Rosa bore Joseph five children, three sons and two daughters one of whom Margaretta, was born at the Grove, the seat of the Jenkins family and baptised at the nearby church at Discoyd.

Joseph Bradney rapidly became a prominent figure in the government of the county of Monmouthshire. He was high sheriff in 1889, a county councillor from 1898 to 1924, an alderman

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24 GA, Bradney papers, D556.31.

25 Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The History of Newport*, vii.

26 Davies, E. T., *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment* (Regional Publications, Abergavenny, 1986) 8.

27 Middlemass, K. and Barnes, J., *Baldwin, A Biography* (Macmillan, London, 1969) 16.

28 GA, Bradney papers, D554.79. *Cambridge University Reporter*, previous examination Easter Term 1878 Part I, 1st class, Part II, 2nd class.

29 Middlemass and Barnes, *Baldwin A Biography*, 17.

30 Bradney, Sir J. A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1904, reprinted by Academy Books, London, 1991) 129.

in 1928 and rose to the rank of colonel in the territorial forces.[31] He was also deputy lieutenant and justice of the peace; and devoted time to improving his estates, planting trees, hunting and shooting. His interest in learning the Welsh language led him to appoint Welsh speaking servants.[32] He could best be described as a leading figure in the *communitas commitatis (sic)*, community of the county.[33] Bradney's local history publishing activities were part of his role as a leading county gentleman of Monmouthshire. Early activities included a short book, published in 1889 on the Hopkins family of Llanfihangel and Probyns of Newland[34] and manuscript notes made on the hundred of Skenfrith before 1898, for a paper including Troy, Monmouth and Rockfield possibly a 'practice run' on what became the first volume of *A History of Monmouthshire*.[35]

Once Bradney had started work on his *A History of Monmouthshire,* what were his research methods? The key lies in Bradney's working papers in the National Library of Wales. These he organised on the basis of groups of parishes, assembling material by collecting statistics on population, parochial areas by acre and numbers of houses, occupied and unoccupied from published returns; the genealogical material, family trees of major landowners, gentry and farming families, were either provided by the families themselves in response to postal requests by Bradney or were compiled, through use of archives and printed calendars by Bradney himself. When he felt that he had assembled enough material, Bradney proceeded to write the parish histories for the respective hundred.[36]

The only evidence of a records agent being used seems to have been of a William Deane possibly from Abergavenny, who did most of the work at the Public Record Office and Somerset House.[37] Bradney seemed to prefer to use published calendars or summaries. Bradney's liking for using published calendars can be understood, if copies of the 'Rolls Series' or 'Calendars of State Papers' were available locally, so saving expenditure of time and money in visits to London to the Public Record Office and manuscripts collections of the British Museum. Bradney was not afraid to use the great archives held at Llanover, Dingestow Court, St Pierre and The Hendre, as well as papers of local solicitors' firms. *A History of Monmouthshire* has been much criticised in recent years.[38]

The time has come to describe the good points in what is a monumental county history. To illustrate this, the parish of Llanvetherine has been chosen. The account follows this standardised sequence: derivation of name, early history, area in acres, rateable values, population 1801–1901

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[31] Bradney Sir J. A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*. Information supplied for dust cover by Philip Riden.

[32] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, viii.

[33] Stitt. F., 'The Post War decade, the memoir of a county archivist', *Journal of The Society of Archivists*, 19, no. 1 (Carfax Publishing, Oxford, 1998) 78–80.

[34] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, vii.

[35] GA, Bradney papers, D554.106.

[36] The whole collection of research files forming part of the Bradney collection, held by the National Library of Wales, is referenced as NLW 7715-67. The author has consulted the following sample: NLW 7715, Llantilio Pertholey; NLW 7721E, lordship of Wentlooge, including Michaelstone-y-Fedw, Coedkernew and St Brides Wentlooge parishes; NLW 7726E, including the parishes of Whitson, Caldicot and Llanvaches; and NLW 7727, the parish of Llanwern.

[37] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, vii.

[38] Davies, E.T., *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment*.

and manorial history. This is followed by descriptions of larger houses such as Pant Glas, Pool Hall and Gelli Wig, followed by pedigrees of families such as Powell of Pant Glas, of Pool Hall and Turton and James Herbert and Watkins of Wern-y-Cwm. The section ends with an account of the church, list of the rectors and the more important monumental inscriptions.[39] This approach enabled Bradney to work quickly and efficiently and between 1904 and 1913, he had completed the volumes on the hundreds of Skenfrith, Abergavenny,[40] Raglan and Trelech. The parish is, of course, a unit easy for everyone to identify and understand. The second good point has never been identified before. Joseph Bradney did not include a volume or part on natural history, which would have been unnecessary and time wasting.[41]

On one occasion Bradney unearthed spurious history, the grave of St. Tathan at Caerwent in 1912 by the gardener of the vicar. Joseph Bradney's description of the *denouement* of this sequence of events reads as follows:

> After the coffin of the imaginary St. Tathan had been found, other bodies were also turned up and there can be no doubt that the orchard of the vicar was the roman burial place, just outside the walls of the City.[42]

A History of Monmouthshire was ahead of its time, as it benefited from an attractive modern presentation, through the use of photographs, plans of archaeological sites, maps and line drawings of buildings and monuments. A favourite of this writer is a drawing of a tablet over the rear entrance to the mansion at Kemeys, showing a man in Jacobean dress (probably George Kemeys, hence the initials G. K.) holding a scroll and hour glass the motto being 'Onus Whyth Awel Fe Terfyn Amser' – 'Unless the breeze blows time will end'.[43]

Joseph Bradney sensibly started with those hundreds of the rural east of Monmouthshire with which he had empathy: Skenfrith, Trelech, Abergavenny and Raglan. He was not opposed to urban history and wrote well on the market towns of eastern Monmouthshire such as Abergavenny, Monmouth and the small port of Chepstow, devoting more than half of the opening volume of *The Hundred of Usk*[44] to a description of the town of Usk. Within those areas for which Bradney had empathy, his interests were wide: archaeology and as he was a countryman, fox hounds. On more than one occasion he writes with animation of the various packs, their changes in ownership, at least once with chronological lists of huntsmen.[45] From time to time Bradney's view of his world includes colourful personal anecdotes, such as the sticky ends to which the Powell brothers came

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[39] Bradney, Sir J. A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1906, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991) 263–75.

[40] *The Hundred of Abergavenny* comprised two volumes, produced in 1906 and described as Volume 1, Parts 2a and 2b.

[41] Pugh. W. (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Shropshire* (Constable, London, 1908) 1–194 was devoted to Natural History. Tattersall, Dr W. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History. Volume 1. Natural History* (William Lewis Printers, Ltd., Cardiff, 1936). This practice has now ceased, as far as this author is aware.

[42] Bradney, Sir J. A., *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 1)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1929, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1994) 141, 143.

[43] *Ibid*., *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part* 2) (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1923, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1993) 179.

[44] *Ibid*., *Volume 3 Part 1 The Hundred of Usk (Part 1)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1921, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1993) 1–63.

