

# Cyrus Meredith talks transcript.

There are about 24 pages here which are transcripts of cassette tapes which recorded the talks given by Cyrus Meredith about the roads, turnpikes, travel, and people in the Mid-Wales area, especially concentrating on Llanidloes. Transcribing the tapes must have been a laborious and difficult task, hence the many corrections, and amendments to the finished text. I don't know when Cyrus gave the talks, but I guess that it was probably in the 1970's. I have not been able to discover much about Cyrus, but I can see that he had a very detailed knowledge of the area and the people. The knowledge and information contained in this transcript is invaluable material for researchers, because much of the content is first hand information, and this may be the only source.

Last week, as you no doubt remember, we <sup>went</sup> ran over the story of the first Methodists Evangelists coming into this area, and please remember that at that time, and for a long time afterwards, it was a movement within the Church. They did not accept the name non-conformist, but they were really, as I said last week, a <sup>e</sup> pep group as it were inside the Church and we have to pick up the story again later on, but I tried to deal with it in some fullness because it is such an important landmark in our history. I have here a little leaflet which some of you have got, I'm sure, - this is Mr. Hugh Jenkins' booklet which was issued at the time of the centenary of the Wesleyan chapel in Llawryglyn in 1973 and in it he ~~was~~ <sup>relates</sup> through the coming of the Methodists to Llawryglyn as a background to the study of this Cause in the last century, but the early pages here are a very good summary of much of what we were doing last week about Howell Harris in the parish of Trefeglwys. If you haven't got a copy of this, I would advise you to beg, borrow or steal one. Well, as I say, we touched on that subject last week and James Beaumont's letter about his reception in Llanidloes and Trefeglwys, and the replies to the Bishop of Bangor's queries of 1749.

Now this evening I want to <sup>deal with roads</sup> pick up the question of the roads of this district to begin with, and then we will pass on to something else afterwards. I want you to remember that when we were talking about Howell Harris here in the middle of the 18th century, in the 1750s, there was practically no wheeled traffic - it was almost all walking or horseback. Someone told us, towards the end of the century, that there were only two coaches and they were private ones in the whole of Montgomeryshire. Anybody going anywhere, went on horseback if it was a long ride, or they walked if it was a short one. Prof. Dodd wrote about two years before he died that in the middle of the 18th century a Welsh journey was a bye-word. Gentlemen naturally went on horseback



and the family coach was still restricted to short journeys in level country - around about the Welshpool area or ~~pp~~ in Flintshire or on the coast of North Wales, but not here in Montgomeryshire. Now riders took short cuts and they used the bridle roads - even though it meant riding through falls, even on the biggest rivers and I was told last week that one or two people would like a pointer for places we are talking about because they take a little time to find them on the map. Well there is Llanidloes. Well here, beyond Llangurig at ~~Book~~ <sup>Galed</sup> Rhydd ~~Garreg~~, there's a bridge today but Rhydd <sup>galed</sup>, of course, is a hard ford - a hard bottomed ford, a rocky one, so that tells us that at one time you had to pass through the Wye at that point.

I can remember as a small boy driving with my father through the river at Dolwen - it was a wide ford there and there was ~~just~~ a footbridge with a handrail for pedestrians. Similarly, ~~Just~~ near Pen<sup>crayn</sup>verigin, also ~~up here~~ <sup>going</sup> beyond Llangurig ~~going~~ across towards Glangwy and Troedyresgair, there was a ford ~~there~~, there was a footbridge I am told about the time of the first World War and it was a very nasty ford indeed to cross when the Wye was in flood. We shall hear a little later this evening that there was a ford by Glangwden, there was a ford at Cerrist and complaints about the condition of the footbridge along side. I am sorry to say that one of the last of these footbridges which was up the Severn valley near Rhydyronnen, has gone. Very very simple, Pombren - wooden bridge ~~and~~ that's the sort of thing a home made bridge, and it was across the river ~~there~~ just where Mr. Edmunds has his ponies up the Severn valley. Now I want to look at one or two travellers who were here - people who did leave some record of their journey. Well in 1754, what I might call the Howell Harrés period, Dr. Pocock, Bishop of ~~Ossory~~ <sup>Ossory</sup> in Ireland, ~~he~~ came through Llanidloes and he left a brief record. Eight miles from Newtown we came to

Llanidlos on the Severn, a small, poor town - shame! - in which most of the shops are kept by the tradesmen of Newtown, and are open only on market days, which are kept for the sale of meat, bread and catt~~le~~, veal sells two shillings a quarter, kid - young goat - six pence, butter 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. Mutton is dear - poor, small sheep selling for £6 a score, and mutton when they have it for 1/8 to 4/- a quarter and very small. They have a manufacture of flannel here - it is the last town on this side of Plynlimon hill and is but 17 computed miles - I don't know where from - but 30 measured from the western ocean - from over at Aberystwyth. They have a mayor and burgesses, put in by the Lord of the manor (perhaps you will remember that statement, we shall be talking about it I hope next week), There are copper mines 3 miles off in the parish of \_\_\_\_\_ that is us of course, \_\_\_\_\_ that's not a bad attempt at Geufron, and a great number of lead mines particularly on the Bringle (I think he means the Rheidol) - a little rivalet near Llyn Birddyn pool - well I think he means the Rheidol and he's brought the Rheidol which it does'nt come out of the lake Llyn Dege<sup>u</sup>lyn - I think that's what he is trying to get at. - which belong to the Mine Adventurers and there are lead mines all the way down there in that valley from Begeulyn behind Plynlimon down towards Ponterwyd. On the 9th, I went up the hill to the north - (it was'nt to the north, I think you will agree with me in a minute) he went up that dreadful road from Short Bridge between White House and Cae(rhaf. I went up the hill to the north in order to go to the rise of Severn. I saw to the right over the river Llwydiarth - (that's not a bad attempt at Clywedog, is it?) some lead mines beyond Mr. Glyn's of Glyn House and further on a hill called Gaer Fychydd - I think he means Gaer Fach, which must have been the name used in those days for Penygaer, Crowlwm. I saw some lead mines beyond Mr. Glyn of Glyn's and further on a hill called Gaer Fychydd on the top of which is



a circular rampart of stones - well that clears it! And of course, if you were riding up past Penybank and along the ridge towards Maenhinon, you do look down and see Glyn and you do see the mines at Bryntail from that top road, and that, I think, is where he went, up that way to Plynlimon. That's Dr. Pocock, Bishop of *Ossory in Ireland*

Four years later in 1758, a mining engineer called Francis Thomson came from Derbyshire and he was finding his way through to the lead mines at Cwm Ystwyth. I remember last winter Mr. Radford telling me that some of these strange names that we've got here locally could well be Derbyshire names, Derbyshire mining. There was a contact between that area and this - here is Francis Thomson coming through. Well, he rode on horseback from Shrewsbury to Welshpool and Newtown and he noted there that they had a market hall. He also noted that coal costs 25/- per ton in Newtown. Then he came up towards Llanidloes and he noted that we had a <sup>good</sup> ~~got~~ market Hall - obviously a man with the right ideas - and he noted that coals here cost 30/- per ton, so there was an extra 5/- for bringing the coal up from Newtown to Llanidloes. Now the landlord of the Inn, probably The Lion would be standing in 1756, advised him to go no further that evening but to put up for the night and he would give him a guide next day. Well next day, he and his guide, ~~they~~ travelled very friendly as far as 'Glangurig'. Well they went to "Glangurig" no doubt they passed up by Penygreen, Felindre and the Glynbrochan route. And there at Llangurig, I don't know whether it was the Black Lion or the Blue Bell, ~~but~~ they had a glass of brandy at 6p a tot and the landlord of the Inn lent the guide a strong staff about 5 foot long, well piped and with a brass cap on the top of it and they set off, <sup>no doubt</sup> /through the *Bachno Wye* by <sup>Cruglyn</sup> Penygrigyn and up past Glangw

*Llangurig*

and Troedyresgair and up that valley, over the top, down towards Lluest dolgwiell and then they would get into the Ystwyth valley. Now the rest of his note is outside our area, but I am going to tell you because I think it is rather interesting. When they got into the Ystwyth valley, they stopped in a little hut which the guide said was a public house - "the poorest place within that I have ever entered for a public one. Inside were three women seated on a bench of turfs - and those of you who have seen blocks of peat will realise it was a wall of peat built up and they were sitting on it as on a bench - with a small tub before them into which they put the wool that they were picking for their business is the making of flannel." and here in this little hut he was given some barley bread and oat bread, "as thin as paste board and as hard for they dry it up in the roof of the house" It must have been like a biscuit - ships biscuit - and they could't understand a word that Thomson said to them - they were monoglot Welsh people, and at this point the guide left him and returned to Llanidloes - not a bad walk really, all the way from the Lion, right through Llangurig over the top, down into the Ystwyth valley and back again.

Well I've got another story of a walk, much the same period, and it was preserved in a drawer full of papers at Pantdrain. The Prices of Pantdrain had lived there for several <sup>generations</sup> ~~centuries~~ and the late Mr. Tom Price's father was Churchwarden at Llangurig for sixty years. There's a tablet in the church which tells you that • Sixty years Churchwarden - and his father before him had been a warden and overseer in Llangurig and they had this drawer stacked full with what were tremendously interesting documents. I was allowed to borrow a few and after the death of both Mr. Price and Mrs. Price, thanks to the kind offices of Mr. Bryl Evans and other people, we got hold of these documents and took them over to the National Library in Aberystwyth.



