

HANES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRECKNOCK HISTORY FORUM

ISSUE 23

MAY 2007

DR ELWYN BOWEN A TRIBUTE

We were all saddened to hear of Elwyn's recent passing; a true gentleman of Breconshire he will be deeply missed, not only for his academic reputation but also for his warm and friendly personality.

Elwyn was born in Cefn Coed and educated at Vaynor and Penderyn Secondary School before training as a teacher at Trinity College, Carmarthen. A Headmaster at the age of 21 he held positions at Beulah, Penderyn, Cefn Coed and Merthyr Tydfil. He studied at Cardiff and Swansea University Colleges where he gained B.Ed (Hons), M.Ed., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. In 1984 he was awarded an M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to Education in Wales. In 1992 he won the first prize in the Welsh Academy Historian of the Year Open Competition. Over the years he has been a regular contributor to radio and television in Wales.

I consider myself indeed fortunate to have known Elwyn for a number of years and will always be grateful for his unstinting support, friendship, and co-operation. It is so poignant that just a few days before he was due to present one of his trademark lectures at Brecon Library Elwyn was taken ill and we were all denied a glorious opportunity to share and enjoy the company of one of our most illustrious and widely acclaimed historians.

Elwyn will always command my greatest respect; I feel privileged to have enjoyed his friendship. Our thoughts and sympathy are with Elwyn's family.

If you have something to say, a question to ask, a view to promote then please contact:

Chris Price.
Editor *HANES*
Brecknock History Forum
c/o Branch Library
Ship Street
Brecon
Powys
LD3 9AE
Tel 01874 623346 Fax 01874 622818
E-mail: chrispr@ntmail.powys.gov.uk

Closing date for September 2007 issue
1st. August 2007

Introducing The Forum

BRECKNOCK MUSEUM

Contact: Kate Hebditch Tel. 01874 624121

BRECKNOCK SOCIETY AND MUSEUM FRIENDS

Contact: Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507

BRECON CATHEDRAL LIBRARY

Contact: David Chatfield Tel. 01874 625957

BRECON LIBRARY: LOCAL STUDIES DEPT.

Contact: Chris Price Tel. 01874 623346

BULTH WELLS & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY

Contact: Chris Mainwaring Tel. 01982 552689

CRAI & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY ARCHIVE

Contact: Frances Walter Liz Matthews
Tel. 01874 636990 Tel. 01874 636797

CRICKHOWELL DISTRICT ARCHIVE

Contact: Angela Waring Tel. 01873 810922

CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004

LLANGAMMARCH WELLS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Pamela Lewis Martin Rhodes
Tel. 01591 610479 Tel. 01591 610637

LLANGYNIDR LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Christine Porter Tel. 01874 730354

PONTNEATHVAUGHAN LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Stephen Morris Tel. 01639 720728

POWYS COUNTY ARCHIVE OFFICE

Contact: Catherine Richards Tel. 01597 826088

POWYS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY (Brecknock Group)

Contact: Philip Evans Lynda White
Tel. 01874 754365 Tel. 01497 847229

REGIMENTAL MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL WELSH

Contact: Martin Everett/Lucy Jones Tel. 01874 613310

TALGARTH AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Contact: Jan Hughes Tel. 01874 711397

YSTRADGYNLAIS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306

Forum Newsdesk

Llangynidr Local History Society held another summer holiday “dig” last August at Blaen-y-cwm farmhouse in the Glaisfer valley. A number of students from local secondary schools joined the other enthusiasts to help with the work, which is encouraging for the future of archaeology. It is hoped that further exploration of this site may be possible this year if funds allow. An interesting picture of farming life over several centuries in this area is being accumulated.

The hills above Blaen-y-cwm have been surveyed this winter by several members of the Society under the professional guidance of Wendy Toomey. A start has been made in plotting man-made structures on the moorland above Cwm Glaisfer and noting any historic features.

Llangynidr Local History Society is grateful to the BBNPA for supporting this venture. More will be heard about this project at the Society’s AGM in May, when the archaeologist-in-charge will make her report (See *Dates for your Diary* on page 7).

