



Breconshire Local & Family History Society (BLFHS)

Cymdeithas Hanes Lleol a Theuluoedd Brycheiniog

Newsletter 69 - September 2017

Stanley Price Morgan Bligh and the Llywelyn Memorial

On 23rd of June 1956 at Cefyn-y-Bedd near Builth Wells a new memorial was raised to Prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, known as the last sovereign Prince of Wales. The monument had been nearly one hundred years in the making as the original idea had been discussed as early as the 1850's but disagreements between the parties over where the memorial should be placed and a lack of enthusiastic fund raising meant that the initial proposals fell into abeyance. In 1873 The Welshman publication reported that Sir Thomas Lloyd, M.P of Bronwydd, was again proposing that a memorial be initiated and that all the peoples of North

and South Wales should join together to erect such a memorial to Llywelyn and follow the route of the Scottish people who had done a similar thing for their hero, William Wallace. He further reported that he had received many offers from Cardiff and hoped that the rest of Wales would similarly respond. Despite this the idea once again progressed no further. By the 1890's the idea was once again being discussed with meetings held at Llandrindod Wells, Chester, Shrewsbury and London. A National Memorial Committee was set up and one person who was extremely keen on the idea was Stanley Morgan Price Bligh. He lived at Cilmeri Park (sometimes spelt Cilmerry or Kilmerry) near Builth and along with Rhys Davies, the Surveyor of Brecon, proposed that the monument should be raised at Cefn-y-Bedd which was considered to be the place that Llewelyn had lost his life during the Battle of Orewin Bridge. Not only did they believe this to be a suitable place it was also on land owned by Bligh making the whole process much easier.

Agreement was reached at a meeting in Shrewsbury during 1894] and the proposal was taken forward to the National Committee meeting in London later that year. A letter in the Evening Express of January 4th 1895 opens up the issues abounding around the idea and is more than scathing in its view of the whole debacle. The writer reports firstly that the whole idea was first

“discussed by a few idle holiday-makers one wet afternoon last summer at Llandrindod Wells, that well known place of lost causes”

He continues that the first meeting of the General (National) Committee was held in London in November of 1894 where he derides it thus;

This month on our website

Just a reminder

Update: development of the new website is going well. Most of the new pages have now been converted and our web master is working on ways to display the documents, photographs and other media as well as to make things easy for us to add more content in the future. We hope that the new website will be ready to launch by the end of September 2017 but we will continue to update members as we have more information on this.

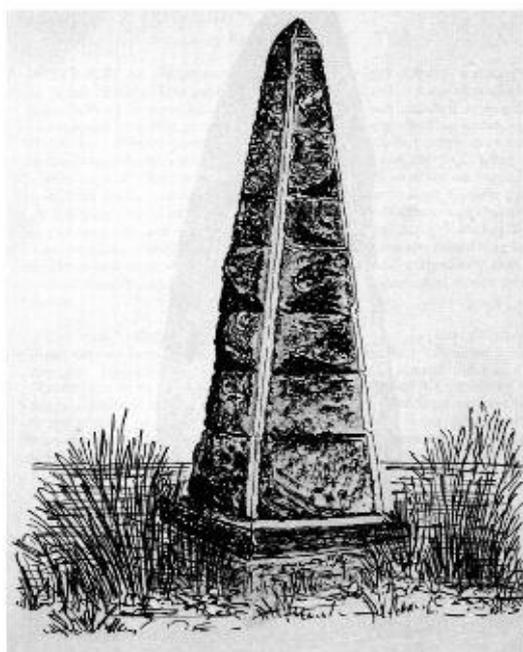
Members continue to be able to access the current website as normal but as reported previously, no new items will be placed on it, no old items will be removed, and no amendments will be made. When the new website is up and running, visitors will be able to access old and new data as before. Access to the member's section of the new website will require a different username and password from the ones currently in use; members will be informed about this in time for the launch. I hope that everyone understands the need for this change and will bear with us until every section of our website has been converted to the new CMS website platform.