They are there now. And this brief note - a small piece of paper - and it said:- 1798, March. The Parishioners of the parish of Llangurig to Evan Evans - it's a bill -  
 For a journey to Merthyr Tidfield (2) to search for David Thomas.  
 Expenses. At the Newbridge on Wye, Ale 2p, bread & cheese 3p  
 At Builth<sup>h</sup> Night's lodging 1/6, breakfast at the Inn 6p  
 At Brecon Dinner and Ale 1/2p Chapel Nantyrhyd Ale 2p  
 bread and cheese 3p. Merthyr, Ale 2p.

Return for home: At Brecon dinner and Ale 1/-p  
 Capel Cwan; night's lodging 1/4; Capel Uchaf, Breakfast 6p;  
 At Builth, dinner and ale 1/2. At Newbridge on Wye, night's  
 lodging, 1/4. Rhayader, breakfast, 6p. Total 10 shillings.  
 Lost of time, 5 days. 5/- Total bill 15 shillings.

And on the back is written :- A Bill from Evan Evans,  
 Hafodfraeth. That is written by one of the Prices to say what  
 it was. You will notice there was no stabling of a pony, ther's  
 no feeding of a pony - he must have walked - a round trip, I  
 have worked it out, of 120 miles. The first day Llangurig to  
 Builth 23 miles; the second day right over the Eppynt, that  
 mountain behind Builth, 36 miles, and probably slept in Merthyr.  
 The third day Merthyr to Lower Chapel, coming back, 25 miles;  
 Lower Chapel to Newbridge, near 16 miles; and on the last day  
 Newbridge to Llangurig, 18 miles. We don't know what David  
 Thomas had done, we don't know why they wanted him in Llangurig,  
 and we don't know whether they were <sup>successful</sup> but I do hope  
 that journey had not been in vain. That was 1798. Now there  
 are lots of old roads around here that go <sup>as</sup> straight as the crow  
 flies, straight as you can get, from A to B. I mean <sup>F</sup> from  
 Llanidloes ~~here~~, if you wanted to get over in the Aberystwyth  
 direction the simplest thing to do walking or on a pony would  
 be to go up Penygreen Road, Felindre, climb pp there by Cefn  
 chapel, straight along the ridge, you come down and cross the  
 Bidno and then ~~get~~ get out on to the Llangurig Road this side of

Glansevern Arms, near the Plynlimon Cafe as it is now. That is one of the direct routes. Another one was the road that people followed up this way past where the school is now - they would go up as far as Glandulas, Pentre, and then turn up the river there at Pentre, cross a ford by Penpompren and come by the mill, and then from the Mill there were roads radiating, one coming back across the main road to Bont farm, another one going up on to the hill and another one following the glen through what is ~~now~~ Cwmbelan. These roads wandered about, regardless of the route that's taken today. Other people coming here from the hills the other side beyond Glandulas Caravan camp, they would come straight down the hill, and I remember in my childhood there was a footbridge that was much used, ~~in~~ Lower Glandulas land, ~~coming across~~ and people came down over the river and into the town that way, taking a direct route. This route that I spoke of going over the top by Cefn chapel, it went very close to Maesybrynner and Edward Hamer, the Historian, tells us that just by Maesybrynner there was a pub, Tavern Y Cych, the Sow Inn, which was much frequented by travellers. You see they needed a drink after they had walked up there on the top. Well, that was the sort of way they went. It's very hard to find a sort of unregenerate road to mention to you today because the Montgomeryshire County Council have done such splendid work on our roads - the old County Council - I think we've got some of the best bye-roads in the whole of Wales - and farmers have done up their own approaches and ~~it's difficult~~, but this afternoon I was down at Four Crosses looking at an empty house there with a mile length drive and that reminded me of the sort of roads I would like to talk to you about. It never had any tarmac on it - it was one series of large potholes filled with dirty water and I crawled in the car at about 2 miles an hour along it. And that is what our roads were like. n



It's very hard to understand that until the days of the Tar Macadam, there were ~~these~~ potholes all over the roads and they were very, very narrow, because there was a grass verge and then a gutter and then the road with a crown on it, and I can remember in the early days of motoring going with my father and my brother towards Llangurig and we came up behind Mr. Middleton in his baker's covered cart and he was deaf, and my father blew the horn because <sup>the baker</sup> he was in the middle of the narrow road between ~~here and Llangurig~~ <sup>the road</sup> and at last I, or my brother, I forget which, jumped out and ran past him and asked him to please go to the side of the road, because we couldn't pass. That was between here and Llangurig. When the Methodists in Llandinam built their first meeting house (while they were still members of the Church,) they built a meeting house on the spot where the village school now stands and that was Mr. Breeze's garden and the Deeds tell us that this garden is bounded on the west side by the footpath leading to the Churchyard at Llandinam and on the south side by the highway leading from the village of Llandinam ~~over~~ <sup>Cefn</sup> to Newtown and those of you who know Llandinam village will know that if you pass the school you get into the most appalling little lane ~~at the head there~~, and that was the main road from Llandinam to Newtown. And it went climbing up there, past where Plasdinam is now, up towards Little London, and there was an Inn there - the Cross Keys - and the cottage still bearing the name - and then over Penstrowed hill and down towards <sup>Newtown</sup> Llandinam. It was a hilly route but that was the direct route.

On the Llandinam Enclosure maps which I shall show you, I hope, before the end of this class, there is a road ~~here~~ coming up from Glanfeinion - (here is Llandinam and there is Glanfeinion - and there are the Llandinam hills and there is a road marked over the top there,) past Borth and up past Cae Lluest and on the map it is clearly marked "To Llanbadarn Fynydd" so that anybody going from here went straight over the top to Llanbadarn Fynydd, and ~~coming up here~~ at Lliidiartywaen the road <sup>which</sup> that goes from the Talbot near Croesffynnon and over the Pegwns, that has written on it "Road to Penybont" and you know Penybont is beyond Abbey Cwmhir ~~down there~~ near Crossgates and that is the road over the top of the Llandinam hills, marked "Road to Penybont" - people just went over the top. Over here in Carno, people coming from Carno to Llanidloes, and John Marsh the Town Clerk <sup>of Llanidloes</sup> went to live in Carno and he came over ~~here~~ to his office, which was ~~the~~ room behind the present Post Office, he came over the top and he would just take this route from Carno ~~up here~~ past where the <sup>of</sup> Tabe<sup>l</sup> chapel is now, down to Gleiniant and so to Llanidloes. And a man writing in Carno about ~~this~~ Trawscoed area referred to the road to Llanidloes, so it must have been known as the road to Llanidloes - the one coming over the top. Unfortunately, you can't drive along it today because there's a piece missing on it which they have <sup>not</sup> done up. You can go to Tabe<sup>l</sup> chapel and <sup>but</sup> just beyond you have to give <sup>it</sup> up, ~~you cannot take a car there anyway.~~ Well I hope I've shown you that there were a lot of these cross country routes that were in use. Now the roads themselves, they've always been neglected and in the days of Queen Mary Tudor 1555, they tried to put the responsibility on the parish and from 1555 onwards the parish had to look after the roads. They jointly looked after the main roads and the various <sup>units that a</sup> localities, the smaller areas or townships, looked after the parish roads. Well it fell very hard on a parish like



Llangurig. They had to look after the main road from the Eisteddfa boundary ~~right~~ down the valley ~~here~~, ~~right down~~ as far as Glandulas<sup>1</sup>. That was their pigeon. Llanidloes, on the other hand, only had from Glandulas through the town to Dolwen, and you were in Llandinam after that. ~~Well~~ <sup>B</sup> because it fell heavily upon them, they were badly neglected ~~and~~ <sup>y</sup> every occupant of a holding of land worth £50 or <sup>more</sup> ~~over~~ had to supply a cart, a team of horses and two men, and every other able bodied man in the parish was to give his labour, and that service had to be rendered free for four days in the year. You think of the people in Llangurig repairing all that road and four days doing it. <sup>A</sup> All they did, of course, was to take a cart load of stones from the river and then tip some into barrows and tip them into the potholes and that was ~~to do~~ <sup>it</sup> - ~~you~~ think of the distance that had to be repaired. The roads were shocking and then when a cart came and got into the loose stones in the pothole, they all shot out and it was as bad as ever afterwards. Until you come to the days of McAdam - not tar Mcadam, just Mcadam <sup>they</sup> ~~work~~ broke the stones and then they were packed down. You've <sup>had</sup> got to break them if you pack them, putting them in as they are, without being broken was no good at all. Now this was statute labour that they had to do. After some years they made it six days ~~people~~ had to do it, ~~and not four~~, but that was'nt much good either. Also, by the time we reach the middle of the 18th century, the Howell Harris period ~~of last week~~, the construction of roads and bridges so worried them in Wales that it became the responsibility of Turnpike Trusts. These Turnpike Trusts were to look after ~~the~~ roads and ~~the~~ bridges and there were several Acts of Parliament - lots of Acts of Parliament - establishing these Trusts. They had one in the Shropshire area and they gradually came towards us - the Shrewsbury one was 1758 and we got the first one in Montgomeryshire in 1769. That <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ an