Regimental Museum of The Royal Welsh

It has been a period of change at the Regimental Museum in Brecon. Firstly, a change of name – we are now ‘The Regimental Museum of The Royal Welsh’. The new regiment was formed on St David’s Day 2006 when The Royal Welch Fusiliers and The Royal Regiment of Wales became the 1st and 2nd battalions of the new regiment. If you find it difficult to keep up with the changes, just call us ‘The Regimental Museum’. The regiment’s other museums in Caernarfon and Cardiff Castles will continue to flourish. We wish soldiers of both battalions good fortune as they embark on difficult operational tours of Afghanistan and Iraq in the next two months.

If you are wondering what has happened to the Regimental Colours in Havard Chapel at the Cathedral, they are currently in store at the Museum whilst work is being undertaken on the chapel walls and ceiling. The famous Zulu War Colours, however, will be on display for all visitors to see in the Museum. All the Colours are expected to return to the Chapel in December 2007.

Everyone connected with the Regimental Museum will have been saddened to hear of the death of Yvonne Callaghan of Free Street at the age of 82 on 19th March 2007. Yvonne had been a volunteer at the Regimental Museum since 1984, taking over this role from her late husband Paddy. Paddy had been in the South Wales Borderers – they met while Yvonne was manageress of the NAAFI at Dering Lines in the late 1940s – and maintaining the link with the regiment was a matter of great pride and importance to Yvonne. Regular visitors will miss her at our entrance turnstile on her Monday afternoon volunteer slot, and colleagues will miss her cheery presence. Her well-attended funeral in Brecon Cathedral – at which former curator Major Bob Smith gave the address – is testimony to the respect and affection with which Yvonne is remembered both in the Regimental community and beyond.

Spring Term 2007 has been another busy period at the Regimental Museum. We provided educational services for 24 groups, including local schools such as Mount Street Juniors, Llanfaes, and Ysgol Penmaes – all finding out about life on the Home Front in World War Two - plus pupils from Crickhowell High School and cadets from Christ College learning about the Anglo Zulu War of 1879. As well as local schools, we have also helped varied organisations such as Libanus YFC, Rhondda Cynon Taff Social Services, and schools and FE colleges from further afield. If you think we can assist any group (young or not so young) you are involved with or know about, do contact the Regimental Museum on 01874 613310.

Events

Military Collectors’ Fair

Brecon Town Indoor Market Hall

10am – 4pm

Sunday 27 May 2007

Further information contact: Roy on 01639 722479

Major Martin Everett, Curator

Crickhowell District Archive Centre

The year of 2006 was one of change for the Archive Centre with new Committee members, relocating to a new office, and welcome additions to its resources. These changes had been in the pipeline for a long time and were discussed at the 2006 A.G.M.

During the year the Trustees had decided to move to the new building administered by Crickhowell Resource and Information Centre (C.R.I.C.). Chairman Paul Foley stated “The major drawback is the reduced space that we will have in our Archive Storeroom and also the office.” Hopefully, this would be “offset by the benefits of a 20% reduction in our rent in the new building where we will be joining other voluntary groups such as the Tourist Information Centre which will attract more of the general public. It will also allow access for the disabled which is presently not possible.”

After a couple of years in its planning and 12 months in construction, Ty-y-Fro (House of the Region) was officially opened on the 12th of September 2006 with the cutting of the ribbon and an address by the Chief Executive of the Brecon Beacons National Park, Mr Christopher Gledhill, and A.M. for Wales, Ms Tamsin Dunwoody. Also in attendance were Mr Roger Williams, M.P. for Brecon and Radnor, Ms Kirsty Williams, A.M. for Brecon and Radnor, Crickhowell County Councillor Mr John Morris, and the Mayor of Crickhowell Town Council, Mr Geoffrey Powell, plus other local dignitaries and representatives of Voluntary Groups. Ty-y-Fro is owned and managed by the Crickhowell Resource and Information Centre and one of its Directors, Mrs Mary Thomas, responded to the opening address on behalf of C.R.I.C. The building is also home to the Tourist Information Centre, the Volunteer Bureau and the Oriel Cric Gallery.

The Archive Centre has completed its move to the new premises and is open for business with the same telephone number as previously – 01873 810922 – but with a new e-mail address history@crickhowellinfo.co.uk and also a new website on www.crickhowellinfo.org.uk/communitygroup/CDAC

The size of the new office is causing some concern but the Archive Committee are working closely with the C.R.I.C. managers to hopefully resolve some of the identified difficulties. On the positive side there is now more space for the storage of Archives than previously and a new map chest. Special thanks are offered to Professor and Mrs Redwood who gave an extremely generous donation towards its purchase!

