

COWBRIDGE 750

Charter Day, March 13th, is approaching fast, and we would appreciate your help. Volunteers are needed to put in an hour or so at the Town Hall where the Charters and other materials from the Glamorgan Record Office will be on display, together with some other exhibitions. Obviously a watchful eye will be needed, but this should also give you a chance to see the exhibitions and study the contents at leisure. Will members please give names and preferred times to Jeff Alden?

Members of the committee have been very busy preparing for all the events. Bruce McGovern is of course the Secretary of Cowbridge 750, and his contribution to all aspects of the organisation has been phenomenal. For the historical aspects, Brian James and Robert Cope, with some editorial assistance from Jeff Alden, have produced an attractive and informative leaflet on the Charters. We have used a Cardiff design agency, the Martin Hopkins Partnership, to ensure that the leaflet is appealing to the eye. The Record Society has funded this completely, and has also purchased the 60 or so remaining copies of the booklet describing the Borough Ordinances.

Robert Cope has also produced some excellent drawings for note-cards of Cowbridge, which have been a good fund-raiser for Cowbridge 750. Finally, the Town Trail is an eye-catching leaflet, with major contributions from Robert's illustrations and some photos and the text from Jeff Alden. This fortunately has been funded by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

These initiatives are examples of the way in which the Cowbridge Record Society is living up to its educational remit.

MEMBERSHIP

A reminder that annual subscriptions (of £3 per person) are due on April 1st, and should be paid to the Treasurer, Keith Jones, as soon as possible thereafter. Keith has moved; his new address is

Ruthyn Fach
Ruthin,
St Mary Hill,
near Bridgend
CF35 5 EB

Telephone: 01656 860552

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We will hold the AGM on Wednesday, April 21st in the Duke of Wellington Pagan Room (upstairs) at 7.30pm. All members are invited to attend.

AGENDA

1. Chairman: Welcome
Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM of Cowbridge Record Society held on 28 April 2003
3. Reports: Chairman
Treasurer
Editor
4. Election of Officers and Executive Committee
5. AOB

The AGM will be followed by a talk - on a suitable subject, by a speaker as yet undesignated!

Refreshments will of course be served; it is usually a most convivial evening. We do need to know how many members will attend, so will you please inform the Secretary, Mrs J Rawlins, as soon as possible and certainly no later than April 14th. Address: Mrs J Rawlins, 8 Mill Park, Cowbridge CF71 7BG; telephone 01446 772750

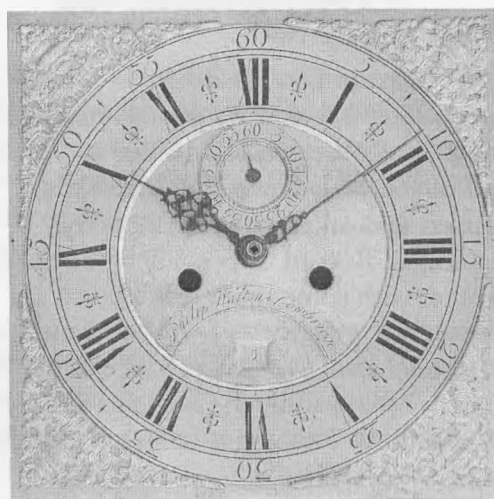
VALE CLOCKS AND CLOCK-MAKERS

It is a well-established fact that the past wealth of an area can be judged by the quality of its artefacts. It will be no surprise, then, to learn that in the 18th century the prosperous and beautiful Vale of Glamorgan was the home of the maker of some of the finest domestic clocks ever to have been made in Wales: Henry Williams, farmer and clockmaker of Llanccarfan, 1727 -1790. The only surprise, indeed, is that we had to wait until 2003 for him to be properly researched and recorded, but this shameful lapse of time is more than compensated for by the quality of a new book, *Henry Williams, Llanccarfan: 'A Clock and Watchmaker and a Great Farmer'*, by two outstanding scholars in this field, Dr E W Cloutman and Dr W Linnard.

Dr Linnard has very recently published a new definitive work, *Wales Clocks and Clockmakers*, which includes a dictionary of makers, the first to be produced since Iorwerth Peate's book of 1960. In this latest book he has collaborated with Dr Cloutman, a clock restorer and historian, well known in horological circles but now in print with a fascinating and lavishly illustrated text, which includes pictures and descriptions of the fourteen so far known pieces by Williams. The full account of his life and status as a craftsman and farmer in the rural Vale community, with origins in Gloucester, and Somerset connections as well, makes it a "must" for local historians as well as for antiques enthusiasts.

However, Williams and his successors were not the only clockmakers in the area, and recently a fine clock by Phillip Walton of Cowbridge has come to light. Walton was the earliest maker found by Dr Linnard in this town, working in the first half of the 18th century, and Dr Linnard also lists a number of later ones, some only known by a single example or from Trade Directories.

The Cowbridge list totals ten, including Walton and Godfrey in the 18th century, and a



- (a) Clock by Phillip Walton of Cowbridge, mid 18th century
- (b) Ink legend on the back of the Walton case, indicating that it was made for Walton, presumably by a local cabinet-maker.