people were still liable to give their services - the tolls didn't really <sup>fair</sup> pay enough for it. One of the early roads that was turnpiked is the road from Newtown, through Aberhafesp to Llanwnog. It is still very twisting and it has a great many ups and downs in it. That was a road that was improved. The road from Llandinam <sup>up</sup> here is a much later construction. It's got long straight stretches and it's pretty flat. That was a completely different road made at a later date. If you want to know what these early turnpike roads were like, you can find an unspoiled portion if you go to Cwmbelan and turn up on the right, just as you leave the village, and all along the side of the hill there is a road ~~running~~ <sup>past</sup> there, going through a small farm just beyond and above Cwmbelan and comes <sup>out</sup> down again near Bwlchgarreg, ~~and~~ <sup>that</sup> that will show you what a turnpike road was like - how narrow and how very bad it was. Later on, of course it was by-passed by the <sup>present</sup> modern road. Incidentally, ~~here is the river Dulas coming down, as I said,~~ <sup>the</sup> the old road used to go up ~~here~~ by Penpompren and cross and there was that road up there to Cwmbelan another road going to the top of the hill, another coming over here to the Bont farm, and then in the heyday of turnpikes they ran the road up here and made a new bridge like that and you cut that lane, and you cut that lane, and join that one. And ~~now~~ you see they are doing it yet again - they are coming up here to the bridge and going like this, this time, so it is quite a history book of roads round about Cwmbelan. But while you are motoring now you realise that this road is entirely new and cuts the road to the Bont farm and that cut's going up there & joins further on. Well <sup>in</sup> 1769 then, we had this Act, and they divided Montgomeryshire up into three districts - three areas. One was the road from Welshpool up



by Brynderwen bridge, <sup>near Llanhermille</sup> both sides of the river Severn to Newtown, Penstrowed, Llandinam by Berthddu to Llanidloes and thence through Llangurig to 'Steddfa, that's the road going <sup>through</sup> up to Cwmbelan. That was one of the roads. Another road that they turnpiked ~~then~~ in the very beginning 1769, was from Llanwrin to Machynlleth and over the h  ll to Llanidloes. In other words, that road over Dylife and Staylittle ~~way~~ was a turnpike road from the early days and you can get a very good idea of what those roads were like if you go to Staylittle, ~~come up here~~ <sup>go</sup> to Staylittle, and instead of going to Dylife, take the road to Rhiwdyfeity, leave your car in the yard of Rhiwdyfeity - you <sup>can</sup> see a milestone in the yard and open the gate and go through and you are on the <sup>old</sup> turnpike road. It's unbelievable because it's just hacked out of the rock and it just runs right along the top of the ridge and that was a road for which you had to pay a toll from Llanidloes to Machynlleth in 1769. The third district they had was round about Llanfyllin. Now we were very, very lucky ~~here~~ in having only these three districts. ~~Down~~ in Radnorshire and ~~down~~ in Breconshire they had far too many districts and each district had its own ~~toll~~ <sup>ticket</sup> - gate - and of course if you were going a long journey in Radnorshire you might pass through six different districts and pay six times. If you started off in Welshpool and came to Llanidloes, you were in the same district all the way, so that the one ticket you got would take you through every gate. That is why we had <sup>one reason</sup> no Rebecca Riots in Llanidloes, while they had lots of them in Rhayader and other places. People here had nothing to complain about, but of course they wanted to get through as many gates as possible in a day and if a man <sup>was</sup> going to Llanymynech for <sup>home</sup> nine - a local farmer - he would get down to the first gate ~~down~~ <sup>at</sup> the bottom of the Lower Green - he'd get there just before midnight and as soon as midnight had passed and they



agreed that it was Monday or Tuesday, off he would go with his ticket and that would take him through all the gates and he would get a long way in the one day. Bear that in mind that these Trusts were few in this area - only three- but very numerous in other counties. Now they appointed about 200 Trustees, and why of earth <sup>did</sup> they had so many, to run these roads, and it's quite a roll call of people in this area. Thomas Bowen of Tyddyn, Thomas Bowen of Tyddyn, Junior; Price Davies of Maesmawr, John Davies of Aberbiga, John Edwards of Clochfaen - he must have been a tenant I suppose there - John Edwards of Garth, Richard Evans of Llanwnog, Edward Evans of Glyn, John Herbert of Parc, William Howell of Llanidloes, the Rev. John Humphreys of Trefeglwys Robert Ingram (that would be Old Hall) Lieutenant Colonel Valentine Jones ( he was the man who when he'd gone up one grade and become a General, he built the Trewythen) Evan Jones, the <sup>of Trewythen and</sup> Vicar, Wythan Jones - his brother, - the Rev. Roderick Jones of Llanwnog, Roderick Jones of Llanidloes, Thomas Lloyd of Llwynhyddod, Edward Lloyd of Berthlwyd, Thomas Marsh of Penrhuddlan Thomas Marsh, the younger, George Meers, David Owen of Glandulas Richard Owen of the same, Owen Owen of Glyngynwydd, ~~up the long length on the way to Llangurig, under the old railway line,~~ <sup>was</sup> and that house there, Glyngynwydd, is the home of the Owens, <sup>later</sup> the Humphreys Owens of Glansevern, Berriew, who owned this land in Llangurig and they also had land ~~right~~ up there towards Manod, hence the Glansevern Arms on the banks of the Wye - very confusing. <sup>name</sup> John Price of Pantdrain, the Rev. Edmund Price of Llangurig, Baggot Reed of Llandinam Hall, Morris Stephens of Llanidloes, Morris Stephens of Berthddu, Richardswancott of Llanwnog, John Tilsley of Llandinam. Those are some of the trustees <sup>among</sup> of the 200. They <sup>well</sup> had toll gates and they could charge at the toll gates and I will give you the charges in a moment, but on this <sup>a</sup> map of Llanidloes made in 1823 I think, <sup>can</sup> here you see



<sup>Gwyn</sup>  
 the town and here is the ~~Clywedog~~ valley, here goes down towards  
~~Berthlwyd and round Dol-Llys way.~~ T.G. - Toll gate - just  
 over the Long Bridge, TG Old Toll Gate, near where Mr. Gareth  
 Morgan used to live, just past Mr. Dewi Davies' house there.  
 TG - toll gate here beyond Penygreen, that is the cottage still  
 standing <sup>at</sup> of the corner there where Dolenog is now. Another  
 Toll Gate <sup>near</sup> ~~up here~~ by Glandulas. Incidentally, you see the  
<sup>near Dol Llys</sup>  
 bend in the river ~~there~~, an enormous bend, there was a flood  
 and it broke through ~~like that~~, and went down towards Berthlwyd,  
 and all this part remained a backwater with moorhens ~~in~~ and they  
 are now making it into a grave for motor cars! That is rather  
 off the point but it just shows you that you can see that bend  
~~there~~ if you go along beyond the cemetery and up on the hillside  
<sup>you can see</sup>  
~~- here is the bend, this is where the river used to come round~~  
<sup>near Dol Llys Hall</sup>  
~~there is a double hedge which comes round here past the~~  
 electricity sub-station, and <sup>beyond</sup> here is the place they are filling  
 up with motor cars, just ~~an old ditch because it broke through~~  
~~and made this new course.~~ From this map you can realise that  
 the breaking through was sometime after 1830 and it did  
 another breaking through <sup>the time</sup> ~~at that same flooded time~~ up near  
<sup>there</sup>  
 Dolenog, and if you were to go wandering about here now, it  
<sup>you can see that the way has</sup>  
~~has now broken through like that,~~ and left this curious island  
<sup>there</sup>  
 with again <sup>lots</sup> of moorhens living ~~on that side.~~

~~Anyway here are the toll gates on that map.~~ Well the Trustees  
 were to re-build the bridges, repair them, widen the roads and  
 put milestones on. <sup>them</sup> You can see a milestone at Rhiwdfyeity,  
 you see several milestones on the road between here and the Van,  
 as well as the milestones on the road to Llangurig. The people  
<sup>of the parish</sup>  
 still had to ~~do this work on the roads,~~ they didn't escape it  
 because the toll was'nt enough to keep the road really in repair  
 The toll just helped to keep them in repair and the lesser roads  
<sup>now remember</sup>  
 were still the parish responsibility. I have found the names



(on the ~~old~~ <sup>turnpike</sup> road beyond ~~Cwm~~ <sup>both on</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>buyard</sup> ~~side~~ <sup>there</sup>)  
of those two houses - Coedcochion Fach, I bet you know where that holding is ~~on the side there~~, and the house that used to be called Penywern - ~~that is~~ <sup>both on</sup> the old road, there. Now the road going <sup>buyard</sup> ~~up~~ towards Llangurig, you must'nt think of it exactly as it is today. On a very old map, I find that the road from Llangurig up the valley went through Ty'nddol farmyard. Well now it is on a higher level, just above the farmyard. Also the map shows that when the road reached the Bidno, it turns up the Bidno and not past Rhosgoch but over the top and came down through Llwyrhyddod. That was the main road. They did'nt mind going up and down. And so it went wandering along, when you got up past Bennett Evans' of Manod and around the corner, you can see the track of the old road below you ~~at~~ intervals all the way to 'Steddfa. It is just a green grassy terrace ~~at~~ a lower level below the road and so it went on to 'Steddfa and then dropped sharply beyond 'Steddfa ~~into~~ the floor of the valley. ~~And~~ Again when you are going to Aberystwyth, if you can take your eyes off the road and look over the edge, you can see the old road as a lane on the floor of the valley, ~~going along~~. The Rev. Richard Warner of Bath, was on a tour through Wales and he spent the night in the hotel at Devil's Bridge in 1797 and they came from Devil's Bridge ~~this way~~ towards Ponterwyd and as you are coming this way the road forks, one bit goes to Ponterwyd and one comes ever towards Dyffryn Castle. We left the Hafod Arms and pursued what the Welsh effect to call the Turnpike road to Llanidloes - he did'nt think much of it ~~did he?~~ for a mile and a half, then he left it and instead of coming to Dyffryn Castell he went to Ponterwyd and round the back of Plynlim. Now what <sup>did they have</sup> ~~have they~~ got to pay? For every horse or any other beast drawing a coach or a chariot or or hearse or a chair, 3p. For every horse or beast drawing a wagon, wain, cart, tumbrill, drag or sledge, two pence.