[45] *Ibid*., 103–4, section – title 'The Hounds'; *Ibid*., *Volume 4 Part 1 The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 1)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1929, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1994) 85–6. These descriptions are of the Llangibby and St Pierre packs of hounds.

'men of great originality, combined with pluck and love of adventure and all came to an untimely end': Thomas murdered in Abyssinia in 1869, Walter lost in a balloon and never heard of again and Henry, a huntsman, known for obvious reasons as 'Timber Powell' killed in a hunting accident.[46]

The cardinal virtue of Bradney as a county historian stemmed from his interest in genealogy. His refusal to engage in criticism, analysis and interpretation is a strength rather than weakness, as the facts are presented on a 'take it or leave it' basis.[47] For this reason *A History of Monmouthshire* is still used not only by genealogists, but by academic historians. Any reading of this work reveals evidence on a whole range of historical issues such as the contraction of Monmouthshire's agricultural settlements after 1870; the rise of a professional priesthood for the Church of England; and most poignantly Bradney is the chronicler of the decline of his own class, the landed gentry, a case in point being the Lewises of St Pierre, into which family Joseph Bradney married. That family had to survive by downsizing when Charles Edward Lewis moved to Moynes Court in 1893, the mansion house of St Pierre being let to William Henry Phillips Jenkins.[48]

The work produced by Bradney is, in most respects, ahead of its time. It is a parish by parish, hundred by hundred topographical history of Monmouthshire, very closely resembling the topographical volumes of *The Victoria History of The County of Warwickshire* comprising volumes III to VI and covering the hundreds of Barlichway, Hemlingford, Kington and Knightlow and produced between 1945 and 1951.[49] In respect of most of his writing as a county historian, Joseph Bradney was ahead of his time and indeed a pioneer.

Dr Gray has emphasised that the genealogical foundation of *A History of Monmouthshire* also attracted academic historians, with an interest in family connections, eighteenth-century politics, professional and occupational groups, studies of the land market and social relationships based on marriage patterns. Here pedigrees and narrative family histories meet the needs of cutting edge academic historians.[50]

Fewer faults can be attributed to Joseph Bradney, partly they are the obverse of the coinage of his virtues. He was a genealogist, not a historian, yet the school reports in the Bradney papers show history was not on the curriculum at Harrow in Bradney's day, the option of reading history was not available to Bradney as it was to Baldwin, a few years later at Trinity College, Cambridge. Secondly, Bradney's uncritical acceptance of the forgeries of Iolo Morganwg (Edward Williams) was a mistake made by others.

The early paragraphs in each section using Iolo can be so easily identified, they read like a health warning on a cigarette packet, (the acceptance of this paragraph may damage your critical faculty).[51]

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[46] *Ibid.*, *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part2)* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1923, reprinted by Merton Priory Press, 1993) 200–1.

[47] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, vii–ix.

[48] Bradney, Sir J. A., *Volume 4 (Part 1) The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 1)*, 85. In 1896, Charles Edward Lewis was forced to sell his hounds to Sir Edward Curre of Itton.

[49] Salzman, L. F., *The Victorian History of The County of Warwickshire* (vols III–VI, Oxford University Press on behalf of the University of London Institute of Historical Research, London, 1945–51).

[50] Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, viii–xi; Namier, Sir Lewis, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (Macmillan, London, 1965).

[51] Bradney, Sir J. A., *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part 2)*, 250; and Iolo MSS p.73 Eng. 458. A good example of the supposed origin of the name Henwyg to whom the parish church of Llanhennock was dedicated.

The final concern is Bradney's lack of interest over industrial history, yet this was a common shortcoming in the early twentieth century. Most of the eastern part of Monmouthshire was not industrialised, excepting Trelech and the Wye Valley and this was not appreciated then. The industrialised part of Monmouthshire for which the relevant part of the history was completed, was that part of the hundred of Abergavenny including the parishes of Trevethin, Llanhilleth, Aberystruth in which fifty-five of the 479 pages are allocated to industry. Bradney again tried to cover the hundred of Newport in his draft notes, but what was produced in this incomplete volume was 'top down' and inadequate.[52]

In general the good points far outweigh the few faults in *A History of Monmouthshire*, but Bradney was as unlucky in the hard times he endured in his later life as he had been with a lack of historical education in his youth. As a patriotic member of his class and lieutenant colonel in the territorials he volunteered to fight for his country in 1914. He was on the staff of Lord Treowen and then in charge of a reserve battalion in the south of England.[53] From his club Boodles, Bradney lobbied his influential friends to seek active service and from the summer of 1917 to the spring of 1918, he was in charge of a labour corps, being in the thick of the action, in that swamp called Passchendaele, being shelled by artillery or bombed by aircraft every night. In the spring of 1918, Bradney was caught up in the Ludendorf offensive, which for him culminated in the death in action of his youngest son, Walter. All of this must have been hard for a man in his late fifties to take.[54]

Naturally work on *A History of Monmouthshire* was halted for some five years and was started again by a much older and probably tired man. He worked more slowly and for this reason the completion of the four volumes of *The Hundred of Usk (Parts 1 and 2)* and *The Hundred of Caldicot (Parts 1 and 2)* happened in 1921, 1923, 1929 and 1932 respectively. Although he received all possible honours, including being knighted in 1924 and receiving an honorary degree of doctor of letters from the University of Wales, his health was starting to fail and possibly being aware that he had little time left, Sir Joseph Bradney placed the notes and drafts of his volume on *The Hundred of Newport* in the custody of the National Library of Wales, these being referenced as NLW MSS 7721 E, 7729 E and 7735 E. He died in 1933 at the age of seventy-four.

Before leaving Sir Joseph Bradney, a side issue, possible arising from his work needs to be considered. A collection of slips and notes taken from such published sources as *The Calendar of Patent Rolls, Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII* and the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*, was placed in the keeping of the National Library of Wales and it seems within the bounds of possibility that someone may well have started work on researching a *Victoria History of the County of Monmouthshire* or of a *Victoria History of Wales* (some of the material relates to Anglesey) and the progress made by Bradney on *A History of Monmouthshire* could have 'headed off' this initiative.[55] The author has been informed that due to the quality of the parish surveys made to a good standard by Bradney in his *A History of Monmouthshire*, the decision was taken, before the Second World War, not to proceed also with a Royal Commission inventory for Monmouthshire.[56]

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52 Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, ix and Davies, E.T., *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment*, 15–16.

53 Gray, Madeleine (ed.), *The Hundred of Newport*, viii.

54 GA, Bradney papers, D554.92: field message book of Colonel Bradney, 21 June 1917–16 April 1918; D554.91: diary of Colonel Bradney, O. C. of 28 Labour Corps of IX Corps, 11 Nov. 1917–6 May 1918.

55 Currie and Lewis (eds) *A Guide to English County Histories*; Freeman Jane, 'Northumberland' in *A Guide to English County Histories*, 308. In 1927, most of the material collected on Northumberland for the *Victoria County History* was sold to the Northumberland County History committee for *The History of Northumberland*.