One of the reasons for the move was to attract more visitors to the Centre and although it is still early days, signs are promising, with the Visitors Book reflecting an increase for Nov. – Dec. 2006 set against the same period in 2005. May the trend continue!

Reproduced, with the kind permission of Crickhowell District Archive Centre, from Newsletter No. 8 December 2006.

The Pulpit at St Mary's, Hay

I have always been fascinated by the fine polished alabaster pulpit in Hay Parish Church that stands on the right of the chancel arch and is sufficiently elevated so that all those sitting in the pews in the nave and in the gallery can see the preacher. Hay Church, as we know it now, was built when it was expected that there should be a substantial sermon for all to hear.

In 1825 the Rev. Humphrey Allen was appointed by John B. Jenkinson (the Bishop of St David's) to Hay Parish as a *Stipendiary Curate*, that is, a clergyman whose living was funded by the Bishop in order to break the chain of absentee rectors who had since 1746 employed poorly paid curates to act on their behalf.

The Rev. Humphrey Allen, a Glasbury man, was far from poor so he used his considerable resources and influence to reconstruct the mediaeval church building. He obtained a grant of £200 from the central Church of England fund, *The Queen Anne's Bounty*, and with his own money and liberal collections from local people he had the old church pulled down except for the bell tower.

A locally well known church architect was retained viz. Edward Haycock senior (1790-1870), who had practiced in Shrewsbury as a general builder and architect, was also county surveyor for Shropshire, and, after 1845, specialised in ecclesiastical buildings.

By 1833 the old church had been cleared away and a new one stood in its place. This new church was planned so that the Word could be preached for all to hear.

I do not know what pulpit Humphrey Allen installed in his

new church, possibly he retained the old one, as it was not until the young William Bevan came to the parish in 1845 that moves were made to bring the church building up to high Victorian taste. In 1866 the chancel was extended eastwards by a semicircular apse to give more room before the altar. The architect for this was a Mr Nicholson

In 1865 Dr Robert F. Trumper's wife died, so during the year following he provided the remarkable pulpit we have today. It certainly was not cheap with statues of the four evangelists and Our Lord in quatrefoils standing on eight colonettes in the manner of Giovanni Pisano's early 14th century pulpits at Sienna and Pistoia. The figures stand above an inscription that reads:

"Dedicated by Francis Robert Trumper to the Glory of God. In memory of his beloved wife Emma who died Nov. 15th 1865 and of her mother Fortune Higgins who died April 23. 1860.

As part of the improvements to the church Dr Robert F. Trumper, a local medical man, also provided the decorated leaded lights for the three lancet windows in the apse behind the altar. These windows were *"To the Glory of God and in memory of Emma Meredith, born 1839 died 1866 the beloved niece of F and E Trumper"*

According to Geoffrey Fairs' *History of Hay* the Trumbers lived in Brook Street.

During a recent summer visit to St Faiths, Dorstone, I thought I saw on the left of the chancel arch the twin of the pulpit in Hay Church, turning on the lights I saw at once that it was a very similar but somewhat smaller stone version. At Dorstone there are only the statues of the four evangelists occupying the panels on the sides of the pulpit. The dedication reads: *Francis Robert Trumper surgeon of Hay. To the Glory of God in memory of his beloved wife Emma Beavan who died Nov. 1865.*

Also in the nave at Dorstone is a marble memorial tablet to Fortune Higgins, Robert Trumper's mother in law, which throws more light on this lady. It reads:

Sacred to the memory of Fortune Relict [widow] of Thomas Higgins Esq of Brook Street Hay, solicitor, daughter of John Williams Esq of Cwm Llanayre, Radnorshire and Fortune his wife./ Born March 16 1776 / Died April 23. 1860/. Her son and daughter placed this memorial to the memory of one of the kindest and most indulgent mothers as a lasting tribute of their sincere affection.

The Higgins family included John and David who were drapers living in Bear Street and also engaged in property speculation in Newport Street.