For every horse or other beast laden or unladen and not drawing anything, one penny. For every drove of oxen, cows, tenpence a score - that's half penny each - for every drove of calves, hogs, sheep, lambs or goats, five pence a score - that's a farthing each. And that's what they had to pay. Now you can see why the drovers had to find a way of moving across from Cardiganshire to England and avoiding all possible toll gates, and if anyone can tell me the route <sup>the drovers</sup> they followed in this area, I think I will give you a £5 note - I have tried so hard to find where they go. A gentleman from Aberystwyth rang up <sup>some</sup> Mrs. Roberts' <sup>some</sup> husband about two winters ago, and ~~put him on to me and~~ neither Mr. Roberts or I could give <sup>him</sup> <sup>no</sup> ~~them~~ any tradition in this area <sup>as to</sup> ~~of~~ where the drovers <sup>travelled</sup> came, but they must have come from Cardiganshire, over the hills and avoiding the toll gates. The top of the Llandinam hills <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ the obvious route to follow - there are tracks up there - but how do they get there - you come from the Ystwyth valley, you dodge the gate ~~here~~ at Botalog, come up Lluestdolgwiel, come down to Llangurig, ~~somehow you could get from there.~~ I am very tempted to think they came somewhere across to Tyliwch some way and near Glanyrafon <sup>y mythenyn</sup> halt there is a ford in the river, Rhyd Y ~~Mythenyn~~ the Ran's ford - and down in the field there is Eisteddle - public house - what it's doing away from the road, down by the river, I don't know. <sup>however</sup> I wonder if they came that way. But no-one can say my grandfather told me that they used to bring cattle that way.

TURNPIKE ROADS

*Some Turnpike roads*

through Trefeglwys to join the road down here, so that <sup>The</sup> road over the top of Gellilefrith was turnpiked in 1773. <sup>The Turnpike Trust</sup> They also turnpiked the road up by the Felindre - they made a bridge there and you had to pay a toll as you came in from Llangurig. People had been using that road through Pencroesau and down past Rhydyronnon - (Mrs. Holmes' house) - down through Glynbrochan, slipped in by Felindre and got into the town without paying a toll. So now ~~they are going to have~~ <sup>they</sup> a toll gate on that road. They also decided to have a toll <sup>gate</sup> on the road from Tylwch to Llanidloes - from Llanidloes to the confines of the county near Tylwch - and from Nantyeleddau, over Waengelli Felin to join the road from Tylwch to Llanidloes. From Nantyeleddau over Waengelli Felin - that was to be a turnpike road with gates and tolls. Well, Waengelli Felin is ~~this~~ <sup>a</sup> flat area just this side of Lliidiartywaen school. It was open common land and there were gates at Lliidiartywaen - the gates of the common - and the road coming over there was to be turnpiked but it started at ~~Nantyeleddau~~ <sup>Nantyclwydiau</sup>. Now Nantyeleddau - ~~if you go~~ <sup>Nantyclwydiau</sup> through Lliidiartywaen and you pass below Wing Cdr. Ryan's house and you ~~pass~~ <sup>pass</sup> Deulah chapel, and you pass the turning to ~~Gogarth~~ <sup>Gogarth</sup> Mill and so on, eventually you do down the hollow and reach a brook and then up zig-zagging to the forest ~~on the road.~~ Well that ~~brook~~ <sup>spot</sup> at the bottom there is Rhyd-y-Clwydiau - that is the ford of the ~~Clwydiau~~ <sup>Clwydiau</sup> so Nant ~~y~~ <sup>Clwydiau</sup> ~~Clwydiau~~ must be the brook they are thinking about and that road was a turnpike road, a toll road. It's in no condition today, so what must it have been like in the 18th century. And you paid your toll at one end, just near Pantydwr shop and this end you paid at a toll gate just at the turning to Mr. Evan Morgan's farm <sup>at</sup> at Bryndu. ~~The~~ <sup>to</sup> top of Bryndu, just ~~where~~ <sup>the</sup> the line goes in - there was a toll house - they would catch you <sup>at</sup> one end or the other



And by placing the tollgate there by <sup>near Bryncku Farm</sup> (Mr. Evan Morgan's) gate they caught both the streams of traffic from Llidiartywaen and from Ty<sup>at</sup>itch, with one gate. That ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> an important point, not to have to pay two gate keepers. They found here <sup>that the</sup> that this toll gate <sup>near Bryncku Farm</sup> there would catch the traffic coming down from <sup>Oakley Park</sup> Dol-Llys and Trefeglwys but by moving the tollgate <sup>near</sup> ~~nearer~~ the bridge, it could serve <sup>those roads</sup> ~~this road~~ and that one, so that you get the tollgate there at a later date. A good many years ago, I was standing on the Long Bridge one day and I met and had a chat with Mr. David Cadman's grandfather. He was then a very old gentleman and I said to him, "Mr. Cadman do you remember the tollgate?" and he said "Of course I do, it was there where the bamboo tree is - the conker tree, the chestnut tree." ~~It~~ <sup>It</sup> had double doors like a stable " he said "I think I can see the woman now with her sleeves rolled up leaning over the door waiting," To him it was completely vivid, this old toll house with two gates, one for each road, and the two gates names are still remembered, <sup>named</sup> the Eastgate and Westgate Street. One day I was looking at a map in Denton Clark's office and it was a matter of the town drains - I don't know what made me look at it - and on the map of the town drains there <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>details</sup> this map. Here's the Long Bridge and the Van Road, there's the Trefeglwys Road and there's the toll bar. It was clearly ~~drawn~~ just where the chestnut tree stands, there was a gate there and a gate there, and a little gate for pedestrians at the side of it and that's the road going down to Mr. Phillip Bennett's house at Frankwell. There used to be a tollgate there at one time, but that was scrapped, and the one by Gareth Morgan's was scrapped and we got this one to serve the purpose. There is the little chapel <sup>2</sup> which is now part of Sandringham. <sup>factory</sup> Now these <sup>coll</sup> strong gate posts ~~there~~ and heavy gates across ~~and when the tollgates were removed in the~~ 1890s, <sup>owned</sup> whoever was then at Cambrian factory must have acquired them

discontinue the lane or way leading from the Short Bridge at Llanidloes by Penrhiw to " By an Act of Parliament that road was blocked and that I think must be the explanation of Highgate. There <sup>should</sup> will be a gate at the bottom and White House used to be called Highgate House and Cae'rhaif were Highgate cottages, - ~~stopping up that road~~. Also they stopped <sup>another</sup> ~~this~~ road, the lane or way leading from Llanidloes to Brynpyllog <sup>over the top of the Gorn,</sup> a road that they were using to dodge the tollgates, and it was to be closed now. On the enclosure maps of Llanidloes, Brynpyllog is the side of the Gorn, <sup>so that</sup> these Trustees knew <sup>Turnpike</sup> if they put a tollgate by Mr. Evan Morgan's lane on Bryndu, <sup>that</sup> what the farmers of Llidiartywaen <sup>near the lane</sup> would immediately do, <sup>from that</sup> would be to go to Cefngwilgi and come down over the top of the Gorn and <sup>along</sup> ~~through~~ what we know as Ysgubor Capel and Well Lane and get into the town that way. So the lane going from Well Lane - <sup>goes</sup> it's under the railway <sup>at one spot</sup> there ~~now~~ - it's a dreadful lane, <sup>to</sup> going up past Ysgubor Capel - ~~and that~~ was closed by Act of Parliament to stop people dodging. Will you please note that there was no road that we call Gorn Road <sup>today</sup> that's a well made road with good gradient, which must have been made by the miners to bring the lead down from the Gorn mines, in that glen. But the road was <sup>old</sup> ~~was~~ over the top - Brynpyllog. I am always interested to think that those <sup>names of the</sup> places are in solemn Acts of Parliament, recorded in London. The road to Penrhiw was blocked and the road over the Gorn <sup>was</sup> blocked. So the Trustees were, as I said, one jump ahead there. There was a gate at one time, too, just this side R. & E. Garages on the Dolwen Road, <sup>near</sup> at Clydfannau. It's ~~always~~ a very smart house, that one is, but in a sale catalogue of 1838, it says "Ornamental and newly erected cottage on the site of the ~~old~~ Toll House" so the Toll house was a simpler dwelling and when they moved the toll house up towards Llanidloes, nearer the coal yard, they got rid of that <sup>near</sup> ~~one~~ at Clydfannau called <sup>old</sup> Bersillio's Toll gate.