56 Information supplied by Madeleine Gray.

Sir Joseph Bradney left behind him a fine, topographical county history, which, excepting a few mistakes, anticipated the early topographical volumes of the *Victoria County History*. The task was incomplete and much time was to elapse before *Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport* was to be edited and published by other hands. Sir Joseph had researched, written and caused to be published virtually all of the history of Monmouthshire alone. It was a monumental achievement.

The Years That Followed, 1933–79

Very little indeed was published from the time of Sir Joseph Bradney's death in 1933 until 1949. There were three reasons: the Depression; the Second World War, which factors need no explanation; nor do the years of austerity from 1945 to 1950.

The county histories published before 1976, fell into two overlapping types; specialist histories of county-wide significance and histories with popular appeal. The fact that these books have no academic pretensions does not negate their value, as they evidence the popular appeal of local history.

The first title to appear was the two-volume *Men of Monmouthshire* published in the year of Bradney's death.[57] This book belonged to both categories, both specialist in nature yet having popular appeal. Many of the people described had national fame, not true local roots, examples being Henry V, the buccaneer, Sir Henry Morgan and the duke of Monmouth.[58] Others such as Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Crawshay Bailey and the poet Islwyn had real local roots. Histories based on 'great lives' were a popular *genre* in the 1930s.

The first post-war county histories to appear had popular appeal and were written as 'entertainments' for the mass market. They comprised *The County Books – Monmouthshire*[59] and *The King's England. Monmouthshire, A Green and Smiling Land*.[60]

The next county history's specialisation is proclaimed by its title, *The Story of Gwent: A School History and Geography of Monmouthshire*.[61] C. J. O. Evans caused to be published in the same year, 1953, *Monmouthshire Its History and Topography*. Its contents, rather than title, identify it as a book with a geographical bias written for schools.[62]

E. T. Davies's contribution to the canon of Monmouthshire's county histories was both ecclesiastical and educational in nature (he had been a teacher before taking holy orders).[63]

The final histories of the era were by Arthur Clark, for twenty-five years senior history master of Jones West Monmouthshire School and of comparable ability to E. T. Davies, both men having

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57 Twiston Davies, L., *Men of Monmouthshire* (2 vols., The Western Mail and Echo, Cardiff, 1933).

58 One of this author's favourites is Walter Savage Landor, 1775–1864, the romantic poet who purchased an estate near Llanthony. An idiosyncratic man, he soon fell out with the local farmers and left for Italy. His elergy on the celebrated Anglo-Welsh beauty Rose Aylmer, who died in India and is buried in the South Park Cemetery, Calcutta is well known.

Ah! What avails the sceptred race!
Ah! What the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

59 Phillips, Olive, *The County Books – Monmouthshire* (Robert Hale, London, 1950).

60 Mee, Arthur, *The Kings England. Monmouthshire, A Green and Smiling Land* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1951).

61 Oates, D. W., *A School History and Geography of Monmouthshire* (Educational Publishing Company Ltd., Cardiff, 1953).

62 Evans, C. J. O., *Monmouthshire. Its History and Topography* (Cardiff, 1953).

63 Davies, E. T., *Ecclesiastical History of Monmouthshire Part 1* (Starsons, 1953); Davies, E. T., *Monmouthshire Schools and Education to 1870* (Starsons, 1957).

taken firsts and then masters degrees at Sheffield University and University College, Cardiff, respectively.

Arthur Clark's history was an ambitious two-volume affair. *The Story of Mnmouthshire Volume One From The Earliest Times To The Civil War* came out in 1962.[64] He then sadly died, but his family saw *The Story of Monmouthshire Volume Two From The Civil War To The Present Time* through publication in 1979.[65] With the completion of this sound history aimed at schools the post-war era in the writing of county histories ended.

Review And Reprint

The events which led to the writing of an analytical history of Gwent were already in train by 1980. The first volume of the *Glamorgan County History*, published in 1938, as it was on natural history, was outdated in concept. This was not true of the rest of the Glamorgan County History series.[66]

An understanding of what was going on over the border in Glamorgan, must have given E. T. Davies the impetus to deliver the annual lecture to the Cambrian Archaeological Society at Caerleon College on the 16 August 1978. It was published as *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment*[67] in 1986 and is an appeal for an up-to-date synthesising, analytical county history, very much on the lines of the *Glamorgan County History*, with different authors for each chapter.

Davies was little heeded and what followed was certainly not what he had in mind, a good introduction, written to a high standard as a single small volume by an established scholar, Raymond Howell. *A History of Gwent*, covering the whole history 'in bite sized chunks' or small chapters, from 'The Earliest Inhabitants' to 'Modern Gwent'. There were appendices: 'Arthurian Gwent', 'The Castles of Gwent' and 'Seasonal Traditions'. It was published in 1988 and is a valuable introduction. It is a little gem.[68]

The next feature was the reprinting of the two best county histories produced to date, *A History of Monmouthshire* by Sir Joseph Bradney between 1991 and 1994 and *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* by William Coxe with an introduction by Jeremy Knight in 1995.[69] The reasons why these reprints were made were threefold. Firstly, there was chance. Jeremy Knight gave a lecture on William Coxe and his *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* which happened to be attended by Philip Riden. Having set up Merton Priory Press, Philip Riden took the opportunity to publish a reprint, with Jeremy Knight preparing the introduction. Secondly, Philip Riden correctly perceived that Bradney's *A History of Monmouthshire* and Coxe's *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* were the best of the

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[64] Clark, A., *The Story of Monmouthshire Volume One From The Earliest Times To The Civil War* (Christopher Davies, Llandybie, 1962).

[65] Clark, A., *The Story of Monmouthshire Volume Two From The Civil War To The Present Time* (Monnow Press, Llandybie and Monmouth, 1979).

[66] Savory, H. N. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History Volume II Prehistory and Early History* (Cardiff, 1984); Pugh, T. B., (ed.), *Glamorgan County History Volume III The Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 1971); Williams, G. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History Volume IV Early Modern Glamorgan* (Cardiff, 1971); John, A. H. and Williams, G. (eds), *Glamorgan County History Volume V Industrial Glamorgan from 1700 to 1970* (Cardiff, 1980); Morgan P., (ed.), *Glamorgan County History, Volume VI Glamorgan Society, 1780–1980* (Cardiff, 1988). All published by the University of Wales Press on behalf of the Glamorgan County History Trust.

[67] Davies, E. T., *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment* (Regional Publications, Abergavenny, 1986).

[68] Howell, R., *A History of Gwent* (Gomer Press, Llandysul, 1988).