Mr Karl Showler

The Welsh-Born Man who was Crucial to the Ending of Slavery

With the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery approaching next year there is going to be a lot of interest in Welsh connections. S4C has already screened a series of programmes – America Gaeth a'r Cymry – and doubtless more are planned. Of course, slavery still exists in some parts of the world and remained in Africa long after it was abolished under British law.

Sir Bartle Frere was born at Clydach House, Gilwern on March 29th 1815; at that particular time Clydach was in Brecknockshire. Although he spent most of his career in India and South Africa he remained attached to his birthplace and visited it shortly before his death in 1884. His family were involved in both the Llanely Ironworks and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal which was started to connect Gilwern with Brecon.

Frere's lack of recognition, both at the time of his death and today, stems from the major blunder he made in 1879 when, rather like Bush and Blair in Iraq, he invaded Zululand. A common feature was an ultimatum beforehand. He was condemned partly because he lacked clear authority from London and within a few days was defeated by the Zulus at the battle of Isandlwana. It was after this battle that the main street in Brecon was known as widow's mile.

Before 1879 Frere had a glittering career in India where he rose to become Governor of Bombay. On his first journey to India in 1834 he saw the evils of slavery when he was taken to the slave markets in Egypt. He became an ardent supporter of the Anti-Slavery Society and hosted David Livingstone when he was recruiting staff for his expeditions in India. In 1872 Frere was chosen by Lord Granville to head a mission to the Sultan of Zanzibar to bring slave trading to a final end along the east coast of Africa. The Sultan had been violating previous treaties by allowing around 20,000 slaves to be captured and exported every year.

Getting the Sultan of Zanzibar to sign a new treaty proved exceedingly difficult partly because some of the European powers were suspicious of British motives. In the end Frere threatened a naval blockade and the Sultan signed on the 5th of June 1873. Britain's position was greatly strengthened by having a British resident in Zanzibar. This was Dr. John Kirk, whose African career started when he was physician and botanist on Livingstone's second Zambesi expedition from 1858-63. His unique contribution was to win the confidence of the Sultan, African chiefs, Arab slavers and representatives of European powers. Frere's contribution was to pull it all together and slave trading in Zanzibar ceased for ever on the day of the signing.

One of the tragedies of Frere's achievement was the fact that David Livingstone died on 1st May 1873, although it would have taken months for him to have heard of the end of the slave trade in Zanzibar. The 3 Africans who carried his body to ensure that it reached Britain for burial had been recruited by Livingstone while staying with Frere in Bombay. Livingstone was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Frere was buried in St Paul's cathedral in June 1884. In 1888 a large statue of Sir Bartle Frere was unveiled by the Prince of Wales on the Thames Embankment. Anyone coming out of the tube station towards the river should turn right and Frere's statue is the second on the right.

For further information:

O'Connor, Damian P. *The Zulu and the Raj; the life of Sir Bartle Frere*. 2002 ISBN 1 903607 29 9
Jeal, Tim Livingstone. *Heinemann* 1973 ISBN 0 7126 5638 3.

The author of this article is available for interview by telephone, or personal visit to 41, Orchard Close, Gilwern, Nr. Abergavenny, NP7 0EN. Tel. 01873 830193.

Mr Ronald Watts

The editor acknowledges the researches of Mr Watts and for allowing them to be included in HANES.

Brecknock Society and Museum Friends 2007 Junior School History Awards

Six Brecknockshire pupils received awards for their entries in the annual competition organized by the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends for junior schools in the old county of Brecknock. Designed to be an integrated part of the Curriculum, the competition encourages pupils in Year 6 to undertake their own research into aspects of history close to their school or home. Sometimes local information leads to insight into wider national events and developments. This year's winner, for example, prompted by her grandmother's recollections of childhood on a farm during World War II, researched the impact on the community around Talgarth, and then, with a collection of press-cuttings and wartime propaganda, enabled readers to set the local Welsh rural experience within the context of Britain at war.

A lively study of the Penoyre Estate, exploring characters, legends, and authenticated history, also considered the social and economic trends which affected the land and mansion. Penoyre's chequered history is pursued through the 20th century to its present development – intriguing reading for its future residents.

Other research, which focused on the history of a family farm, was, again, set against a wider economic background and the changes in agriculture over a century. An early family notebook provided valuable evidence of farming activities in its records of prices and details of stock breeds and machinery.