~~of that one.~~ I hope now that we've got a little bit of a picture of the network of roads around the town <sup>which</sup> that had tolls taken on them, and all this is ~~in~~ 1769. A lot of us have been brought from childhood to think that the age of stage coaches - we have no idea whether it was 50 years or 500 years - actually the stage coach era in this part of the world couldn't possibly begin until the roads were put into some sort of order. So you are not going to get stage coaches in this district till about 1780 or so and then you see, when the railway came they <sup>came to an end</sup> finished. So the stage coach era around here was very short - a short but a colourful one. Those of you who were at the band concert the other night will remember the "Post Horn Gallop" played by the tutor of the young boy, of course that yard of tin as they called it, was carried by every guard on the coach and they delighted in playing those fanfares as they came into the towns - it must have been an exciting moment when they heard this ~~thing~~ being played somewhere down the Lower Green as ~~the~~ coach came rattling in up to the Trewythen, <sup>and on</sup> going to Llangurig. Now the tolls were put up for auction <sup>by the Tumpike Board</sup> and you offered a sum and you hoped to squeeze the last penny you got and more out of the poor wretches that went through the gates. The Shrewsbury Chronicle 1836 said there would be an auction - the best bidder would get the job, and they gave you an average figure. The Bertwylwyd gate makes about £310, so you paid £310 and you'd get a bit more if you were lucky. The Glandulas gate £218, the Bryndew - that ~~would be the Brynda gate, £144~~ - the Dolhafren - that was the time when it was over here <sup>near</sup> by Mr. Gareth Morgan's - the Dolhafren Gate (not much traffic along that road) £50. The Frankwell one up the Van Road £50. The Wig £50 (Now the Wig Gate, the house is still there - you go through Trefeglwys down towards Caersws and when you get to the top of what they call the Parc pitch before dropping down, there is the house on the left, on old maps it's called "The Gates") Those were the sort of <sup>toll</sup> charges.

made

That is near Bryndewilid the junction

In a later ~~one~~, there's a reference to the Parc Gate - that is at Wig -(or Weeg) and there's <sup>also</sup> Ty'n Y Cwm Gate - well you see we have'nt referred to a gate <sup>up</sup> in the Llangurig area, <sup>and</sup> beyond Llangurig. The Ty'n Y Cwm gate was somewhere near the Plynlimon Cafe, between there and Glansevern Arms, and when I made enquiries I discovered that it is the small house that was for a time used as a garage in connection with Glansevern Arms - it's just this side of the Hotel, on the side of the road. That is the old Ty'n Y Cwm gate house, where the toll gate was and that would catch traffic from Llangurig and people coming over from the Bidno valley.- ~~it would get you there.~~ They tried to place these gates strategically. A man called George Kay writing in 1794 said "The Parish roads of Montgomeryshire, with very few exceptions, are in a most miserable condition" - those are the ones around the villages - "and many of the public roads are little better". And since his previous visit he said "I could see no improvement in the roads, though there is no lack of toll gates. On horseback I could'nt travel two miles an hour, although on good roads in England I could generally go six miles an hour." They must have been in a shocking condition. "There was one practice in the county which I observed that destroyed the roads prpdigously , that is the manner in which the waggon wheels were shod." Because now that we've got turnpike roads we could fairly have waggons on the road. And what he said <sup>was,</sup> is that on the wheels theyhhad tremendous great nails sticking out. Waggon wheels are abundantly broad but the iron rim is driven on in short pieces, ~~whihh~~ large headed nails projecting for two or three inches and they tear up the roads and they add great resistance to the movement. This mode of shoeing wheels is very common in North Wales and may in some degree account for the number of horses used in pulling carts and waggons, as well as the roads being continually broken up. Extraordinary idea



to have nails two or three inches long sticking out of the wheels - goodness knows why - but I can understand they would tear up the roads dreadfully. And that is an observer in 1794. Thomas <sup>Bennant</sup> ~~Perrett~~ the great naturalist, the man who corresponded with Gilbert White of Selbourne, ~~he~~ came through here in 1776 and he was very struck with the beauty of the road coming up from Llandinam, - the vale goes narrow, it is bounded by lofty hills, the lower slopes skirted with beautiful hanging woods, those at Berthlwyd being far the most <sup>stunning</sup>, - I think it is very good that the Dorestry Commission should have kept the beauty of Berthlwyd coppice by planting mixed woods there, so that we have not got just one carpet of dead green there. He said they came up to Llanidloes, a small town with a great market for yarn and the goods were sent down in waggons to Welshpool. He talks about the Church and about lead and slate being found in the hills and he said many of the houses are covered with slates around here or with shingles of wood - well I should have added too that they are also covered with thatch. ~~Here is a picture of Old Cilhaul in Trefeglwys, and you see it is a thatched house and a~~ <sup>artist</sup> ~~man~~ <sup>came</sup> who was here ~~in~~ the town at the beginning of the century - (the bigger copy is missing but on this drawing of Long Bridge, here is the Long Bridge) <sup>the old bridge</sup> ~~he~~ was going to paint when he got back home, ~~so~~ he has written "thatch, ~~thatch~~" on the roof there. I have tried to make a sort of enlargement of that so that you can see better at the back of the room. ~~This is where~~ you come down from the Van Road and turn down past Frankwell - (Phillip Bennett's house) - <sup>old wooden</sup> and there was the bridge into the town. It was quite impossible, of course, to take a waggon over it - the thing would collapse at once - so the waggon had to go through the river and pedestrians only would cross the bridge. And these are the houses he <sup>Bennant</sup> wrote "thatch thatch" across. ~~Perrett~~ adds one remark about us - he said, he is quoting from a writer of earlier days,

he says "Humphrey justly celebrates the fertility of these valleys around here, the stature and the beauty of the inhabitants." That stigmatises them with the character of Adonis. "They are too addicted to useless amusements."

I have here what you may call the A.A. book for 1778. This is the sort of book that a traveller would take in his pocket. This was given to me by the late Mr. John Brown (- Jack Brown you know, he and his brother Willie, had the cabinet makers shop.) It just gives a list of places you would like to go through and notes of them and this <sup>was</sup> published in 1778. It is very nearly 200 years ago and I like to think that somebody carried that on a coach checking up his route on a map and so on. Pennant also said that he called to see Mr. John Evans ~~down~~ at Llanymynech and Mr. John Evans at his own expense was making a beautiful map. Now Mr. John Evans did make this map and before the Ordnance Survey maps were made it was one of the few that we had.

~~It is not terribly accurate~~ this ~~is~~ Cardiganshire, and he had'tnt any time for Cardiganshire, so he left that out.

Dated 1795 - there is Llanidloes, there's Trefeglwys and here we are at Carno and way down towards Machynlleth. He did his best but as I say there were no Ordnance Survey people to help him, so there are a number of odd mistakes. He takes the river from Llidiartywaen, ~~instead of running it down past Glanfeinion to Llandinam,~~ <sup>but with head</sup> he brings it down to Dolwen and around the hill, that sort of thing. I will leave it up there because it's rather interesting. You can see quite distinctly ~~here~~ <sup>down</sup> beyond Llangurig how the road goes up the Bidno and round by Llwynrhyddodan and ~~leaves the river - the road goes over the top there.~~ That's the John Evans Map that Pennant was so interested in. ~~That's~~ only a photograph of it, of course. When the Bishop wrote to

of Banga



<sup>the</sup> these Clergymen in 1749 and asked them all the questions, he said "If I have to write to you, how do I address you - how do I get hold of you - with the greatest safety and expedition" and the Vicar of Trefeglwys said "Write to me, Vicar of Trefeglwys near Llanidloes in Montgomeryshire" The Llandinam Vicar said "Mr. Tilsley at Llandinam in the Montgomeryshire and <sup>Salop</sup> Severn Posts and Llanwnnog said " Write to me per the Salop Post, Montgomery Bag" so what happened of course was that the letters were put into a bag and brought to Montgomery and then distributed from there and given to any carrier who was coming this way, and it might be a fortnight or month before you would get your letter.

1635 a new letter office <sup>was</sup> established in London and there were standard rates, so much a mile and it was worked out on that mileage. I wonder if anyone in the room remembers the milestone at Glandulas that used to say at the bottom "London 199 miles" That was for calculating the postal charges, so that you would know what the rate would be.

1660, King Charles II re-established the postal service and believe it or not, they reduced the price. It was brought down from 6 pence a sheet to three pence a sheet. When it was a sheet, you wrote your letter, then you folded it ~~and folded it like this~~, and tucked it over and sealed it with sealing wax and put the address on it. So it was only one sheet and you could send that - one sheet, formerly it was six pence and then for threepence Marvellous, wasn't it! And as I think I mentioned before, that the horse post came from Welshpool, over to Llangadfan and Llanerfyl and down to Mallwyd and they left it at the Office of the Three Cans Pub and that is why it is <sup>called</sup> Cann Office of the three cans). Miss ~~Edith~~ <sup>fact</sup> ~~Edith~~ <sup>Edith</sup> Roberts, one time of Llangadfan discovered that <sup>fact</sup> in the National Library. Lord Powis, his Agent was going to meet somebody in Llangadfan at the sign of the Three Cans., so that at last we know why it is <sup>called</sup> Cann Office.