[69] Coxe and Colt Hoare, *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* (1801 and 1995) *see* fn. 14; Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire* … (published in 12 parts by Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1904–33, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991–3 and Merton Priory Press, 1993–4).

histories of this county then in existence and so good that they could be regarded as primary sources and should be re-printed for this reason. He was aware that many years had passed since these histories had been published, there was a shortage of existing copies and therefore a ready market for a new, visually attractive and easy to handle quarto format, instead of the original bulky folio volumes.[70]

One final project needed to be carried out, the completion of Sir Joseph's *magnum opus*. It will be recalled that before Sir Joseph's death his drafts and notes on the hundred of Newport had been 'mothballed' in the custody of the National Library of Wales, as part of Bradney's MSS. Madeleine Gray whilst researching her doctorate, had found the inaccessible nature of this incomplete volume a problem in respect of the study of western Monmouthshire. Receiving help from the National Library of Wales in as close a format to Philip Riden's reprints of the earlier books, as the incomplete nature of the notes and drafts allowed, it was published by the South Wales Record Society and the National Library of Wales[71] as *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*. With this Bradney's monumental project was brought to a close in 1993, leaving a fine topographical history of Monmouthshire, as complete as made no difference. The way was clear to produce a modern, thematic, analytical history of Gwent.

The Gwent County History

Written appeals, such as E. T. Davies's *Bradney's 'History of Monmouthshire': An Assessment* had no influence whatsoever on most of those involved in the decision to write a new history of Gwent. Indeed most did not know of the existence of this publication.[72]

There was a feeling that 'the time was right' and to use Madeleine Gray's expression, 'there was a Gwent-shaped hole in the bibliography of the county'. From September 1996, Martin Culliford was chairman of the Gwent Local History council and with the full support of the other members of the council on 5 October 1996, he obtained a decision to set up a working party on a *Gwent County History*. In October 1997, discussions took place on ways and means: the formation of structures, appointment of trustees and involvement of key personnel such as Madeleine Gray, Christopher Williams and Raymond Howell. The fact that county histories had been produced in south Wales in the 1970s and 1980s meant that most of the proposed editors of *The Gwent County History* had 'previous' on this sort of editing. It was Martin Culliford's idea that Ralph Griffiths, then professor of Medieval History at the University of Wales, Swansea, be recruited as general editor. He already had the experience of contributing the chapter on 'The Boroughs of Glamorgan' to *Glamorgan County History Volume III* [73] and had been honorary secretary of *Glamorgan County History Volume IV*. [74]

The success of a scheme to publish successfully the five volumes comprising *The Gwent County History* depended on two principles; precise yet broad organisation and many hands making light work. The governing body was the committee to which two committees reported – the Administrative and General Purposes committee, which was responsible for fund-raising,

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70 I am grateful to Jeremy Knight and Madeleine Gray for providing the first and second reasons. The third reason, advanced by me, could have occurred when preparing a business case.

71 This section depends on verbal information generously provided by Madeleine Gray and also her splendid introduction to *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, vii–xi. She also uses this introduction to rehabilitate Sir Joseph's reputation.

72 From this point, the author relies on the verbal testimony of those involved in the planning of the *Gwent County History*, especially Martin Culliford, Madeleine Gray, Tony Hopkins and Peter Strong and is grateful to all of them.

73 Pugh, T. B. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History Volume III The Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 1971).

74 Williams, G. (ed.), *Glamorgan County History Volume IV Early Modern Glamorgan* (Cardiff, 1974).

membership and social events. The second, the Editorial committee, was responsible for publishing, choice and oversight of writers and has had responsibility for no fewer than sixty-five authors and nine editors, the numbers involved described as 'a staggering thought'.[75]

The task of organising so many people engaged in such complicated tasks reflects Ralph Griffiths's administrative experience and capacity. Although the scheme was essentially funded through the membership fees of the Gwent County History Association and the sales of volumes, Dr Elizabeth Armstrong made a very large donation which was crucial in acting as 'seed corn money' at the start of the project. Other sums of money were made available by individuals and by organisations such as Gwent Record Office. The critical innovation which ensured the completion of the scheme was the negotiation by which the chairman, Martin Culliford, ensured that the University of Wales Press would underwrite the publishing of the other volumes of *The Gwent County History*, those numbered from two to five, in return for an increased share of the profits.

Once the arrangements for publishing *The Gwent County History* were financially secured, good progress was made and the following books have been launched to date in the following sequence: *Volume 1 Gwent in Prehistory and Early History*; *Volume 2 The Age of The Marcher Lords, c. 1070–1536*; *Volume 3 The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780*; and *Volume 4 Industrial Monmouthshire, 1780–1914*. It is expected that the fifth and last volume *Twentieth Century Gwent* will be launched in the summer of 2013.

It has been a great sadness that certain of the administrative participants have died without seeing the end of this project: Gwenllian Jones, the honorary secretary, Lord Raglan, Minnie Gibbens and Geoff Mein. The same has been true of authors: Sir Rees Davies, formerly Chichele professor of Medieval History at Oxford; John Williams, formerly professor of Economics, University of Wales, Aberystwyth and Kate Hunter of Newport Museums, who played a key role in the preservation and conservation of the Newport ship. A late start on this county history project could have meant that the scheme might have been jeopardised through the lack of local administrative support and non-availability of academic contributions. Joseph Bradney started to research his *A History of Monmouthshire* in 1897 and died in 1933; his involvement lasted for about thirty-six years, but he was working alone, even if the failure to complete *Volume 5* is taken into account. Ralph Griffiths was appointed general editor of *The Gwent County History* project on the 6 December 1997. If the scheme completes in the summer of 2013, it will have taken rather more than fifteen years to complete. As explained before, Bradney worked alone; the new county history has involved a team of nine editors and sixty-five authors. The whole body of Monmouthshire's and Gwent's county histories will be considered in a wider context.

Conclusions

Monmouthshire started late yet compares well with the provision of histories for other counties. Some counties started earlier, examples being Kent, with Lambarde's *Perambulation* of 1576; Warwickshire, with William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated*, published in 1656 and George Owen's *The First Book of the Description of Penbrokeshire in general* completed in 1603.

Appearances can be deceptive, as some early histories were followed by very little. Dr Robert Thoroton's *Antiquities of Nottinghamshire* appeared in 1677 and is comparable to Dugdale's *magnum opus*, yet two volumes only of the *Victoria History of the County of Nottinghamshire* have been published, in 1907 and 1910. The two other county histories, the Revd J. Curtis's *Topographical*

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[75] *Gwent County History Association Newsletter – Spring 2012*, 'One Last Lap' by Ralph Griffiths, general editor.

History of Nottinghamshire (1843–4) is a re-hash of Thoroton and J. T. Godfrey's *Notes on the Churches of Nottinghamshire* cover the hundreds of Rushcliffe (1887) and Bingham (1907) only.

Glamorgan is an especially good example. *A Book of Glamorganshire's Antiquities* was completed by Rice Merrick in 1578, but was first printed by Sir Thomas Phillips in 1825, some twenty-four years after *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* by William Coxe, illustrated by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, was first printed.