All the work submitted was attractive in layout and presentation. Excellent illustrations informed the content; the text was clear and well annotated with references and bibliography. From the drier, but necessary, details of census returns and dates, from ruins, remains, and reminiscences, the pupils gleaned material on historic features as diverse as a watermill's workings, early cinematic projection, and the age of timber. Rewardingly,

the competitor's all show an understanding of the life and interests of Breconshire's earlier generations.

The first prize was awarded to Angharad James of Llanfaes County Primary School with second prize going to Douglas Evans of Cradoc County Primary School for his research on the Penoyre Estate. Third prize was awarded to Ffion Chamberlain, also from Cradoc County Primary School.

The Brecknock Society and Museum Friends.

*One Hundred Years Ago - From The Columns
Of The Brecon And Radnor County Times,
Friday May 31st 1907*

DEATH OF MR HUGH POWELL POWEL BRECONSHIRE'S "GRAND OLD MAN."

It is with a deep feeling of regret that we record the death of Mr Hugh Powell Powel, of Castle Madoc, which sad event took place at Wormstall, Hungerford, Berks, on Sunday last. The deceased gentleman, who was eighty-five years of age, had a paralytic seizure on the 15th of April last, from which he failed to recover. The news of his demise was received at Castle Madoc on Monday, and it cast quite a gloom over the people of the district, by whom the late Mr Powel had ever been held in high honour and reverence.

SPECIAL MEMOIR

The late Mr Powell Powel was essentially the "grand old man" of Breconshire, and the embodiment of all that is understood by the term "fine old gentleman." Born in 1822, he had thus reached the age of eighty-five, and maintained to the end the same unclouded intellect as in those days when youth enabled him to apply himself with energy and distinction to the affairs of state and county. He was truly a remarkable man, probably the most remarkable county man of his generation. At the age of twenty-four Mr Powel was elected to the county bench of magistrates, and was thus introduced into that limited circle of county men to whom were entrusted not only the administration of justice but also the government of county matters. He had thus filled the office of magistrate for sixty-one years, and outlived all his earlier and nearly all his later associates on the bench. What developments in county government he had witnessed in his long and eventful career! The erection of substantial and numerous county bridges, the making of good roads, the establishment of a regular police force, the imposition and abolition of road tolls, the provision of improved prison and asylum accommodation, the control of Militia for local defence, and many similar matters all came within the province of those who administered the county affairs.

Mr Powel had lived through the old period of county government by selection, had shared in the controversies which eventually led to a new form dependent upon the popular vote, and had participated in the work of firmly settling the County Council as successor to the old order. In all those changes Mr Powel maintained that dignity of bearing which was to be expected from a gentleman of his

position, experience, and erudition. He held to principles with considerable tenacity, as his numerous public speeches testify, but his was a mind which embarked upon discussion of disputed questions with well-stored brain and properly regulated constitution. Even in those days when Mr Powel, in pursuit of political honours, appeared at the hustings, and faced opposing crowds more often swayed by passion rather than reason, he was able to command the general esteem of the people by the force of his dignity and intellect. Whether in the heat of political disputes, or in the calmer atmosphere of the council chamber, or in giving encouragement and friendly advice in agriculture, Mr Powel was always a commanding figure, and his opinions were always listened to with the respect born of confidence. He was essentially a neighbourly man, as his friends in the Castle Madoc district, as well as many of the older inhabitants of Brecon to whom he was known, will readily testify. The passing away of such a man, even if by reason of advanced years he had disappeared from active participation in local affairs, is most sincerely to be regretted. He had lived a long, useful, public life, and, as the squire of Castle Madoc, had done his duty faithfully and well, taking a fatherly interest in the welfare of his neighbours, doing good for the sake of doing it, and thereby earning the reverence and affection of all who had the privilege of knowing him. Of his family, it was said by a writer who lived before Mr Powel's time that "the distinguishing characteristics of the family for several generations has been that of plain, unaffected country gentlemen, hospitable to strangers, neighbours, and friends, and charitable to the poor." Those who knew Mr Powell Powel will say that he worthily upheld this trait in the family history.