There is <sup>are</sup> frequent references to the Office there in the village  
the post office <sup>of Hlangadfan</sup>

The Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, was complaining bitterly  
about getting books <sup>safely</sup> to the Society for the Promotion  
of Christian Knowledge. He was interested in getting Bibles into  
Wales and he said he had great difficulty in sending books to  
Carmarthen, but if parcels were sent to him at Oxford, he would  
send them in six weeks <sup>by the</sup> carrier, who comes from Carmarthen  
to Oxford once every three months, getting them that way. I have  
been distributing some County Historical magazines this evening  
which <sup>came from</sup> went to the printers at Welshpool, they were then taken to  
the County Library at Newtown and I brought 25 of them <sup>up</sup> and  
brought them along here this evening - trying to do what they were  
doing then, distributing them. A little ~~sideline~~ of this

travel too. Sir Clough Williams Ellis of Port Meirion, ~~He~~ said  
that his ancestors, his forebears, going up to Cambridge, would  
go up on pony from Portmadoc, right across Wales to Cambridge.  
And when they ~~arrived~~ there they would sell the pony so that  
they didn't <sup>so get</sup> have to pay for its keep all the term and ~~give them~~  
a bit more pocket money. That's how they worked it. I don't  
know whether to start another subject, is it too late, or not  
to begin. I ask this because when I was taking a class in ~~Aberm~~

<sup>Abermule</sup> last week I said "Well there we are, Ladies & Gentlemen" and  
nobody moved. Ten minutes went by, quarter of an hour and nobody  
moved at all. Well I think I'll just give you five minutes <sup>more</sup>  
if you can put up with it and the seats are not too hard.

Now, I mentioned parish roads and so on and so forth. This  
question about townships - <sup>in Welsh</sup> The TREF, <sup>found</sup> this part of all over  
Wales. <sup>found</sup> The smallest unit was the Tref, these Trefi. They were  
small areas, you <sup>may</sup> <sup>ask</sup> how small, well Glynbrochan was a Tref,  
and these were probably areas that had originally belonged to  
one family. They cleared an area, made a farm and the whole



thing was surrounded by woods and ~~wired~~ land, waste land or common. And they are the essential units in Wales - these Trefi

~~This area of Arwystli which I have a black line around, that is called a Cantref of Arwystli, in theory a hundred Trefi to make up that area.~~ <sup>Was a Cantref</sup> That is in theory. Now ~~when~~ these early princes divided, it was too big, so they had a ~~there~~ and a ~~there~~. When the early Christian missionaries came ~~in~~ <sup>carved out</sup> and they made their parishes, they ~~made the~~ parish by uniting so many Trefi or townships and that is how they built the up - <sup>the</sup> they were grouped. Well there were nine Trefi in Llanidloes and nine in Llandinam, only three in Carno, only one in Penstrowe

<sup>parish</sup> It didn't seem to matter how many there were. And this is ~~the~~ unit of self government that probably lasted for about a thousand years. It's now gone <sup>19<sup>th</sup> local govt</sup> finished the whole business, ~~and~~ at one time these townships were tremendously important, but they are so far forgotten that an intelligent young man asked me one day why, on the map by Llynebyr, why is Trefle<sup>g</sup> written across it. Trefle<sup>g</sup> <sup>the</sup> the township of the lake. It meant nothing whatsoever to the young man. Now what were <sup>the names of</sup> these townships? Well in Llanidloes, Morfodion, Gilfach Allt, Cefn Croesllwy<sup>fan</sup> Trefle<sup>g</sup> Manledd, Glynhafren Iscedd, Brithdir, Hengynmwydd Fach and Ystradynod. In Llangurig there was Llanyfyny<sup>g</sup> (6) up the valley, <sup>Wye, Llanidloes</sup> ~~down~~ below the village, Glynhafren, that part of Llangurig which is over towards Old Hall, Glynbrochan, that needs no explanation, Glyngynmwydd, that's coming over towards Cwrbelan but ~~now~~ crossing the brook, and over the brook ~~is~~ Cefnyfodau. Those were the townships in Llangurig. In Trefle<sup>g</sup> Glyntrefnant, Bodaioch, Ysgeiria<sup>th</sup>, Dolgwdon and Maes<sup>the</sup>ygomer. In Llandinam, Tre'r Llan - round the village - Dythenydd, up on the Llandinam hills, Esgairmaen over towards Banhadlog, Gwerneirin - round the farms - <sup>(of that name)</sup> Trewythen, Maesmawr, Carnedd, Hengynmwydd <sup>farm</sup> near Dolwen, I ~~think~~, in that area, Rhydfaes, not

far from Tyddyn. In Llanwnnog, Weeg, Sirnant, Caersws, Esgob ~~and~~  
Castell, and Uwchlan ~~Coed~~. In Carno, ~~Glasyn~~ <sup>Llanfryn</sup>, ~~Blawcock~~, Trawscoed  
Derllwyn. And in Penstrowed, just one. And if you look at the  
one inch ~~maps~~ you've got in front of you, you will see that the  
names are still there written in large type ~~of~~

I think you will find Dethenydd written across the Llandinam  
hills. You will certainly find ~~Llanfryn~~ <sup>Llanfryn</sup> and ~~Llanwared~~ <sup>Llanwared</sup> in  
Llangurig. Sometimes Ystradynod is written in large type.

Now no doubt how rich they were (?) these townships were all  
known as Tref Manledd, Tref Morfodion, Tref Gwerneirin. Tref  
Carnedd, but the prefix dropped and it only survives now in its  
early form in six cases - we've got Tref-lyn, the township of  
the lake, (Oakley Park way, <sup>at least</sup>) we've got Tre's Llan, the township  
around the church in Llandinam, Trewythen - the woody township  
around about Trewythen, and they've still got timber there - in  
Trefeglwys TreCymer, the township of the conference <sup>of the brook</sup>  
(you get in Llanidloes Cymerau, where the streams come down <sup>into</sup> both  
~~sides there near the caravan park~~ <sup>you have</sup> ~~the caravan park~~). Cymer Abbey near Llanelltyd,  
near Dolgellau, you get the Cymer there again, Trefnant in  
Trefeglwys, the township of the stream, <sup>up</sup> beyond Llawryglyn, and  
Trefeglwys, would have been the township around the church which  
has now been absorbed into a neighbouring township. This  
absorption happened here in Llanidloes. Gilfach Allt, <sup>about</sup> over the  
town, used to be separate from Morfodion township, but by 1826  
the township was known as Gilfach Allt and Morfodion, bracketing  
them together. So no doubt Trefeglwys was separate at one time  
and then <sup>was</sup> swallowed up with Bodaipch. Now if, as I say, you  
started with one family in the township, as it grew ~~the~~ land you  
be sub-divided and it would <sup>maintain</sup> carry another one. You've got two  
Glynbrochans in Glynbrochan township. You've got three  
Gwerneirins in Gwerneirin township, two Trewythens in Trewythen  
township, two Trawscoeds, I'm not sure that there are not three



Trawscoeds in Carno. Two Manledds in Manledd township, three if you count PenisaManledd at the other end, ~~too~~. And I think we can say there are two Glynhafrens up the Severn, because the Old Hall would be the old Glynhafren and then the modern Glynhafren is the present farm, so it must have been <sup>the same</sup> there.

So ~~that~~ next week I want to talk to you about the administration of the townships, having just explained what a township is.

~~Here~~ on the map of Carno, there is the parish of Carno up here, and there are the three townships in Carno. Here is the Church here is the brook going through, this is Trawscoed, <sup>Lluseyn</sup> ~~Glasyr~~ and Derllwyn. You see here is the township of <sup>Lluseyn</sup> ~~Glasyr~~, this red one with a detached <sup>part</sup> there is Derllwyn and here is Trawscoed also with some detached parts. ~~But~~ there are three townships in that parish. It is not easy to make maps of these townships, because they are not on the modern maps. You've got to get something that I can't explain <sup>fully</sup> today, the Parish awards and very carefully transfer the boundaries from <sup>them</sup> ~~that~~ to <sup>modern maps</sup> that. I've tried to transfer the boundaries from the maps in the Church here for the townships around the town if anybody wants to see where they are. There's Gilfach Allt, <sup>Hengynwydd</sup> ~~Glyngwilydd~~, here's Treflyn and Brithdir and Manledd. Brithdir is around the Glyn and the Garth, ~~you see there~~ And Glynhafren up there. <sup>the Severn here, towards Hen</sup>  
 Thank you very much. <sup>Nenadd (Old Hall)</sup>

On Thursday evening, November 20th in Bethel Street Schoolroom, you know where that is, not far from Bon~~W~~'s the Ironmongers, at 7 o'clock Mr. Ion Trant of Maesmawr, Guilsfield, Welshpool, is coming up to talk to us on "our changing Countryside" and will illustrate the talk. I am told he is a first class photographer, so if you are not going to listen very intently, you have much to look at. And there's no charge for admission and everybody's welcome. Now I hope we shall have a good turnout for him, coming up from Welshpool to talk to us.

