



Newsletter 50 – January 2016
BLWYDDYN NEWYDD DDA I BAWB
HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

Welcome to our Newsletter. We invite you to contribute articles, tips, questions and answers for others to share. Feedback is always welcome. Have you missed an edition? Read the archived Newsletters on our website.

January Meeting Review: Helen Ball: “The Lords Tredegar in Breconshire”.

The New Year got off to an excellent start, with Helen’s illustrated talk. She spoke of the history of the Morgan Family of Tredegar and their marriages to local families, their land holdings and political involvement in both the County of Breconshire and the town of Brecon. Through this medium, she gave the audience three valuable tips applicable to their own family research:

1. Draw up an historical timeline for your ancestors, so that their lives can be understood within a wider historical and social context
2. Trace every available reference to an event such as a death in order to find every bit of information about the individual and family context and finally
3. There is no such thing as infallibility in genealogy – double-check everything and if it still does not make sense, research afresh.

The talk was very well received and many follow-up questions and comments were received from the floor.

The sound recording and slideshow of Helen’s presentation are available on our website.

Monmouthshire and Sir Joseph Alfred Bradney

Mention was made at our January 2016 meeting of the series of nine books written by Sir Joseph Alfred Bradney, (1859–1933) entitled “*A History of Monmouthshire*”. Originally published in twelve parts between 1904 and the author's death in 1933, Bradney's monumental survey, extensively illustrated and containing dozens of pedigrees, remains a basic reference work essential for the serious study of local history or genealogy in Monmouthshire. A facsimile edition consists of nine uniform hardback volumes, containing the entire text of the original edition, including the front matter, indexes and illustrations. The original nine of these were written and published in his lifetime and a tenth book was compiled from his manuscripts by Prof Madeleine Gray and published after his death, in 1993.

As well as giving an understanding of the County of Monmouthshire and its families, including the various branches of the Morgans of Tredegar, this series of histories can throw more light on Breconshire families, who often intermarried with those of Monmouthshire. Historically, there were close ties between the two counties.

The facsimiles contain the following information:

Volume 1 Part 1: *The Hundred of Skenfrith*. Includes Monmouth, Dixton, Rockfield, Wonastow, Llangattock-vibon-avel, St Maughan's, Skenfrith, Grosmont, Llangua, Llantilio Crosseny, part of Llanfihangel-ystern-llewern and Welsh Bicknor.

Volume 1 Part 2a: *The Hundred of Abergavenny Part 1*. Includes Abergavenny, Llantilio Pertholey, Llanfihangel Crucorney, Oldcastle, Cwmyoy, Llangattock Lingoed, Llanvetherine, Llanddewi Scyrrid, Llanddewi Rhydderch and Llanvapley.

Volume 1 Part 2b: *The Hundred of Abergavenny Part 2*. Includes Llanarth, Llansantffraid, Llanfihangel-nigh-Usk, Llangattock-nigh-Usk, Llanwenarth, Llanfoist, Llanelen, Llanover, Llanfair Cilgedin, Goitre, Mamhilad, Trevethin, Llanhilleth and Aberystroth.

Volume 2 Part 1: *The Hundred of Raglan*. Includes Raglan, Llandenny, Dingestow, Tregaer, Penrhos, Bryngwyn, Bettws Newydd, Clytha, Parc Grace Dieu and Llanfihangel-ystern-llewern.

Volume 2 Part 2: *The Hundred of Trelech*. Includes Trelech, Penallt, Mitchel Troy, Cwmcavran, Pen-y-clawdd, Llangoven, Llandogo, Llansoy, Llan_hangel-tor-y-mynydd, Wolvesnewton, Cilgwrwg, Llanishen, Trelech Grange, Tintern Parva and Chapel Hill.

Volume 3 Part 1: *The Hundred of Usk Part 1*. Includes Usk, Gwehelog, Glascoed, Monkswood, Llanbadock, Trostry, Kemeys Commander and Llangibby.