The Castle Madoc family is one of antiquity, and Hugh Howell Powel, born 1683, of Castle Madoc, was lineal descendant and representative of the Powels of Castle Madoc, who derived descent through Llewelyn and Einon Sais from Bleddyn ap Maenarch, lord of Brecknock. This Hugh Howell Powel married Margaret, daughter and heir of Walter Thomas, of Talwenfawr, and had two sons and five daughters. His eldest son and heir was Charles Powel, who was the last direct male descendant of the Powels of Castle Madoc, and of whom there is an excellent oil painting at Castle Madoc. This Charles Powel was High Sheriff in 1738, and married Catherine, daughter of Hugh Penry, of Cefnbrith, by whom he had two daughters, both of whom died unmarried. He died in 1796, and the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that period describes him as "A gentleman whose virtues justly entitle him to general respect. He was an active and indefatigable promoter of every design conducive to public good, and to the comfort and happiness of the labouring part of the community. The Agricultural Institute in the county of Brecon owes its origin in a great measure to the exertion of this worthy man. On the re-establishment of the constitutional defence of our county – the Militia – his patriotic zeal manifested itself in enforcing the law relating to the national object, and afterwards bore a principal commission in the service." It is worthy of note, having regard to the part played by the late Mr H. Powell Powel in the dissemination of knowledge in agriculture, that this Charles Powel in the year 1755 presided at a meeting in Brecon and actually proposed the resolution establishing the Brecknockshire Agricultural Society, and that he took the keenest interest in the Society's welfare up to the time of his

death. The Breconshire Militia was embodied in 1760, and the principal officers who were on duty with the regiment at Yarmouth in that year were this Charles Powel as lieutenant-colonel, with Howel Harris as major, all under the command of Colonel Sir Edward Williams, of Gwernyfed.

Upon the death of Charles Powel the Castle Madoc estates were inherited by his daughter Catherine, who died unmarried in 1798. They afterwards descended to the Rev. Hugh Price, M.A., rector of Rottendon, and Little Ilford, Essex, who then became of Castle Madoc. He married in 1773 Sarah, daughter of John Turner, of King's Stanley, and died in 1803, and was buried at Llandefaelog Churchyard; he held preferment in Gloucestershire, and was a man of some note. The Rev. Hugh Price was succeeded in the estates by his only surviving son, Hugh Price, of Castle Madoc, J.P. and D.L. and High Sheriff of Breconshire, 1815. This Hugh Price was in the 11th Light Dragoons (now Hussars) and was distinguished as a soldier. He served in the Peninsular War, was present at the battle of Salamanca and other engagements, receiving a medal and two clasps. His name is also honourably mentioned in the Records of the 11th Dragoons; he was thanked by General Ponsonby for conspicuous courage during the retreat from Burgos, for by the check he then gave to the French he saved a possible catastrophe. He was married to Sophia, youngest daughter of Francis Brodie, Esq., and died in 1856, being buried at Llanfihangel-fechan Churchyard with his wife, who died in 1845. Of this marriage there were two sons and two daughters. The surviving son at his father's death was Hugh Powell, the subject of the present sketch, who dropped the name of Price, and assumed that of Powel in 1875. Mr Powell Powel (now deceased) married as his first wife Mary Alicia (youngest daughter of David Thomas, of Welfield, Radnorshire), who died in 1880. He married secondly Selina, daughter of the late Thomas Frewen, of Birkwell, Sussex, and Cold Overton Hall, Leicestershire, and widow of Charles Vickers, of Wormstall, Berks. By his first marriage Mr Powel has surviving issue one son, Hugh Penry Powel, J.P., of Brighton, who married in February, 1884, a daughter of Basil E.A. Cochrane, Esq., by whom he has two sons and two daughters.

The late Mr Hugh Powell Powel was J.P. and D.L. for Breconshire, for which county he also served the office of sheriff in 1870, and J.P. for Berks. He was a most active county justice, and for many years was president of the Breconshire Chamber of Agriculture, and much added to the value and interest of the debates by participating in them. He was a strong Gladstonian Liberal down to the time when that great statesman introduced his Home Rule Bill and so divided his party. Mr Powel, as many another supporter of Mr Gladstone, greatly felt the severance of this political connection; but he threw in his lot with the Hartingtonian section of the Unionists against the Home Rule Party. As age crept on he gradually dropped out of the ranks of those who actively participated in the political campaign, but up to the last he was not slow of interest in the trend of political events in the county.