Historic Monmouthshire and Gwent has always had a clearer sense of identity than Glamorgan, despite the latter county containing the capital of Wales and a much larger population. Nevertheless thirteen county histories of Monmouthshire and Gwent have appeared as compared with ten for Glamorgan and this is after Madeleine Gray's edition of Bradney's *A History of Monmouthshire Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport* has been counted as part of the main project covering the hundreds of Skenfrith, Abergavenny, Raglan, Trelech, Usk and Caldicot.

Four of the histories of Monmouthshire and Gwent are outstanding. *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* was written by William Coxe and illustrated by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, both men having national reputations and deserved ones at that, as a historian and as an artist. Sir Joseph Bradney's monumental *A History of Monmouthshire* anticipated by many years the topographical volumes of the *Victorian History of the County of Warwickshire volumes 3 to 6*, published by L. F. Salzman and Philip Styles, between 1945 and 1951.

Ray Howell's *A History of Gwent*, published in 1988 is all that a clear and popular, yet scholarly single volume county history should be. *The Gwent County History*, in terms of analysis, clarity and erudition brings together all that is best in present day local history scholarship and exposition and is at the cutting edge of English and Welsh local history scholarship.

The coverage of Monmouthshire and Gwent by county histories is amongst the best in England and Wales.[76]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to Annette Burton, honorary editor of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* respecting her forbearance for my many telephone requests for advice whilst I was preparing this article. I also thank Madeleine Gray, again for advice and for allowing my use of her edition of *A History of Monmouthshire Sir Joseph Bradney Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*. I am grateful to Jeremy Knight, once again for advice and the use of his introduction to *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* and to Raymond Howell for use of *A History of Gwent* and to Philip Riden for permission to quote from *Local History A Handbook for Beginners* and for his wise and incisive comment on the *magnum opus* of Sir Joseph Bradney, 'V.C.H.ish'.

Finally thanks must be given to Tony Hopkins, who, as a volume editor and officer of Gwent Record Office was present at so many meetings of the Gwent County History Association. My gratitude is due to Martin Culliford, chairman and Peter Strong, deputy chairman of the Gwent County History Association, those inveterate 'shakers and stirrers', members of the 'Great Society' before the term was even coined, for describing their roles and the administrative machinery used to shape the great venture of *The Gwent County History*.

If any acknowledgements for sources used have not been quoted here, may the person or persons concerned accept my apology.

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[76] It has been suggested that there is a case for a comparable study on the histories of individual industrial towns by local amateur historians. This is a sound suggestion and has been publicised here.

REVIEW

Dear, Ian and Wendy, *William Downing Evans: Poetry and Poverty in Nineteenth Century Newport* (South Wales Record Society, Newport, 2011); ISBN 978-0-9553387-4-8; hardback; 150mm x 215mm; xvi + 496pp; 6 colour + 6 black and white illus; £20-00 (members), £22-50 (non-members) plus £2-50 postage and packaging.

This collection of William Downing Evans's poetry begins with a comprehensive and well-written introduction, giving a detailed view of his life and times in Newport. He was born the son of a lime burner in Caerleon and rose to become a registrar of births and deaths. It is likely that he was supported in his education by the Morgan family of Tredegar House and he seems to have become their court bard. Evans celebrates their past history and present good works just as Dafydd ap Gwilym, the famous bard, did in the fourteenth century for Ifor Hael. Evans makes the parallel in a poem he recited at Sir Charles Morgan's annual agricultural dinner in 1854:

TREDEGAR'S sons shall never fail:
Nor fade their fair renown.
Our fathers had their Ifor Hael –
We have one of our own.

In another poem, Evans wrote his own version of the charge of the Light Brigade in 1854, based on Captain Godfrey Morgan's description of the battle. It has plenty of blood and thunder, but perhaps not Tennyson's rhythmic intensity. Here is part of one verse of 'The Lancers' Charge':

They turn: - but horror! Left and right,
Thickens the fierce retreating fight! –
When from some rent volcano's side,
Rolls down the lava's fiery mass,
Till in the vale it meets the tide
Of waters, where it strives to pass.

Evans adopted the bardic name of 'Leon' and won several prizes at *eisteddfodau* for his translations of Welsh verses into English. He had great facility, writing in a variety of styles, in Welsh for his songs and English for poems. Many were published in the *Merlin*, recording local events. A delightful sonnet records an eclipse of the moon. There are nature poems describing the changing seasons, exciting narrative poems, comic verse with somewhat heavy-handed humour and many strongly religious poems mourning the deaths of Newport notables and friends. These deaths were commonplace in the crowded, insanitary streets of Newport during its rapid expansion. His simplest poems, deeply felt and saddest of all, are those on the deaths of children, including his own:

God gave me once a pretty boy,
But would not let me keep him long,
The gift was but a transient joy:
Yet dare I not aver 'twas wrong
In Him to take him back again,
Although my heart was rent with pain.

William Downing Evans's poems are grounded in Newport life and reflect all its aspects. They are of varying quality as occasional poems are bound to be; some are florid and rhetorical, but many express true feelings and national pride. Anyone studying the Newport of this period would get an insight into the atmosphere and events of the time. As a bonus, there are real treasures to be discovered.

Ann Llewellin

FIELD EXCURSIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES, 2012

The Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association joins the Society of Antiquaries of London: Welsh Fellows' meeting at Cardiff, 1 March 2012

The Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association and Cardiff Archaeological Society were privileged to have been invited to the Society of Antiquaries of London's first formal meeting in Wales. The Society of Antiquaries is one of the most important institutions of British archaeology. Normally meetings are held at the Society's headquarters in Burlington House, London, but this year a meeting was held at Cardiff University. The society's president, Maurice Howard, presided, along with the general secretary, John Lewis. The society's regalia – the mace and cocked hat – were on display and two newly elected fellows were formally admitted by the president. Members of this association were well represented in the large audience.

The main business of the meeting was to hear a lecture by Frances Lynch, of Bangor University, on Megalithic studies in Wales. Frances, a leading Welsh pre-historian, has studied megalithic tombs and excavated a number of important sites. She gave a wide ranging survey of our knowledge of these important monuments. The lecture was followed by an enjoyable reception and dinner at which our chairman, Jeremy Knight, proposed the health of the guests. Our thanks go to Alan Aberg and Professor John Hines for their hard work in organizing these events.

Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association Annual General Meeting, 21 April 2012

The AGM was held, as usual, at the Endowed Junior School, Caerleon. This year we were pleased that our patron, the Rt Revd Dominic Walker, bishop of Monmouth, attended the meeting and presented a certificate of honorary membership to Revd Dr David H. Williams. This certificate had been beautifully illuminated by Keith Underwood, our events and excursions secretary. David Willams has been a member of our association for many years and is a past editor of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*. This year's journal, superbly edited by Annette Burton, was given out to members. At the meeting a decision was made to increase the cost of membership due to the increasing costs of producing an annual journal.

After the business meeting, a talk was given by Christabel Hutchings, our secretary. She had been researching the archives of T. H. Thomas (1839–1915) an artist and Welsh cultural nationalist as well as a founding father of the National Museum of Wales. Many members were totally unaware of the importance of this multi-faceted man who was the son of Dr Thomas Thomas, the principal of the Baptist College at Pontypool. The lecture was well-received and the illustrations, which showed examples of Thomas's work, were greatly appreciated. Christabel's book *The Correspondence of Thomas Henry Thomas 'Arlunydd Penygarn'* was published by the South Wales Record Society in July 2012 and many MAA members attended the book launch.