[As a contrast to the beautiful quality of the craftsmanship shown here, it is interesting to note the comment made by David Jones of Wallington: 'Dr Philip Walton died of drink - a very great drunkard. Swelled so much in his coffin that they could not put the lid down. Had to deflate him with a butcher's knife. My father knew PW. He died 1769, aged 79.']

proliferation in the 19th. Llantrisant had four in the 18th century, including Jenkin Griffiths who died in 1729, and a further two in the 19th. Historically, contacts with Bridgend means that it must be included, with sixteen named - but detailed listings are beyond the scope of this short notice.

A RESEARCH PROJECT

This flowering of horological scholarship in 2003 is a hard act to follow! However, it is hoped that in 2004 and later we shall fill in some gaps in the broader picture indicated by Dr Linnard's lists, quoted above. So, we are hoping very much that people in this area who own Vale clocks, that is, any clocks with a Vale town or village identification on the dial, will allow them to be recorded. This would mean a visit from Dr Cloutman and/or myself to take photographs and measurements, and details of past ownership when known, to build up a picture of the different types and qualities of the clocks and their makers. Members may remember the discovery, reported in this newsletter, of a clock by a previously unknown 18th century maker, Richard Lloyd of Cowbridge. There may be yet more makers to be found, as well as clocks. Who knows?

What, you may ask, are the aims of this project? They are:

First, to provide owners with a background history of Vale clock-making, to enhance the interest and value of their clocks.

Second, to contribute to the Wales-wide scene, feeding the information into the database being enthusiastically developed at St Fagans by the young curator, Dr Sioned Williams.

Third, to publish a report of the results of the project via the History or Record Society, and hopefully to incorporate it into a wider, more substantial work on Vale furniture.

What we would NOT do is to reveal details of present ownership and precise whereabouts of any clock seen. All contacts will be in strict confidence. So, if you own a Vale clock, or know anyone who does, or have relevant contacts, please contact me, Luke Millar, on 01446 773528, or Jeff Alden on 01446 773373. The quality of the project will depend upon the strength of the response to this appeal.

THE NEW BOOKS ON CLOCKS

Both the books mentioned above are hard-backs, handsomely produced and copiously illustrated. Their details are :

Wales Clocks and Clock-Makers by William Linnard, 2003. Published by Mayfield Books, Matherfield House, Church Lane, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2 JR. Tel. 01335 344472.

270 pages. ISBN 09540525 5 2. £ 30.00.

Henry Williams, Lancarvan, 'A Clock and Watchmaker and Great Farmer', by Edward Cloutman and William Linnard, 2003. Published by Tathan Books, PO Box 6044, Radyr, Cardiff CF15 8YS. 136 pages, 180 illustrations and 4 colour plates. The first edition, limited to 300 numbered copies, can be ordered from the above at £21.00, plus £3.50 postage and packing, payable to Tathan Books.

Luke Millar

RESEARCH GRANTS

Among the purposes of the Glamorgan County History Trust is the encouragement of research into the history of Glamorgan. In furtherance of this aim the Trust offers grants of up to £500 to assist people with research expenses, and the Trustees are keen that this should be known as widely as possible. For further details please contact Hilary Thomas, Brian James or Jeff Alden.

INNS AND ALEHOUSES . . .

Last year's publication has sold well since the launch in November, and has also excited a great deal of interest, and praise. The cover picture will be used on the cover of the next edition of the Glamorgan Family History Society Journal, and will be reviewed in that journal as well - if past editions are anything to go by, that should generate some correspondence, and some information for us as well.

May I remind members that the book is still available to them at the reduced price of £4, as are all the books which we have published. Postage of course is extra. We also still have one copy of the *Cowbridge High Street Buildings and People* source book (nearly 200 pages of detailed information and photographs) at £14.

DONATIONS AND ACQUISITIONS

During the past year we have been pleased to receive a number of donations. Some of these, having been considered to be at least of county-wide interest, have been passed on to the relevant county Record Offices. Wakeford's Cardiff Directory for 1855, together with an *Index of Llantrithyd People* and a book of press-cuttings of the Vale in the 1960s, both compiled by Dr JB Loudon, have gone on to the Glamorgan Record Office, which has also accepted some correspondence between Ralph Bird and Idwal Rees about the removal of the stained glass windows from the school and resiting them in the church. The Meyrick/Wynn marriage settlement of 1771 has been sent to Denbigh Record Office.

We have kept a book entitled the Registers of Llantrithyd, 1571 - 1810, and the sale booklet of the Radcliffe estate in 1961, both of which were given to us by Mrs Loudon, and copies of which were already in

the GRO. Of the other donations, we were particularly pleased to received from the Llantwit Major Local History Society a series of photographs relating to Old Hall around the time of its restoration.

A number of other photographs have been borrowed to make copies (and have been subsequently returned). Could all members keep their eyes open for material which would be of interest, and encourage others to deposit or loan material to us?

A REMINDER . . .

This newsletter needs responses to three different appeals:

Volunteers for March 13th

Membership renewals

Attendance at the AGM and social evening.

If you want to save time, you could respond to all three by contacting me (Jeff Alden) by March 7th, and I will pass on the information to the other relevant officers.