*omit*

Now last week, we spent most of our time on the question of roads. We began with a discussion of the ~~of~~ the bridle-ways by which these 18th century travellers made their way over our hills and we heard the comments of Dr. Pocock, the Bishop of Leath, riding up there past Penrhiw and along the top of Maenhinon towards Plynlimon and also Francis Thomson who went through Llangurig and over by Glangwy and right over the top to Cwm Ystwyth and then we looked at the bills submitted by Evan Evans of Hafod Fraith for his rush down to Merthyr~~y~~ Titfield, as he called it, - Then we came on to the establishing of the turnpikes Trust in Montgomeryshire. The first if you will remember, was in 1769 and the second one in 1773, that just 200 years ago. And by the first Act our main road from Welshpool, Newtown, Llandinam, Llanidloes, Llangurig to 'Steddfa, was turnpiked, with gates on it and also unbelievably, the road from Llanidloes over the top of Llwybyr<sup>Styffell</sup>madin, Penycrochbron down to Machynlleth. That was a turnpike road, if you please, *made* by the first Act. And in the second Act we turnpiked the road from <sup>Llanidloes</sup> here over Gellilefrith to Trefeglwys and then down to join the road which was running through Pontdolgoch towards Carno and on. And we also turnpiked, again it seems hard to believe it, the road through Glynbrochan, they must have taken a toll and <sup>down</sup> nothing to the road, because, until quite recently it's been a



fourth grade road, ~~that one through Glynbrochan.~~ And also the road up to Tylwch and the road which swings away at the finger post at the top of Bryndu and round past the modern Lldiartywaen school, we pass <sup>Llygarth</sup> Wing Cdr. Ryan's and Beulah chapel and so over towards Bwlchysarnau, and that was turnpiked too. But I think it's pretty clear that <sup>although</sup> they took these tolls at the gates but they didn't do very much to the roads, because those roads until quite recently have<sup>n't</sup> been very good. Well, we looked at the charges at the gates and noted the provision for stopping up and discontinuing two roads in this area which people could quite conceivably use for dodging the tollgates. And ~~the~~ one road which was stopped <sup>up</sup>, and it looks like it too, was the one coming down by the side of White House - that was closed by Act of Parliament, so that you could no longer get up on to the hill there at Caencoed, Glanynant, and come along the top along the hedge by ~~Ponbank~~ <sup>Pen y quon</sup> and slip down into the town that way and miss the gate by (Father Gillespie's Friary,) so they closed that one, and to stop you dodging the gate by Mr. Evan Morgan's lane at Bryndu, they stopped the lane which came down over the face of the Gorn, you know the road - it dodges under the railway line and comes into Well Lane, and that <sup>too</sup> was stopped by an Act of Parliament, ~~as well.~~ Well, we just had time at the end of the class to have a look at the question of the townships into which this area was divided. <sup>Now</sup> Here is the Cantref of Arwystli, which should, in theory, be divided <sup>into</sup> up into 100 Cantrefs, actually it is nothing like 100. <sup>but</sup> It was just a fiction - it should be 100 to make a Cantref. If it was a densely populated part of Wales then you might get a hundred townships, but in this semi-mountainous district, there were never a hundred. And I reminded you at the end of the class of the names of these townships. I'll run through them quickly again and also <sup>told</sup> you that they were <sup>the smallest local</sup> a unit of self government. Now we are seeing great

great changes ourselves in Local Government. April 1st 1974 saw the creation of Powys and the disappearance of the Shire of Montgomery. <sup>The latter had</sup> We have now been down graded to a District. Well Montgomeryshire County Council came into existence in 1888 - it's only had a life of 86 years and one of the first County Aldermen was John Jenkins of Penygreen. He was made a County Alderman at the very beginning of the County Council. Then we had Urban District Councils and Rural District Councils and Parish Councils in 1894 and they've had a life of just 80 years. The Llanidloes Borough Council, as we knew it, only came in with the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835 so it had a life of 138 to 139 years in that form. Well you might ask me if there was no County Council till 1888, how was the county controlled? Well, it was controlled by the magistrates, J.Ps, sitting in Quarter Sessions. They ran the County. There wasn't very much to do, of course, but what was to be done, they did, and <sup>as for</sup> the towns and the parishes - we shall come to that later. But tonight I want to look at <sup>the</sup> townships, and here in Llanidloes, <sup>parish</sup> there is Llanidloes ~~town~~, here is Gilfach Allt covering the Gorn and also the slope of the woodland side and also combined with Morfodion, which was too small, obviously, to stand on its own feet so it was referred to as Gilfach Allt and Morfodion. <sup>There</sup> is Glynhafren Iscoed running up the Severn valley, and Brithdir covers Glyn Hall and Garth, Ystradynod - you know where that is, where the Sailing Club is, all that area up there was ~~one~~ township, Manlodd covers the Van, today we speak of it as the Van area, and <sup>as a</sup> ~~here in one~~ little pocket, consisting of Bryntail and Penclun, which had belonged to Strata Marsella Abbey at Welshpool, so it was Church property, and it was always on its own, and we never get a reference to it <sup>in the</sup> in what we are doing now. Treflyn is the township alongside Llyn Ebyr Iank. Gilfach Allt I have already mentioned; <sup>extends</sup> Groesllwybyr runs from Dol-Llys and Penrallt, up



towards Dol-Llys Fach and joins up with Treflyn. And this one here, Hengynnwydd Fach, very large, very narrow, running from Pandyewisbren, top of the road to Llidiartywaen, a long narrow stretch down to Clydfannau and it joins up with Treflyn ~~just~~ near Oakley Park, ~~today~~. And that I think must have been a lately <sup>arranged</sup> created one out of the old forest which divided Hengynnwydd ~~the old woodland~~. I think they cleared the woodland, made it into farms and that is why it is such an extraordinary shape, ~~through~~ there. <sup>In</sup> Llangurig; <sup>parish we have</sup> Llanlyddin, Llanymawer, Glynhafren, Glynbrochan, Glyngynnwydd, <sup>Llanymawer</sup> ~~Cefn y Ffodau~~. <sup>Llanymawer</sup> Cefn y Ffodau. Trefeglys; Glyntrefnant, Bodiaoch, Ysgeiriaeth, Dolgwen, Maestregomer. Llandinam; Trelan, (around the village), Dethenydd up Llidiartywaen way, Esgairmaen over towards Banhadlog, Gwerneiri; you can guess where that is, Trewythen, Maesmawr, Carnedd, and the <sup>Hengynnwydd farm</sup> have a Hengynnwydd too, running parallel with ours, and Rhydfaes, just beyond Tyddyn on the road to Hopbrook. Llanwnog; Weeg, you know where the Weeg gate is, ~~you take a short cut across the road~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~Strnant~~ <sup>Strnant</sup>, Caersws, Esgob <sup>and</sup> Castell out towards Llanwnog and Uwchlawrcoed, <sup>going</sup> ~~running~~ up towards Carno. Then Carno itself, Llysun, Trawscoed and Derllwyn. And Penstrowed is so small, just one township. You'll find a lot of those names on the lminch maps in front of you. Now twice a year the lord of the manor, in later days it was Sir Watcyn Williams Wynn, ~~he~~ summoned to some place in his manor, officials who answered for what had been happening in each township. The meetings were usually held at <sup>an</sup> ~~an~~ Inn in Llanidloes, Llangurig, Llandinam or Carno and here the officials, the petty constable of each township, supported by ~~his five men, his five~~ <sup>of his five men</sup> that he'd gathered ~~in~~ to help him, ~~they~~ reported on the state of affairs in the particular township. The petty constable had been chosen by his fellow farmers and they presented lists of offenders in that township, and what these offences were I think you'll

present  
day

into the wood & forest.

gradually gather as we're studying <sup>Arwystli</sup> the presentments. Now  
 presentments for Arwystli <sup>Arwystli</sup> Iscoed have been published. They  
 were copied out <sup>at</sup> from the National Library by the late Prof.  
 Arthur Lewis, (whose sister, some of you will remember, she was  
 the manageress, owner of the Glansevern Arms at Llangurig) and her  
 brother was a very distinguished professor at Aberystwyth, and  
 he copied these out and printed them in our County Journal.  
 I have not been able to get hold of any for ~~the~~ Arwystli Iscoed  
 further ~~up the Llangurig~~ area. The ones I shall give you are, I  
 think, typical of all misdemeanors which were reported to the  
 steward of the Lord of the Manor. Carno had three townships,  
 two of them belonged to the same manor as Bryntail and Penclun,  
 so we don't know anything about those but we do hear something  
 about the other one and that is Blusyn. I have never come across  
 any documents which tells you exactly what should go on in a  
 township, but I think if all the Statute Books of this country  
 were lost in a fire, people in a hundred years time would know  
 pretty well what they were by reading the reports of our Law Courts  
 and Magistrates' Courts. You would realise there must be laws  
 saying you were not to park cars in certain places and not to  
 ride bikes without lights and all that sort of thing. You could  
 work out the laws from studying the offences. You must have  
 licences for dogs and T.V. sets, and goodness knows what,  
 and that you are still forbidden to drink on Sundays in  
 Merioneth. Now before I begin looking at the presentments,  
 I want you to look at this little map here which is just covering  
 that central portion of Arwystli, and ~~the things~~ <sup>what</sup> I have marked in  
 green, they are not woods, they are open, unfenced common land.  
 It is unbelievable to some people that we have so much open,  
 unfenced common land as late as the beginning of last century.  
 Here is all the area up towards Plynlimon, Cwmbiga. This is  
 the Maenhinon part here and this is above Glanynant and Caenocoed.

The Montgomeryshire  
 Collections.