A guided tour of Usk castle, 20 May 2012

It is some time since members of the MAA officially visited Usk castle, but the visit proved that it was far too long ago. We were given a tour by the owners, Henry and Rosie Humphreys, who are members of our association and they made us most welcome. Usk Castle Friends kindly provided us with refreshments which were much enjoyed. Jeremy Knight, our chairman and the president of Usk Castle Friends, expounded the history of the castle and referred to the book written by Jeremy Knight and Andy Johnson, *Usk Castle Priory and Town*. The castle was first mentioned in 1138; the Norman gatehouse was probably built in the twelfth century by the de Clare family. Jeremy told us

about Giraldus Cambrensis's visit to Usk in 1188 to recruit support for the second crusade; his offer of pardon to those in prison if they joined, met with some success. The castle was strengthened by William Marshall (d.1219) who married Isabella de Clare. The castle passed through several hands until, following the death of Henry VII, it passed to the earls of Pembroke. The castle was bought by Henry Humphreys's father, Rudge, in 1933. Henry took us on a tour through the gatehouse and castle grounds up to the inner ward and Jeremy was on hand to provide information concerning the dates and use of the various structures. The view from the inner ward was magnificent because the foliage, which had obscured the view of Usk, had been cut back. Many MAA members have fond memories of happy hours spent at Usk castle and this official visit was no exception.

A visit to Mynyddislwyn, Bedwellty and Manmoel in the company of Dr Maddy Gray of the University of Wales Newport, 9 June 2012

After the storms of the previous days the sun shone on thirty members of the association and members of the congregation of St Tudor's church, Mynyddislwyn, who gathered to listen to Dr Gray. We were warmly met by the churchwarden, Mr Sharpe and his wife, who kindly provided refreshments. Dr Gray informed us that St Tudor's church which stands 1,000 feet above sea level was granted to Glastonbury in about 1102AD as part of the endowment of a short-lived Benedictine priory at Bassaleg. Subsequently Glastonbury leased the tithes of the whole area to the diocese of Llandaff. Later it passed to the Cistercian monks of Llantarnam, who established a grange there.

The parish registers start in 1664. The Church was rebuilt in 1820 on the site of the earlier structure. Most of the party took the opportunity to climb the fifteenth-century church tower to see the magnificent view. We also looked at the small adjacent motte built at the time when the Normans were allying themselves with local princes. Its size suggests it was more of a watchtower.

At St Sannan's church, Bedwellty, Dr Gray and local historian David Mills were our guides and members of the congregation were also there to meet us. The church of St Sannan is ancient but was restored in 1858 and thoroughly repaired in 1882. It is noteworthy because it has two naves, almost spanned by the chancel and is divided by thirteenth-century pillars.

Bedwellty was part of the same grant to Glastonbury as Mynyddislwyn, although not mentioned by name. Both parishes were perpetual curacies until quite recently. Registers of Bedwellty begin in 1633 with some earlier entries copied in. David Mills told us about the stoical work of a curate, Lewis James, who kept the registers going during the Commonwealth. There were interesting memorials in the church and churchyard. Dr Gray drew our attention to the medieval cupboard carved with the *Arma Christi*, the emblems of Christ's Passion. This may have been a cope cupboard, but could well have served as a cupboard for the crucifix and sacred elements for the Easter sepulchre which commemorated Christ's entombment and resurrection. It was generally a wooden structure, which was placed in a recess, or on a tomb. David Mills provided information about the genealogy of the Williams family of Maesruddud (Maes Manor) where we adjourned for lunch.

After lunch we travelled to Manmoel. Dr Gray explained that Manmoel's church disappeared before the sixteenth century, probably a result of settlement shrinkage in the fourteenth century. It is the Manmoel mentioned in the Glastonbury charter. In the late eleventh century, it features in the *Vita Sancti Cadoci* as the site of a small monastic community founded by the saint in the sixth century for his Irish pupil Macmoil. South of the little valley is the northern part of Llantarnam's Mynyddislwyn grange – the village marks the boundary between Cistercian land and that of the diocese of Llandaff. To the east the regular field boundaries of Cistercian land clearance on Mynydd Penyfan are still evident. The site of the monastic millpond can be clearly seen in the middle of the village. The mill was mentioned in a survey of Llantarnam abbey's granges in 1570. It existed into

the nineteenth century, but subsequent mining probably destroyed the water course. Excavation has taken place on the presumed site of the monastic foundation and later church, at the farm called Ty'r Capel which was a longhouse where a substantial bank and ditch have been located. It was probably built on the site of the former grange in the sixteenth century. Switching centuries, Dr Gray took energetic members to look at the buried viaduct. We were fortunate that Dr Gray agreed to give up a day to provide us with information about the medieval role of these upland areas which are more often remembered today for the industrial role of the valleys they overlook.

A coach visit to Kilpeck church and Roy Strong's Laskett Gardens, 5 July 2012

After weeks of rain, we arrived at Kilpeck in bright sunshine. After coffee in the *Kilpeck Inn* members met the churchwarden, Mr J. Bailey, who had kindly agreed to talk to us about the carvings that adorn the church. Our chairman, Jeremy Knight, was unable to attend, but provided notes for the visit. Jeremy indicated that there were two ways of interpreting Kilpeck, the historical and archaeological and the symbolic. Kilpeck church is at the centre of a complex of earthworks including a Norman motte with a shell keep and a deserted medieval village. The church of St Mary and St David was granted to St Peter's abbey, Gloucester, in 1134. Malcolm Thurlby in his book *The Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture* (Logaston, 1999), thinks the church may have been complete by then, but others prefer a slightly later date of about 1145. Oliver de Merlimond, the steward of Lord Hugh Mortimer of Wigmore, went on pilgrimage to Compostella and the decoration of Kilpeck has close parallels in western France, particularly around Poitiers and even at Compostella itself. Oliver de Merlimond may have brought back craftsmen with him for his churches at Shobdon and Kilpeck.

Looked at symbolically, Malcolm Thurlby has shown that the decoration is inspired by medieval bestiaries – medieval natural history books which draw moral lessons from the often far-fetched supposed habits of animals and birds. Jeremy Knight thinks that the outside decoration represents the secular world we live in – 'the world, the flesh and the devil' – chaotic, unruly, sometimes comic and sometimes plain bawdy. The south door is an example with its carvings representing the battle between good and evil, or order and chaos in the external world. The peace, sanctuary and security of the church is emphasised by the saints around the chancel arch. Dr Naylor Firth, a member of our association, gave us an interesting view of the geology of the stones used in the construction of the church. Few members visited the castle remains because time was short, but those who did were well rewarded. The earthworks consist of a motte with a large inner bailey to the east, between the castle and the settlement. On the motte summit are two fragments of a shell keep wall. The remains of two round-backed fireplace flues, of the former internal lean-to buildings, are also visible.