In the year 1868 Mr Powell Powel (then Price) fought a great political battle with the late Mr Howel Gwyn for the Brecon Borough Parliamentary seat, in which he was

defeated by a majority of 15. A petition was lodged against Mr Gwyn's return, and another election took place, when Lord Hyde (Liberal) won the seat. In less than a year Lord Hyde was called to the House of Lords in succession to his father the great Earl of Clarendon. The borough was therefore called upon to return a third member in three successive years. The Liberals again secured Mr Powell Powel as their champion, whilst the Conservatives nominated Mr J.P.W. Gwynne Holford, of Buckland. The contest was a keen one, and political as well as personal feeling ran high. As the Conservatives had in the previous contest been defeated by the substantial majority of 63, and as the late Mr Powel was held in such high esteem, the Liberals were confident of success, and the night before the poll escorted their champion from the Guild Hall to the top of Pendre with burning torches, amidst a scene of wild excitement. But Brecon had during several contests proved most unsettled in political convictions, and when the poll was declared on the following evening it was found that Mr Powel had been defeated by 34 votes. This defeat did not suffice to drive the late Mr Powel from the political arena. In that great struggle which Mr Fuller Maitland waged for the defeat of the noble House of Tredegar, and the political sway it had so long held in the county, he had no more stalwart supporter than Mr Powel proved himself to be. He continued this support, and was recognised throughout the county as the leading Liberal, down to the time of the Home Rule split.

The late Mr Powel's beautiful Breconshire seat, Castle Madoc, is about six miles from Brecon, in the parish of Llanfihangel-fechan, in the Hundred of Merthyr Cynog. It was built in 1588 by Thomas Powel, out of the ruins, it is said, of a castellated mansion which stood there; with a keep for prisoners, upon an elevated mound close by.

Brecknock Bookshelf

A Selection of New and Recent Titles

Leonard, Martin and Griffion, Mark

Epynt: A Stage Rallying History

This book attempts to cover the rallying years of Epynt in as comprehensive a way as possible. Epynt has hosted motorsport events for many years. From the earliest motorcycle racing and RAC rallies it has provided a stern test for both man and machine.

2006 £35:00

Dates for your Diary

2007

May 10th (Thursday) Builth Wells and District Heritage Society. *Walk and Talk: the listed buildings of Builth*. Meet at the Groe Car Park 6:00pm. All information Mr Chris Mainwaring Tel. 01982 552689.

May 10th (Thursday) Llangynidr Local History Society. *AGM to be followed by a talk by Professor David Austin "The Archaeological Excavation at Strata Florida."* Wendy Toomey will also submit her report on the latest "dig" at Blaen-y-cwm farmhouse in the Glaisfer valley. Llangynidr Village Hall 7:30pm. All information Mrs Christine Porter Tel. 01874 730354.

May 15th (Tuesday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Non-conformity in Brecon. An evening walk guided by Mr Peter Powell, visiting some of Brecon's many chapels.* Meet at Watergate 6:00pm. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

May 16th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mr Ken Jones "Major David Pryce, 18th Century Soldier and Scholar."* The Clarence Hall, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

May 17th (Thursday) Llangammarch Wells Local History Society. *Mr Roger Raikes "St. Gastyn and Early Christianity in Brycheiniog."* Alexandra Hall, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Pamela Lewis Tel. 01591 610479.

May 21st (Monday) Powys Family History Society – Brecknock Group. *Speaker: Mr Stuart Wilson who bought a stony field in Monmouthshire and discovered the lost city of Trellech. An amazing story, and an opportunity to see the archaeological progress being made on this site.* Kensington Chapel Schoolroom, Brecon, 7:30pm. All information Mr Philip Evans Tel. 01874 754365 or Mrs Lynda White Tel. 01497 847229.

May 31st (Thursday) Talgarth and District Historical Society. *Blaenavon World Heritage Landscape. Slides and talk by Mr John Evans.* The Rugby Club 7:30pm. All information Mrs Jan Hughes Tel. 01874 711397.

June 2nd (Saturday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *St. Teilo's Church, at St Fagan's Museum. 11:00am Sara Huws, the Museum's officer for Education Interpretation will be our guide at a private viewing of the restoration work in progress. Entry to the museum is free (car parking £2:50). There is an excellent restaurant. As members may wish to spend more time, transport will not be organised but you may contact the secretary if offering, or requiring, a lift.* All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507

June 7th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

June 14th (Thursday) Builth Wells and District Heritage Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mr Chris Mainwaring Tel. 01982 552689.

