



# Breconshire Local & Family History Society (BLFHS)

## Cymdeithas Hanes Lleol a Theuluoedd Brycheiniog

### Newsletter 63 - March 2017

## What's in a name?

When researching ancestors Welsh ancestors the Welsh naming system or patronymics, can present many difficulties for the genealogist. This system meant that the father's first name was given to the child as its surname resulting in the surname changing through successive generations. Furthermore this has led to a limited pool of surnames – no, everyone with the surname Williams or Jones are not related! The anglicising of many of these surnames has also helped to make Welsh genealogy a challenge particularly to the novice. Examples of ancient Welsh family trees show how the descendants were described patronymically. For example we may have William ap Thomas ap Edward. Meaning William son of Thomas son of Edward. It is when the forename is taken as a surname that we begin to lose the ancestry and so researching the family becomes more difficult and sometimes impossible as the line becomes lost in the fog of patronymics.

Patronymics can be described as a process where the child is given the father's forename as its surname.

Thus, Edward William's son Thomas will be known as Thomas Edward. His son or daughter may then be given the surname Thomas, it being their father's forename. As we progress our search back in time if we do not know the forename of our ancestor how can we track them further back in time? It is at this point that many genealogists give up as their ancestors disappear into the fog of patronymics.

The use of patronymics varied from County to County depending upon whether or not there was a heavy English influence and what the social mix of the society was. The fixing of surnames generally affected the higher social classes first and then with time trickled down to the lower classes. The changeover began as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> Century but continued well into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. By this time there was also a growing tendency to adopt English forenames, many taken from Christian saints. Although in some areas patronymics existed beyond the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the IGI took a view that most counties were not using this system by 1813 and as such this became their cut-off date. New baptism registers had come into use and these included a section for surname which suggests that patronymics were no longer the norm. Many families were using the fixed surname but when searching for a family before this date it is prudent to assume that it has been indexed patronymically even if the family did not use this format. An example is one Roger Prosser son of Roger and Margaret Prosser whose baptism in 1809 at Llanfihangel Tal y Llyn is indexed as Roger Roger. Although it is possible to find an entry for Roger Prosser the entry does not give the parents' names. This can also be seen in the baptisms of Margaret and Ann Havard at Llanywern in 1767 and 1769 respectively where both children are indexed as Margaret Benjamin and Ann Benjamin (their father's forename) and not Havard. It is possible to search the IGI<sup>1</sup> just using forenames, place and prospective date ranges to pull up a list of possible matches which can then be examined in order to find potential matches that

## This month on our website

As well as the regular maintenance tasks to keep our website running smoothly, John has added several new items since the last Newsletter.

### Newsletter

Newsletter 63 (the one you are now reading)  
[www.blfhs.co.uk/members/newsletters.htm](http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/newsletters.htm)

### Members' News Pages

List of members' interests  
[updated 15 & 27 March 2017]  
[www.blfhs.co.uk/members/news.htm](http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/news.htm)

Parish Maps of Breconshire. 35 digital maps of the parishes [updated 27 March 2017]  
<http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/parish-maps/index.htm>

Don't forget! Check the News Pages every few days and the Noticeboard at least weekly.