The coach then took us to Hereford for lunch. On arriving at the Laskett Gardens we were met by Roy Strong and his staff. Sir Roy Strong and his wife purchased The Laskett, an early Victorian house, in 1973. The garden was inspired by Italian gardens and by those of the Tudor and Stuart era. Sir Roy Strong's fascination with early gardens resulted in topiary, a knot garden and parterres. Our large party was soon lost amongst the many garden rooms, each of which was themed. The monuments added extra interest especially the ones from the former palace of Westminster.

Evening visit to Stuart Wilson's excavation at Trellech, 7 September 2012

Stuart has been a member of the association for many years. He has been digging at Trellech for about eight years after purchasing a field to prove his contention that the major part of the medieval settlement was to the south of the village rather than near the church. It had been a wet summer and the site had been waterlogged for much of the excavation period. This had served to prove which

medieval drains worked and which didn't, but made excavation difficult. Stuart explained the history of Trellech during the medieval period. Stuart told us that the motte dates from the thirteenth century and the town's development cannot be traced before 1240. The town's growth peaked at around 378 burgages in 1288. By 1314, this had dropped to 265. The iron production at Trellech was probably linked to the military aims of the de Clares who initiated it on an industrial scale to support their castle building programme. The death of the last of the de Clares in 1314, led to the splitting up of his estates and the decline of the town. Stuart enthusiastically showed us the excavations and took us through his interpretation of the structures, which was complicated due to changes in the usage of the buildings. Stuart is working on the pottery found, which should add further information about dating.

A walk around Newport's St Woolos cemetery in the company of Richard Frame, 16 August 2012
Richard Frame, one of our members, took us on a walk around St Woolos cemetery. Ignoring the pouring rain, he took us on a tour of the cemetery stopping at graves with edifices, but also at graves without gravestones and told us the amazing stories that were connected with these people's lives. Many were part of Newport's nineteenth-century elite, but many were lesser mortals. Some members had connections to the people he mentioned. Many members remembered Les Thomas, the stonemason, who gave his work free to help restore the memorials. Richard placed the people and their graves in context. We learned about the establishment of the cemetery in response to cholera epidemics, the lack of burial space and the change in grave styles. We were also reminded of Newport's cosmopolitan make-up as exemplified by the Catholic and Jewish sections and were suitably moved by the order and care given to the military section. Richard, a charismatic raconteur, is also an author and was a friend of Alexander Cordell. He was instrumental in tracking down the grave of John Frost, the Chartist leader and in bringing his remains back from Bristol to Newport. A book which Richard Frame and Mike Buckingham originally published in 1988, *St Woolos Cemetery – The Haunted Holy Ground*, has been placed on the 'Newport Past' website.

A Day Conference, 'The Wars of the Roses and the Southern March', in conjunction with Usk Castle Friends, 12 October 2012
The conference proved most successful, with about seventy people attending. The day began with a short introduction by Christabel Hutchings and Keith Underwood. Christabel provided a hand-out showing a time chart of events together with a map showing the location of the major battles. She covered the ways in which the Wars of the Roses had been viewed through the centuries. Keith Underwood had created a beautiful colour map of the lordships in our area (not then known as Gwent or Monmouthshire) and explained the areas that made up the lordships and the marcher lords who occupied them.

Tony Hopkins (deputy county archivist at Gwent Archives) gave a talk on 'Raglan: The Making of a Lordship', which dealt with the rise of William Herbert who was given the lordship of Raglan by Edward IV. Tony covered the meteoric rise of William Herbert and the creation of the lordship and the powers that accrued to William Herbert. He also looked at the fortunes of the lordship and noted the eventual decline in manorial obligations. Tony also informed us that Herbert's will had been drawn up after the battle of Edgecote, where William had been defeated by the earl of Warwick who had changed sides and become a Lancastrian. Herbert was beheaded four days later.

After coffee, Phil Pembridge, a medieval re-enactor, delighted the audience by appearing in fifteenth-century armour. He told us about the battles of Tewkesbury and Bosworth, imagining he had fought at both battles. He then handed round his weapons and explained their use. Our

understanding of warfare during the Wars of the Roses was much enhanced especially as his re-enactor role gave him first-hand experience and he was bombarded with questions.

After lunch Dr Barry Lewis, research fellow on the Guto'r Glyn project at the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, talked to us about 'The rise and fall of William Herbert of Raglan, first earl of Pembroke as seen by the Welsh poets'. He emphasised the immense power that had accrued to Herbert by the time of his death. Poets were held in high esteem and were much sought after by patrons who were eager to have their virtues as soldiers and generous hosts publicly extolled in verse. Herbert was seen by the bard, Lewys Glyn Cothi (*fl*.1447–86) in a favourable light, although Herbert was following Edward IV's patronage and furthering his own ends rather than fostering Welsh interests. As a Welshman with immense power, he inspired many favourable poetic references. Dr Lewis referred to the bard Guto'r Glyn (1440–93). Politically, Guto'r Glyn was an adherent of the house of York and some of his chief patrons, such as William Herbert and his brother, Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook, were Yorkists. However, the bard could not bear to see a Welshman killing a Welshman and in 1468, when Herbert overcame north Wales, he wrote a poem asking him to be merciful to the chieftains of Gwynedd and not to allow Englishmen to take their official positions. He also asked him to 'Bring all Wales together into one country'. However, Dr Lewis pointed out that there were bards who struck a more critical note. The audience was delighted when Dr Lewis read some of the poetry in Welsh which emphasised cadence and rhyme. He also told us about the strict rules the bards had to master.

Surprisingly we were told that although William Herbert patronised bards, 'The Southern March' did not breed them at this time. Living in an area that has experienced centuries of anglicization, Dr Lewis's lecture was a reminder of our Welsh roots and of Herbert's incredible power and wealth which was based at Raglan.

The last talk was given by Bob Trett, well-known to us all as the former curator of Newport museum and also a member of our association. He has been closely concerned with the preservation of the Newport ship and chose to talk on 'Ships and shipping during the Wars of the Roses'. His talk emphasised the importance of shipping in our area and he identified the major ports and their dependence on Bristol. He also looked at their trade links and cargoes. He briefly looked at the Newport ship and its relevance to the period we were studying.

Finally Jeremy Knight, president of Usk Castle Friends and chairman of the MAA, summed up the main points of this interesting conference and thanked the speakers for their contributions. Grateful thanks should also go to the members of both societies who worked hard to make the conference a success.

A visit to Shire Hall, Monmouth, 10 November 2012

Finding the nearest suitable date to the Chartist rising which took place on 4 November 1839, members assembled at the Shire Hall in Monmouth and were greeted by Karin Molson, the education manager. We viewed the exterior of the Shire Hall which is Grade 1 listed and was designed in the classical style by Philip Fisher of Bristol and built in 1724. The Shire Hall was the scene of one of the most significant trials in British history when, in 1839–40, John Frost and others were tried for their involvement in the Chartist rising in Newport.