“the meeting lasted nearly four hours and was probably the worst conducted meeting of Welshmen that has ever been held in London or elsewhere ”

Furthermore

“two resolutions were passed , one being contradictory of the other”

The tenor of his letter underlines how disagreements amongst the supporters had caused the movement to fail continuously in its objective. By 1900 this fact was made more obvious when the amount of money raised was found to be only around £200; nowhere near what was needed to provide a monument of suitable quality. Further arguments



The Memorial of 1902

Llewelyn Memorial of 1902. Brycheiniog vol 20 1982/83

L	
LYWELYN EIN LLYW OLAF	
NATIONAL MEMORIAL.	
PRESIDENT:	
THE RIGHT HON. LORD KENYON.	
TREASURERS:	
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Caiff y Tanygrifwyr beudertynu ar y lle y oodir y Gofadaill.	
Rhoddir copi o "Sir Lewis Morris' Ode on Llewelyn ein Llyw Olaf" yn rhad i bob tanygrifwr o swllt ac uchod.	
FIRST SUBSCRIPTION LIST.	
	£ s. d.
The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone ...	1 1 0
The Right Hon. Earl Powis ...	1 1 0
The Right Hon. Lord Penrhyn ...	1 1 0
Sir Watkin Williams Wynn ...	1 1 0
W. R. M. Wynn Esq., Peniarth ...	1 1 0
Mrs Townshend-Mainwaring ...	1 1 0
Stanley Leighton, Esq., M.P. ...	1 1 0
D. A. Thomas, Esq., M.P. ...	1 1 0
F. Howell Idris, Esq. ...	1 1 0
Harold Frederic, Esq. ...	1 1 0
Mrs Harold Frederic ...	1 1 0
The late "Ellis Wyn o Wyrfaï." ...	0 10 6
Wilson Jones, Esq., Rhyl ...	0 10 6
Rev Edwin Jones, M.A., Bangor ...	0 10 6
E. Pritchard, Esq., Portmadoc ...	0 10 6

Raged when the National Committee on realising they had insufficient funds, decided to use the money to fund a lectureship at the University of Wales. This would, from time to time, deliver lectures around the country on issues relating to Llywelyn. Many who had contributed to the fund still wanted to see a monument and were upset by this development. Stanley Bligh who had been one of the strongest advocates of a monument and no doubt, frustrated by the lack of progress, decided to fund it himself and to raise it on his own land at Cefyn-y-Bedd. In 1902 it was unveiled. Positioned in the corner of a small field near a Cwm Llywelyn cottage it was built of Llanellwedd stone on a base of concrete and stood some twelve feet high. A plaque on the monument read:

Gerllaw y fan yma lladdwyd Llywelyn ein Llwy Olaf, O.C. 1282

Near this spot Llywelyn our Last Prince was killed 1282 A.D

Stanley Price Morgan Bligh was born on the 15th February 1870, the son of Oliver Morgan Bligh, a High Sheriff of Breconshire. He inherited Cilmeri through his mother's family, Thomas Price a great uncle having bought the lands from Rebecca Price of Cilmeri the daughter of William and Posthuma Price.¹

Oliver Morgan Bligh was originally a draper and had a shop in Brecon. He married Ellen Edwards of Clifton, Bristol in July 1865 at Clifton St John. The Blighs originated from the West Country where the family had links to the Bligh of "Bounty" fame. Oliver had been born in Bideford, Devon before the family moved to Bristol. On the death of Thomas Price the Cilmeri lands passed to Oliver and thence to Stanley, his only son. Stanley was educated at Eton and Trinity Hall Oxford although the census of 1881 lists him at a pupil at Fairfield School, Great Malvern. The Malvern Register notes he left for Eton in 1883. He matriculated from Eton to Oxford on the 13 October 1888 and left with a BA in History in 1892.² That same year he was returned unopposed as the county councillor for Cilmeri district, Builth, one of the youngest councillors elected and even more surprising given that he was still only just graduating from Oxford. After Stanley's father had died in 1886 his wife, Ellen, continued to run the estate. Stanley returned to Builth to take on the responsibility but his interests were wide and he was considered by many to be a bit of an eccentric. In 1895 he was called to the Bar and began working the South Wales Circuit. He was an enthusiastic member of the community and seemed to have been a popular councillor, evidenced by his landslide appointment in 1892.