June 20th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mr Mike Jones "Bowmen of the Rose :Archers of Agincourt."* Scout Hall, Castle Road, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

June 25th (Monday) Powys Family History Society – Brecknock Group. *A.G.M. and Research Evening.* Kensington Chapel Schoolroom, Brecon, 7:30pm. All information Mr Philip Evans Tel. 01874 754365 or Mrs Lynda White Tel. 01497 754365.

June 28th (Thursday) Talgarth and District Historical Society. *Mr Bill Cainan "The Zulu War."* The Rugby Club 7:30pm. All information Mrs Jan Hughes Tel. 01874 711397.

July Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Weston-Super-Mare Family History Fair.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel 01269 825306.

July Talgarth and District Historical Society. *Visit to South Wales Borderers Museum. Date TBA.* All information Mrs Jan Hughes Tel. 01874 711397.

July 1st (Sunday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Jointly, with Llangynidr Local Historians, a day with Mr Richard Hayman (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales) as our guide to archaeological research on the local uplands. Meet 10:30am at car park, north end of Ponsticill Reservoir for a morning walk. 1:00pm lunch at Llangynidr Village Hall (Tel Mr Mike Scott-Archer, 623404 if you wish to book). 2:30pm illustrated talk in the hall on Richard's recent findings.* All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

July 5th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

July 12th (Thursday) Builth Wells and District Heritage Society. *Details to be confirmed but possibly an evening town walk.* All information Mr Chris Mainwaring Tel. 01982 552689.

July 14th (Saturday) South Wales Victorian Society. *"Aspects of Victorian Radnorshire."* *Car-sharing tour to include: visit to Elan Valley dams; lunch at Bryn Afon (former workhouse in Rhayader); Abbey Cwmhir Hall (newly opened this year) and Church; tea at the Metropole, Llandrindod Wells.* All welcome. All information Mr Richard Camp Tel. 01874 636647.

August 2nd (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306

September 6th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Internet Night*. Ystradgynlais Branch Library 7:00pm. All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

September 8th (Saturday) Builth Wells and District Heritage Society. *Full Day Field Trip based on "Industrial South Wales" – a coach trip departing from the Groe car park. Details to be provided nearer the time.* All information Mr Chris Mainwaring Tel 01982 552689.

September 11th (Tuesday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Talk by Revd. Herbert Hughes "Howell Harris – Man of God with feet of clay."* 7:00pm Plough Chapel Schoolroom, Brecon. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

September 19th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Val Williams – in costume – "A Personal History from the 1851 Census."* Scout Hall, Castle Road, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

October 4th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Bring Along a Tree Evening*. Ystradgynlais Branch Library 7:00pm. All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

October 11th (Thursday) South Wales Victorian Society. *10:30 for 11:00am at The Diocesan Centre, Brecon Cathedral. Talk on what the Victorians spared and repaired. "The Medieval Church Screens of Brecknock." Mr Richard Wheeler, author of the recently published important book on the Screens of the Southern Marches. This will be followed by a tour of Brecon Cathedral and, after lunch, a walking tour of significant Victorian buildings in Brecon.* All information Mr Richard Camp Tel. 01874 636647.

15th October (Monday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Mr Mark Lodwick, Finds Liaison Officer from the National Museum will talk and answer questions on: "The Portable Antiquities Scheme, recent local finds and research, and the interest in metal detecting."* 2:30pm Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

October 17th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mrs Margaret Gregory "The Monmouthshire Police Force."* The Clarence Hall, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

November 1st (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

November 13th (Tuesday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Talk by Mr Ken Jones "Election Fever! Five Parliamentary elections in Brecon 1865-9."* The Guildhall, Brecon, 7:00pm. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

November 21st (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mr Robin Williams "Newport: One Hundred Years of Engineering."* The Clarence Hall, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

December 6th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Annual Dinner.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

2008

February 18th (Monday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Illustrated talk by Mrs Wendy Camp "Francis Kilvert – his pastoral life."* Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery 2:30pm. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

February Half-Term. Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Closing date for entries in the Junior Schools History Competition (to be awarded in March).*

**PRODUCED BY POWYS LIBRARY
AND ARCHIVE SERVICE.**