In 2011, the entire Shire Hall building was sympathetically refurbished to its original state. Karin showed us over the building, but the highlight was the court room. Here she explained the details that led up to the Chartist rising and dealt with the causes, the main events and aftermath. MAA members obtained a view of what it must have been like to be Frost, Williams or Jones in 1839–40. The cells were very small, although Karin reminded us that they were only holding cells,

the town gaol being a short distance away. Coming up the steep stairs from the dark cells into the light of a crowded court room was an experience in empathy for our members and Karin reminded us that many accused were children. Karin's knowledge and lively delivery made for a pleasurable visit.

Social at our Secretary's and Treasurer's home, 7 December 2012

As usual we finished the year with a social and the members who attended not only had a pleasurable evening, but helped raise money for the association. It was also an opportunity for members to meet each other and exchange views.

Other events of interest: The British Archaeological Awards held at the British Museum, 9 July 2012

The MAA was pleased to nominate Dr Tim Young (Geo Arch), Dr Peter Guest (Cardiff University) and Dr Andy Gardner (University College London) for one of the British Archaeological Awards. They were the runners up for the 'Best Archaeological Discovery Award' for their project, 'The Lost City of the Legion – Archaeological Research at Caerleon 2006–11'.

Christabel and Richard Hutchings attended the awards ceremony on behalf of the association.

Keith Underwood, Christabel Hutchings, Jeremy Knight, Ann Llewellin and Anne Dunton
(Events and visits committee)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Helen Forshaw has recently returned to her home county of Lancashire, having spent seventeen years living in Gwent. Prior to her move, she was a custodian for Cadw at the Fortress Baths in Caerleon. During her time in Wales, she completed a Masters degree in Regional History at the University of Wales Newport. The subject of her final dissertation focussed upon Monmouthshire mercers, their relationships and their contribution to urban consumption.

Tony Hopkins is deputy county archivist at Gwent Archives, where he has worked since 1987. He was born in Neath and attended Neath Grammar School before going to Swansea University where he obtained a degree in English in 1976. He worked on the South Wales Coalfield Archive in the university before training as an archivist at Aberystwyth University. He later gained an MA in history from Cardiff University where he taught for fifteen years as a part-time tutor in the university's Lifelong Learning Department. In recognition of this he was awarded an Honorary Research Fellowship there. He is co-editor of the medieval volume of *The Gwent County History* series and has been editor of *Gwent Local History* since 1997. He has been joint editor of *Morgannwg*, the journal of the Glamorgan History Society, since 2010.

Christabel Hutchings has researched the history of education in the nineteenth century, for which she was awarded an MEd by Cardiff University. More recently, she has completed an MA in Celtic-Roman studies at the University of Wales Newport; her dissertation was entitled 'Slavery and Status in Roman Britain'. She has done extensive research into the archive of Thomas Henry Thomas (1839–1915); her catalogue of this archive was published by the South Wales Record Society in 2012. In 2010, she was elected secretary of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association.

Victoria Jackson is an MA Regional History student at the University of Wales Newport. She also works as an archives assistant at Gwent Archives. As a history undergraduate she became interested in landscapes and particularly in how they reflect human needs and exploitation patterns. She is currently researching and writing her MA dissertation on the Fenlands of eastern England.

Jonathan Kissock is senior lecturer in history at the University of Wales Newport where he was until recently programme director for the MA in Historical Landscape Studies. He read archaeology and anthropology at the University of Cambridge and worked for a PhD in landscape history at the University of Leicester. He has written widely on the evolution of the south Wales landscape in the medieval era. Most of his work relates to his native Gower; however he has also studied village origins in Pembrokeshire and contributed the chapter on 'Settlement and Society' to volume two of *The Gwent County History.*

Mark Lewis was born and raised in Monmouthshire. His interest in archaeology was nurtured during excavations at Trostrey and Caerwent. He read archaeological conservation and conservation at Cardiff University where he was awarded a PhD for his research on iron corrosion which informed the preservation strategy for Brunel's *Great Britain*. Since 2000, Mark Lewis has been a curatorial officer at the National Roman Legion Museum, Caerleon and since 2006, has also been an archaeological conservator at the National Museum Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff. He became chairman of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust in 2012.

Ann Llewellin won a state scholarship to Newnham College, Cambridge, where she obtained a degree in modern languages in 1952. She has taught at Newport High School and St John's-on-the-Hill, Chepstow, but her interest in music and drama has also led her to sing with Monmouth Choral Society (for ten years) and to belong to the script and production committees for the *Son et Lumière* shows at Chepstow castle, Tintern abbey and Caldicot castle from 1990 to 2004. She is most proud of writing and directing the *Son et Lumière*, 'Battle and Banquet', performed at Usk castle in 2005.

Julian Mitchell read History at Oxford and lives at Llansoy. He is a playwright, novelist and television scriptwriter; he was responsible for ten episodes of *Inspector Morse* taking a cameo part in each. He is also a local historian of note, recognised when he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He contributed two chapters to *The Gwent County History Volume 3*. He was also guest curator for an exhibition, 'The Wye Tours and its Artists' which was on display at Chepstow museum from May to September 2010; he also wrote the exhibition catalogue. His latest play, *The Welsh Boy*, staged in Bath in 2012, is based upon *The True Anti-Pamela*, the scandalous memoir published in 1741, of James Parry, who courted Mary Powell of Great House, Llantilio Crossenny.

John Morley is an emeritus professor at Swansea University. He was born in the Swansea valley, educated at West Monmouth Grammar School in Pontypool, the Welsh College of Advanced Technology in Cardiff and the University of Manchester, where he obtained his PhD in 1967 and DSc in 1989. His early career was spent with ICI, first at Grangemouth in Scotland and later at Blackley in Manchester, where he became an ICI Research Associate and a visiting professor of Chemistry at the Queen's University of Belfast. He was appointed to a chair of Chemistry at Swansea in 1994; he is the author of around 140 publications in chemistry.

David Rimmer read history at Manchester University and trained as an archivist at Liverpool University. He was city archivist of Coventry from 1974 to 1993 and county archivist of Gwent from 1993 until he retired in 2008. Whilst at Coventry he published a researched history of Warwick Road Congregational, later United Reformed, church. He was made Honorary Research Fellow by the Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic, now Coventry University, in 1983; he is a member of the Gwent County History Association committee.

Keith Underwood was educated at Monmouth School, Newport College of Art and the West of England College of Art, Bristol, followed by a year studying in France (1957–8) on a Leverhulme research award. He taught in London for several years, but on returning to this area, continued working as an artist whilst extending his interests to conservation and local history. His civic works include a mural in the Drill Hall, Chepstow and the Somerset coat of arms on Chepstow town gate. He was a founder member of Tidenham Historical group and is an active member of other local societies. His enthusiasm for local history is demonstrated by the tours that he leads in costume (in the habit of a monk at Tintern abbey and in Norman dress at Chepstow castle).