He followed his uncle Thomas Price Bligh into the Freemasons joining the Loyal Wye Lodge in Builth³ and worked hard to fulfil his community responsibilities both locally in Builth and more generally across the County. In 1898 he married Matilda Agnes Wilson at St John's, Notting Hill and began spending more time at his London home where he welcomed the great and the good. Since his Oxford days he had been very interested in psychology so much so that he learned German in order to be able to attend the first Conference of Psychologists in Vienna in 1908.⁴ This interest culminated in three books which explored how one could cultivate the highest qualities of man. "Direction of Desire", "Desire for Qualities" and "The Ability to Converse" were published sequentially from 1910 to 1912 and were generally well received. An article in the Brecon Radnor Express of 13th January 1916 expresses them as "remarkable". Stanley's intent was to explore his notion of "directive psychology" which sought to encourage "self-realisation and self-improvement".



"Character and capacity are not unalterable ... but can be changed ... if the right measures are taken for the cultivation of the talents and virtues that one admires"

The outbreak of war sent Stanley off in a new direction. He was keen to find out if the landscape could be improved to provide better cropping for farmers and smallholders and thus improve food production. At Cilmeri he took rough grazing and turned it into pasture. Land that was worth only 3/- an acre was suddenly worth 30/-⁵. His experiments were conducted under the auspices of Professor George Stapledon of the Plant Breeding Station at Aberystwyth University, a College of the University of Wales, and David Thomas the Agricultural organiser for Brecon and Radnor. At Home Farm he reclaimed a large field and marked it out into ½ acre plots for his own workers and inaugurated a prize for the best managed plot.

Further experiments sought to establish how continuous cropping could be achieved and so successful were the experiments that the Yorkshire Post reported in 1934 that they were now being organised on a larger scale.

Stanley and Matilda had no children and when he died in 1949 the estate was split into two parts. His will

stipulated that after provision for certain annuities the residue was to be divided into two parts. The first part (his lands in Breconshire) was to be held in trust by Breconshire County Council and the second part, governing all his remaining lands, bequeathed to trustees to create an endowment fund for the purposes of agricultural education. Stanley died on the 15th January 1949 and was buried in Llanfechan Churchyard. Sadly in 1950 the estate was sold and the house was demolished. One footnote to his story is that of the monument he raised to Llywelyn, the last sovereign Prince of Wales. In 1949 when Stanley died there were



CILMERI PARK, BUILTLI WELLS, IN 1950: NOW DEMOLISHED

Cilmeri House 1950. *Brycheiniog* vol 15 1971

many who were worried about the monument and what might become of it. Discussions resulted in the Trustees making a Deed of Gift of the monument and its site to the Residuary Legatees – Breconshire County Council, thus saving it for the nation. At the same time interested parties began to consider that whilst the present monument was of some beauty it did not meet their vision of what a monument to such a man should be. In 1952 measures were taken to raise the funds necessary to build another, more fitting, memorial and in 1956 it was completed and unveiled on the 23rd June 1956.

The new monument was a granite monolith standing 15 feet high standing on an earth and grassed mound and surrounded by a thorn hedge. The old monument was incorporated into the steps to the new memorial and new plaques were carved. The plaques and monolith were made from “Trefor Grey Granite” hewn from the Penmaenmawr quarries and donated by Caernarvonshire County Council to reflect Llywelyn’s native county. Stanley would have been pleased that everyone was finally in accord and as a result a more fitting, public national memorial was achieved.