Volume 3 Part 2: *The Hundred of Usk Part 2*. Includes Panteg, Llan_hangel Pont-y-moel, Gwernesney, Llangeview, Llanllowel, Llantrisant, Llangwm Ucha and Isha, Kemeys Inferior, Caerleon and Llangattock, Llanfihangel Llantarnam, Llanhenog, Tredunnock, Llandegveth, Llanddewi Fach and Llanvrechfa.

Volume 4 Part 1: *The Hundred of Caldicot Part 1*. Includes Chepstow, St Arvans, Penterry, Mounon, Mathern, St Pierre, Runstone, Portskewet, Caldicot, Ifton, Caerwent and Wentwood Forest.

Volume 4 Part 2: *The Hundred of Caldicot Part 2*. 1 Includes Shirenewton, Newchurch, Itton, Howick, Dinham, Llanfair Discoed, Llanvaches, Penhow, Langstone, Additions to Kemeys Inferior, Llanmartin, Llandevaud, Wilcrick, St Brides Netherwent, Llandevenny, Magor, Redwick, Llanwern, Bishton, Undy, Rogiet, Llan_hangel Rogiet, Goldcliff, Whitson, Nash and Christchurch.

Volume 5: *The Hundred of Newport*. Includes Newport, Bassaleg, Wentloog, Rumney, St Mellons, Marshfield, Coedkernew, Michaelstone Y Fedw, Bedwas, Machen, Malpas, Bettws, Henllys, Risca, Mynyddislwyn and Bedwellty.

This month on our Website

As well as the regular maintenance tasks to keep our website up to date, John has added several new items since the last Newsletter:

- **Monthly Meeting Report:** added slide show and sound files from the Jan 2016 meeting: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/meetings/index.htm>
- **Management Committee Minutes:** added minutes of Oct 2015 meeting: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/minutes.htm>
- **Newsletter:** added Newsletter 50 (the one you are now reading): <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/newsletters.htm>
- **Noticeboard:** updated 8 Jan 2016: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/news.htm>
- **Public News Pages:** updated 15 Jan 2016: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/news.htm>
- **Members' News Pages:** updated 15 Jan 2016: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/news.htm>

Check the News Pages every few days and the Noticeboard at least weekly

Help needed! The next parishes to be tackled are Llandefalle and Llandeilo'r fân.

If you can contribute any photographs or textual material relating to these parishes, or if you wish to report any problems with the website, email our webmaster John Ball at john@jlb2011.co.uk

Rice Price Pritchard, 1781-1863 Biography: Part 1

Member Gwyneth Morris has quite coincidentally sent me a piece of work which she is working on for her own family history. As you will see, she uses Helen Ball's tip of creating a timeline and understanding of the social context in which her ancestors lived. Read and enjoy her account, below and over the next issue.

Rice Price Pritchard, 1781-1863 Biography

Welsh tenant farmer

Rice Price Pritchard is my paternal 2nd great grandfather. His name shows the Welsh patronymic system whereby baptismal names were used prefixed by "ap" meaning "son of". Thus ap Rice or Rees (Welsh pronunciation) would become Price and ap Richard would become Pritchard when the custom of using English surnames was adopted.

Welsh character

This is said to show a strong sense of kinship with an emphasis on "belonging" and a lack of individualism. People were said to be able to recite their lineage back to about the ninth generation! Hospitality was said to be a reflection of a tribal past - the keeping of an open house for those in need.

Welsh language

Welsh was spoken by two thirds of the population in the 1840s. Even in the 1891 census 54% were reported as Welsh speaking.

Birth

Rice was born in October 1781 and baptised in Llanhamlach Church. The register entry states "25.10.1781 Rees Price son of Thomas Pritchard was baptised." It seems likely that his father

came from Highgrove, a large local farm where generations of Pritchards farmed and were buried in Llanhamlach Churchyard. His mother Mary Price later farmed at Llanfellte Farm in the nearby parish of Llansantffraed. Census returns record her birth place as Defynnog in Breconshire.