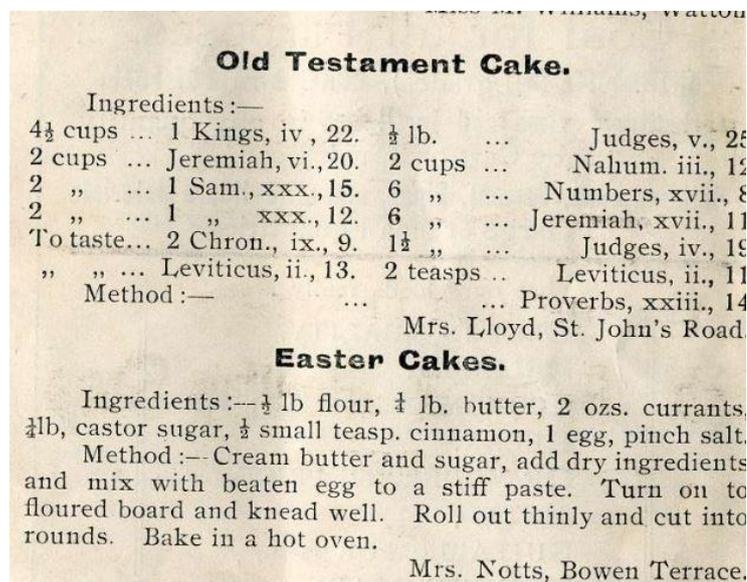
have the necessary surname but this does not always produce any useful results. In some counties such as Glamorgan there are instances where the child takes a patronymic surname but the mother is named for her husband's surname. In 1841 a Lease for three lives names one Mary Edmund wid[ow] and children Roger and Edmund William as occupiers of a property called Gibbons Mill. Mary was married to one William Edmund so although she took his surname the children are named patronymically as Roger and Edmund William. So far so not confusing....Roger marries as Roger Williams [note the addition of the "s"], but when Roger dies he is buried as Roger William Edmund and his Will held at the National Library of Wales also records his name in this format<sup>2</sup>. Another layer of confusion! Signatories to the Will included one Edmund Edmund – perhaps his brother? We do know that at some point the family split with some choosing their fixed surname as Williams and others as Edmund. It can make research very difficult and often it is sheer luck that enables us to find that link which can take us back another few generations.

<sup>1</sup>A point to beware. Although the IGI is still accessible on the FamilySearch.org website, it is no longer recommended as a data-source because it contains so many unreliable member-submitted entries.

<sup>2</sup>Glamorgan Burials. Eglwysilan. 22 March 1800.

## EASTER IS NEARLY UPON US

Here are a couple of timely recipes from an old Brecon cookery booklet published around the period before the Second World War. The recipes appear to have been sent in by various people in the area. Thanks to Colvin Parry for allowing us to reproduce parts of it.



Sue Ashton

## Free Online Resources

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

### Breconshire Quarter Sessions Records: Depositions and Summary Convictions 1895-1913

Although this is just an index of documents held by Powys Archives it does include some relevant detail in that the Depositions and Summary Convictions lists people by name and place.

These are depositions and summary convictions made at petty or special sessions. The sessions are listed in alphabetical order, with the convictions in date order

[http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/Docs/archives/records\\_catalogue/B\\_QS\\_bi.pdf](http://pstatic.powys.gov.uk/fileadmin/Docs/archives/records_catalogue/B_QS_bi.pdf)

It's funny what you find in some of the registers.  
Here is a poem written in the Llanfoist marriage register which dates from 1771!

*"A zealous advocate of the absurd plan of  
setting up infant schools  
The man who builds an Infant School  
May well be deem'd an arrant fool  
At home the cradle should be rocking  
While lazy mothers mend the stocking  
To pay for schools for nursing brats  
Is just as wise as nursing cats"*

### Who do you think you are? Live. NEC Birmingham 6-8<sup>th</sup> April 2017

There's still time to attend. Find your family with help from genealogy experts at the world's biggest family history show. The Society of Genealogists will run its extensive programme of talks by leading genealogists over the course of the three day show. There will be a choice to attend over 80 different talks, covering a vast array of subjects. The Society's 'Ask the Experts' area will provide an opportunity to get some one-to-one guidance on your family history research. This is a perfect chance to pose specific questions to an expert who can provide invaluable advice. Many family history societies will be represented as well as other companies offering access to a wide variety of genealogical resources.

Go to [www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com/](http://www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com/) for more information.