Photo from Visit Wales website. The new Llywelyn Memorial raised in 1956

References

- 1 Family Tree of Price family. Thomas Price of Gwarafof and Strand House and his family. Brycheiniog. Vol 23. P50
- 2 United Grand Lodge of England. Freemason Membership Registers 1751-1921. Ancestry database
- 3 Oxford Men and Their Colleges, 1880-1892, 2 Volumes. Oxford, England: James Parker and Co, 1893. Ancestry database.
- 4 The Squire of Cilmeri. Brycheiniog. Vol 15. Pp57
- 5 The Squire of Cilmeri. Brycheiniog. Vol 15. Pp58

Sources

The Squire of Cilmeri. Brycheiniog. Vol 15. 1971. Pp57-61
 The Price Llywelen Memorial at Cilmeri. Brycheiniog. Vol. 20 1983
 The Price Llywelen Memorial at Cefn-y-Bedd. Brycheiniog. Vol 2. 1956. Pp152-168



Free Online Resources

There are lots of free resources out there on the Internet. Copy and paste the web addresses into your browser.

Gravestone Photographic Resource

An International Directory of grave monuments. The Welsh section is still quite small but it is nevertheless a resource to keep an eye upon.

<http://www.gravestonephotos.com/>



The Beacon

This free A5 monthly glossy magazine distributed in Brecon and its surrounding villages contains a "Your History" column, contributed by the BLFHS, which often offers an interesting article about the area. Here is the August article, entitled "The building of Brecon County Shire Hall."

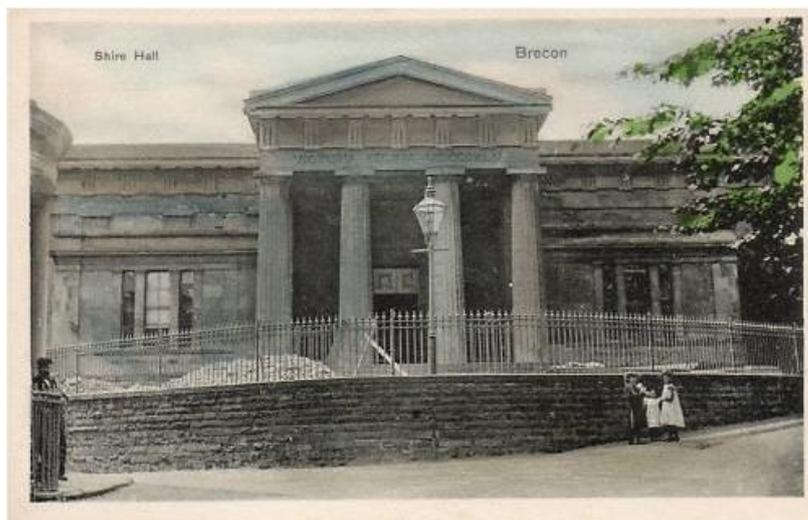
The building of Brecon County/ Shire Hall

The Latin inscription on the front of Brecon's most iconic building the County Hall shows that it was built in the reign of Queen Victoria in 1842. Today it houses the Brecknock Museum, soon to be a part of the Brecon Hub.

For some 200 years previously, the Quarter Sessions, Assizes, county business and Borough Council meetings had been held in the Guild Hall. In 1838 the Court of Quarter Sessions ordered that a County Hall was to be erected, a committee was set up and in a very short time several sites were viewed. The site selected was at that time a garden owned by Henry Allen from whom the land was later purchased for £1,100. Adverts were placed in various newspapers for architects' designs in either Tuscan or plain Doric style and the design chosen was that of Messrs Wyatt and Brandon. Tenders were invited and the one accepted was that of Samuel Hancorn, a local builder.

In April 1841 a clerk of works was appointed at a salary of £2.12.6d per week. Fire insurance purchased meant that work could be carried out by candlelight. Fittings within the Assize Court cost £700; outside railings 7/9 per foot and gates 10/- per foot

No record exists of the date of completion, but the clerk of works engagement ended in November 1842. Total costs amounted to approximately £12,000.