This one extending over this waysis the top of Gellilefrith,  
all along that hillside towards Hiriaeth and ~~running~~ down  
towards the Van. This is the Van hill, this area here is  
Dolgwen, between Bwlchyfan and the Firs. Here is Waengarno,  
still called the Waen, the whole of that area of the Trannon  
moors, Robin's <sup>B</sup>ank above Llynobyr, the ridge going down behind  
Hopbrook towards Trowythen and ~~Wlanduam~~. This is Carnedd  
and the hill which you can see behind Carnedd farm. This is  
Bryndu common here at Llanidloes and this portion here is that  
ridgeway towards Nowchapel <sup>running</sup> down towards the river.  
All that was common and the white parts on the map are people's  
farms, privately owned farms. There are a lot of people who  
imagine that "common" means common to all the people, <sup>of</sup> ~~all~~  
Wolverhappton and Birmingham and so on. But this common land was  
not common to <sup>all</sup> Montgomeryshire <sup>people</sup> even. It was'nt common to <sup>all</sup> Arwystli.  
It was'nt common to the <sup>people of</sup> parish of Llanidloes. It was only  
common to the people in that particular township. Nobody else  
was to come in and make use of the common land except the people  
in the township. <sup>So here are some presentments</sup> 1784, May 17th, Presentment. Presentment  
of Evan Owen, Petty constable of the township of Llanyfynydd in  
the parish of Llangurig and his five men - his little committee -  
"We do present Evan Evans of Caemawr for not rising a ditch about  
his ground, to which he threatens his neighbours for trespass.  
And likewise David Lewis of Nantydugh for the same offence -  
both in the parish of Llangurig. And each were fined 10 shillings  
- a lot of money - unless repaired in a month's time.  
Presentment of John Davies of Ystradynod and his five men.  
We present Wythen Jones Esquire, William Howell Esquire, Thomas  
Marsh Esquire, Edward Chapman, Edward Cleaton and 22 others  
for cutting peat on Pencerrig common in the parish of Llanidloes  
out of their township. So they'd gone into another township  
to cut peat. Fine one shilling each.

people

people

The Presentment of David Lloyd of Glynhafren and his five men. They do present Edward Davies of Malgwyn, (that is <sup>a jam on</sup> along the ridge between Glynbrochan and the Castell and the Bailey) for cutting and burning a "stang of betting" upon a common called <sup>y</sup> Brwnant. Fined nine shillings. What they did, they had a special instrument, rather like a flat shovel with a long handle to it, and you pushed this along underneath and cut the surface of the turf off and then you burnt this and you took it away and ploughed it in, dug it in and lightened your own soil on your own land with it by skinning off the good turf from the common and just leave<sup>s</sup> it bare - and that was a <sup>offence</sup> ~~crime~~, Fined nine shillings for that.

1786 This went down to the Assizes in Welshpool. The Grand Jury present Thomas Wood in the Parish of Llanidloes, for cutting and carrying away two cartloads of fern off a common called Gellilefrith. He'd gone out of the town, up there, and taken the stuff off the common. Also John Ingram for not repairing his fence between Typella and a common called Bryntrafael in the parish of Llangurig. Unless repaired within two months, fined twenty shillings.

Presentment of Edward Evans, petty constable of Maestregomer in Trefeglwys. We present William Jones for enclosing two pieces of land joining Rwyn Green - have you been able to identify that - Rwyn Green, containing about half an acre of land? What he had done you see was to ~~take his own land here~~ and add a little bit of the common on to it, alongside his land. He was fined five shillings and threepence for that, for half an acre. Not exactly excessive, was it? Likewise we present the inhabitants of the same township for not having a <sup>pinfold</sup> ~~pinfold~~. You had to have a pinfold with a wall or a fence round it into which stray animals were put, so they could'nt go blundering about and trampling in people's corn and if they were caught they were put in a



pinfold and somebody would come and pay to take them away. Every township had to have its pinfold and because they had'nt got one they were fined 23 unless repaired before the next court

. Also they presented Mr. Evan Woosnam who lived at Bodaioch, for not cleaning and scouring the ditch joining the road leading to the vil~~l~~age of Trefeglwys down to Bodaioch bridge and which ought to be repaired by the same Mr. Evan Woosnam. He was fined 10 shillings if he did'nt do it. 1789; Evan Chapman of the township of <sup>Ystradynod</sup> ~~Yesterdonald~~ - that of cour is ~~Ystradynod~~. We present Mr. Evan Jones, Clergysman, for carrying turfs from the township of Yesterdonald, having no right to do so. Mr. David Davies, <sup>Glover</sup> ~~Glover~~, for the same, Edward Reaton Skinner, Margaret Evans, Skinner, Thomas Marsh, Attorney, Widow Hughes, Samuel Brunt, Thomas Nathan, and 23 others. They fined them six pence each. They present one David Jerman of Manledd and his five men. We do present David Smith for three acres of land enclosed up at a place called Ailt Y Castell - <sup>him</sup> ~~him~~ and his five men had nothing else to present. It's written down as I read it to you - "Him and his five men." The presentment of Edward Evans of the township of Cilmachy - that's Cilm<sup>bachall</sup> ~~ychan~~, and his five men. We do present the turnp~~ik~~ road leading from Evans Stephens the Turnpike, that would be by Mr. Evan Morgan's gate, to Br~~q~~dnant - that would be Bradnant - for it not being passable and that the inhabitant of the said township ought to repair the same. Fined thirty shillings if the road is not repaired in six weeks. You will notice that turnpike road or no turnpike road, the people of the township still had to keep it in order.

The presentment of Giles Mills of the township of Dolgwden and his five men. We do present two bridges, the one called Cerrist and the other called Goodwin - well the Cerrist one is the little one at the bottom of the hill in the hamlet of Cerrist,

and the Goodwin is the brook at the gates of Mr. Jerman's farm at Glangwden - for nothhaving proper handrails - there were just planks across the brook, with a handrail at the side - and that the inhabits<sup>ants</sup> of the townships of Dolgwden and Manledd ought to repair the said bridges jointly - because they are on the boundary between Manledd and Dolgwden, then both <sup>townships</sup> lots of people should share the responsibility.

Presentment of John Humphreys, petty constable of Ysgaerieth and his five men. We present a bridge called Ponprenddu, over the river Trannon, for not being passable without a person being in danger. That I can well believe. When you go to Llawryglyn you go round the back of Gwernaafon and you pass over the main stream, there's a good bridge there, then you go a little bit further on past the carpenter's shop and there's a very nasty gully, that's Ponprenddu, and if there was'nt a handrail on that bridge you could come an awful "purler"<sup>cropper</sup> into it. Fine ten shillings if not repaired within two months from this day. Here's a whole list again of people cutting turfs. I'm going to read it to you because it may be interesting to know who was living in these farms in 1796. Edward Chapman of Penybanc, Richard Humphreys of Penrhiw; David Chapman of Cefnpenarth; Evan Humphreys of Drainbyrion; Richard Owen of Gwestyd; David Davies of Eblyd; (My great, great grandfather in trouble, I see) George Davies of Malgwyn; David Jones of Llwynbrynmadin; David Jerman of Penclun; Thomas Davies of Bryntail; Lewis Lewis of Manledd, Evan Lewis of the Van, David Jerman of Thoy Fago - I suppose that is Cae Iago - Edward Lewis of BrongEIFr, Edward Ashton of Cwalluan, Richard Beedle of Potato Hall - you ~~know~~ where that is, on the lane to Hiriaeth - Edward Evans of Llwyncerwn; Richard Woosnam of Manledd, Meredith Thomas of Brithdir. They had all been cutting peat in the wrong township and fine one shilling each.



Presentment of John Hughes, Petty constable, Gilfach Allt - that's ~~off~~ the area around the Gorn and Bryndu. We present David Ingram for erecting a cottage upon a common called Bryndu in the said manor. Fined 40 shillings. Ditto, Thomas Price for the like, Richard Owen, Butcher, for the like, Edward Lewis, Edward Davies, Edward Hughes, and the last two also enclosed an acre each. Fined half a crown. John Jones for a cottage <sup>on</sup> Bryndu, Mary Evans, widow, 40 shillings, Humphrey Rees, 40 shillings, David Lloyd, 40 shillings. Now ten cottages popped up on Bryndu and <sup>were</sup> presented at one Court <sup>year</sup>. I wonder how many of them still stand - at least are they the sites of modern houses that we know up on Bryndu? Did they begin as cottages in that way? You know, this question of building a cottage on the common, if, shall we say in Trefeglwys or Llangurig, a farmer had a second son or a third son and there was no accommodation for him in the farm house, he would just pinch a bit of land from the common and build a cottage there, and that would be looked upon quite sympathetically at the Court <sup>year</sup>. But if, on the other hand, the man went and built three or four cottages and then set about letting them or selling them, then he got his knuckles rapped heavily. That was not the thing to do - they objected very strongly.

1802; Richard Davies, Petty Constable Glynhafren Uwchcoed. We present Andrew Hodgson, Evan Evans, Thomas Howells, for erecting cottages on a common called Pencastell or Castell in the same manor. That's up there towards the Castell and the Bailey. Fined 40 shillings. Ditto, Morgan Evans and Richard Evans for erecting cottages upon a common called Rallt Goch, that's near Mr. Hefin Bennett's house - Graig Y Llo - forty shillings. Evan Evans for erecting a cottage upon a common called CaeWeddidi - that's near Guest up there - 40 shillings too.

1804; They were hot on cottages at this particular time -  
the township of Glynhafren Uwchcoed, a cottage on

Morgan- that's up there towards Manachlog, right  
up beyond *the Bailey*.