#### BRECONSHIRE STRAYS

#### MONMOUTHSHIRE

#### LLANFOIST

#### Baptisms

Ann d/o Henry & Ann Price, Cwm Du, Brecs. Born at L[lanfoist, smith.  
10 Jan 1831

Thos (aged 5wks) s/o John & Mary Reed, Ty Mawr, Llanelly, gardener.  
17 Mar 1844

Edith d/o Wm & Jane Powell, Llanelly, machine man. 20 May 1866  
Bertha Jane d/o Wm & Jane Powell, Llanelly, machine man. 1 Aug 1868

Ada d/o Wm & Jane Powell, of Llanfoist, formerly a machine man. 20  
Mar 1870

John s/o Jas Wm & Sarah Hinckley, Llanelly, farmer. 29 Jan 1888

Peggy Hazel Maud d/o Bertram Jas & Maud Marshall, Ynysgarth,  
Clydach, Brecs., Lorry driver. 14 April 1940

#### Banns

Fred Wm Walters, otp, batch. & Anne Price, Parish of Llanhamlach?,  
Brecs. Spin. 18/25 Jan & 1 Feb 1891

Windsor Richd Morgan, Llanelly, Brecs. & Ethel Baldwin, otp. Spin.  
9/16 Jan 1921

John Stanley Stephens, Parish of Llanelly, batch. & Leah Edge, otp spin.  
17/24 Jun & 1 Jul (n.d)

Walter Bayliss, Parish of Llanelly, Brecs. Batch & Alice Eliza Phillips, otp.  
Spin. 9/16/23 Jun (n.d)

Harold Eric Riggs? Parish of Llanbedr Ystrad Yw, batch. & Mary Eleanor  
Morgan, otp. Spin. 7/14/21 May (n.d)

The last date in this register is 1932

#### Burials

Wm Kenvin of Langrwyne. 8 Dec 1758

Elizth. d/o Elizth. William Lewis from Llanelly. 21 Sept 1800

## MEMBERS' INTERESTS

New Member interests added to our website. If you can provide any assistance to these members please contact them using the details on the website. [www.blfhs.co.uk/members/members-interests.htm](http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/members-interests.htm)

NAME	PLACE	DATES
<u>MEMBER: John Price</u>		
BOORE	Brec., Hef., Rad., Sal.	1700-190
PRICE	Hef., Rad.	1700-190
WATKINS	Brec., Rad.	1700-1900
Glascwm, Rad.	-	
Gascwm Local History	-	
Paincastle, Rad.,	-	
Paincastle Local History	-	
<u>MEMBER: Gill Williams</u>		
LEVY	Sunderland Tyne & Wear	1850-1950
STEWART	Sunderland Tyne & Wear	1850-1950
<u>MEMBER: Janice Maynard</u>		
JONES, William & Sarah	Hepzibah Chapel, Erwood, Brec.	1790-1855
WILLIAMS, Elizabeth	Bryndu, Bronllys, Brec.	1810-189
WILLIAMS, Evan	Llandeilo Graban, Rad.	1795-186
N/A	Manufacturers in Brecon	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century to early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century

**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](mailto:editorblfhs@outlook.com)



### March Meeting Review: Tallylyn Railway Village

A report will appear in a future Newsletter.

## Website

Our website address is [www.blfhs.co.uk](http://www.blfhs.co.uk)

## Next Meeting

Date/Time: Tuesday April 4th 2017 2pm

Place: Brecon Library

Subject: South Wales SanatoriUm, Bronllys  
John Powell has researched the important role this institution played in the local life of Bronllys and the health of the nation.

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.*

# South Wales Sanatorium, Bronllys

John Powell will tell us about his research into the important role this institution played in the local life of Bronllys and the health of the nation..

**Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> April 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/>



### Finally a sad note:

We are very sorry to have to report the death of one of our most loyal and hardworking Members. James (Jim) Hendry. Jim was one of our earliest members (No 18) and hailed from Motherwell, Lanarkshire. He was a mainstay of the Transcription Team and had strong Breconshire connections especially around the Abergwesyn etc area and was proud of his (maternal) Welsh ancestry. He also had a lovely sense of humour. Jim contributed so much to our Society and has been the most prolific and consistent transcriber of the group. He transcribed nearly all of the chapel transcriptions and a large part of the Cwmdu records as well as part of many others. He was diligent, doing some nearly every day, willing to learn and taking great care with his work. We will miss his contribution greatly. Jim leaves his wife, Margaret and a son and daughter as well as four grandchildren.