BRECONSHIRE STRAYS

MONMOUTHSHIRE

LLANGATTOCK VIBON AVEL

Banns

Richd Smiles, St David's, Brecs. Bach & Emily Phelps,
otp, spin. 9/16/23 Jun 1895

Chas Rion Morgan, otp, bach & Elizth Peters,
Partrishow, Brecs, spin. 8/15/22 Dec 1895

Wm Jene Pearch, otp, bach & Elizth Jane Bevan,
Llanelly, Brecs, spin. 22/29Jul & 5 Aug 1906

Marriages

Frank Woodland Golesworthy. 35, widower, outfitter
[of] Hay, Brecs. Father: Chas Golesworthy, builder
Married

Caroline Davies. 24, spin., Parc Grace Dieu.
Father: Andrew Davies, farmer.

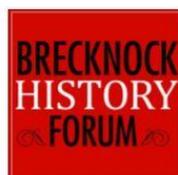
Witnesses: Andrew Davies, John Williams [&] Annie
Davies. Banns. 19th Dec 1885

Richd Smiles. 21, bachelor, blacksmith, St David,
Brecon. Father: Thos Smiles, stone cutter
Married

Emily Phelps. 20, spin of this parish. Father: Chas
Phelps, waggoner.

Wits: Chas Phelps, S? Beach, Bertha Phelps [&] Lizzie
Phelps. Banns. 25 Jun 1895

Just a reminder that the Brecknock History
Festival continues through October



**BRECKNOCK
HISTORY
FESTIVAL**

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2017



The Great Houses & Estates of Brecknockshire

A range of events across the historic county of Brecknockshire
organised by members of the Brecknock History Forum.

Some events are free but others will incur a charge. For
more information please contact Elaine Starling (01874
711484 or evstarling@lineone.net)

Some events are part of OPEN DOORS which celebrates the architecture and heritage of Wales.

For a full list of the events being organised for OPEN DOORS across the whole of Wales in September please see the Cadw website.

A range of events across the historic county of Breconshire organised by members of the Brecknock History Forum.

Events are being held at the following locations: Brecon Hay on Wye Llandew Llangynidr Llanhamlach Penpont Treholford.



September Meeting Review: Walter Wilkins: banker, entrepreneur and politician. Part Two

At the September meeting, a good-sized audience welcomed Ken Jones, his subject being "Walter Wilkins - Part 2". Ken covered the years between 1778 and 1828, when Walter Wilkins returned from the East India Company (where he had gained much valuable experience) to his death in 1828. During this time he, together with other partners, founded the Brecon Bank. This was a private bank, the largest in Wales with branches as far afield as Cardiff, Llanelli and Haverfordwest. Its banknotes were accepted by corresponding London banks and Brecon Bank had the distinction of never going bankrupt, as many other private banks had.

Ken also spoke about Walter's domestic life when he lived at Maesllwch House. He provided lots of interesting information and anecdotes to illustrate his talk and was, as usual, fascinating to listen to.



Brecknock Museum Society & Museum Friends Forward Look – the renovated Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery



An introduction to the interior features and displays, including a discussion on the way in which individuals can be involved in the future operation

A light two course supper will be served and a donation to cover costs would be appreciated.

For more information and to book a place, please contact Elaine Starling (01874 711484 or evstarling@lineone.net)



Website

Our website address is www.blfhs.co.uk

Next Meeting

Date/Time: Tuesday 3rd October 2017 2pm

Place: Brecon Public Library

Subject: Drovers Roads

Breconshire
Local & Family
History Society



Cymdeithas Hanes
Lleol a Theuluoedd
Brycheiniog

Brecon Public Library

Ship Street, Brecon

*Access is through the main library entrance in Ship Street;
or to use the lift, enter via the garage area in Bell Lane.*

Drovers Roads

**Rob Stephens, using family research
and artefacts, will tell the story of
sheep dealing and droving within his
family at the start of the 20th century.**

Tuesday 3rd October 2017

2:00pm

All Welcome

(£1.00 entry fee for non-members)

Further details from Hilary Williams (01874) 624432
and on our website: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/>

Don't forget – I am always looking for interesting article subjects so let me know if you have anything you would like to share!!!!

I am looking for interesting subjects on which to base the monthly article. If you are passionate about a subject which you think would be interesting to our members please let me know by sending me an email at the usual address editorblfhs@outlook.com