Location

Rice's birth place lies in a fertile stretch of the Usk valley between Bwlch and Brecon in South Wales. This was an important route into Wales - used by the Romans from AD 47. A Roman fort was newly identified in 2013 a short distance away. The Normans invaded, conquered and ruled the area from 1090 A.D - reducing the natives to "colonial" status. During Rice's lifetime (1781-1863) the Usk valley saw important developments featuring roads, a canal and a railway.

Farming

In 1770 many Welsh farmers were involved in agriculture as the tenants of landed estates, with the status of yeoman. They farmed in the hereditary way, relying on hand tools, the co-operation of neighbours during the busy periods of the farming year and co- ownership of implements.

Some progressive ideas spread from the formation of the first Brecknock Agricultural Society in 1755 - including rotation of crops, growing of potatoes and turnips and the greater use of lime as a fertiliser. The enclosure of common land enabled greater food production. However, the new ideas were slow to spread in Wales where the roads were narrow and poorly maintained, the new English farming manuals rarely read, the landowners sometimes absentees, and the yeoman class lacked capital and initiative.

Transport

Improvements in communication made agricultural changes easier. From the 1790s canals provided links with ports, such as Newport. However, most agricultural produce was carried by road. Turnpike Trusts produced a road network which led to increased trade and easier communication. Often the route of new turnpike roads differed little from modern main roads, such as the A40 through Llanhamlach. However from the 1767 Turnpike Act we learn that the main road from Brecon to Bwlch ran through Tal-y-Llyn. It was later realigned to run past Llansantffraed Church as it does today.

In the 1850s railways improved transport links and one branch to Newport ran along the Usk valley, albeit hugging the higher ground to the North of the valley near Highgrove using the route of a previous tram road.

Final part in next month's Newsletter

A Request for Information

Member, Jennifer Lewis has asked whether anyone can help with this genealogical problem.

"I wonder if anybody can shed any light on the following which is recorded in the *County Families of Breconshire*.

Bowen, John Mortimer Esq. of Chancefield, Breconshire.

JP for the co. of Breconshire, son of Evan Bowen Esq. M.D. late surgeon in the Royal Navy, born at Talgarth on 13 June 1837, educated at Christ's College School, Brecon and the Grammar School, Abergavenny.

Residence: Chancefield, Talgarth, Brecon.

Crest: A stag pierced with an arrow.

Note – This family derives its descent from the Bowens of Tyddyn, Montgomeryshire. This branch settled at Tref Eionon in the parish of Llangorse during the time of Howel Harris: a former member of this family also came to Chancefield from Tyddyn.

I have discovered that the Evan Bowen mentioned above was baptised on the 3 August 1789 in Llangorse, son of Richard Bowen and Margaret his wife. I have failed to find how these Bowens tie in with the family from Tyddyn, Montgomeryshire. Can anybody help?"

Contact: Jennifer Lewis, Grove Villa, Crossgates, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 6RE

Email: grovevilla100@hotmail.com

PLEASE NOTE: Change of day for BLFHS monthly meetings in 2016

Commencing January 2016, our meetings will be held on the **first Tuesday in the month**. The meetings will be held at Brecon Library commencing at 2.00pm, as before. Entry to the Library will be through the main entrance, although the lift from the garage area is available if you have difficulty with the stairs to the upper floor of the library.

NEXT MEETING

Date and time: Tuesday, February 2nd at 2.00 pm.

Venue: Brecon Library

Speaker: Ken Jones

Subject *Capt. John Lloyd: His Life in Llanwrtyd and Brecon*

This will be a continuation of Ken's talk on John Lloyd last September.

BLFHS WEBSITE: Our website address: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk>

CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to respond to or comment on an item in this newsletter, or contribute to the next newsletter or to our website, please contact our Chairperson:

Hilary Williams, Maesycoed, 39 Camden Road, Brecon LD3 7RT.

Tel: 01874 624432 E-mail: chair@blfhs.co.uk