

DEC 1974

It was a great joy recently to come back and preach in the parishes in which I served my first curacy from 1931 to 1934; to be greeted by a full peal of bells which were silenced by the Death Watch beetle a week after I was directed to the Vicarage at Llanblethian over three kissing gates by "Dicky Bird" and welcomed by the Mayor (Alderman Mills) from the Cinema booking office. This time I was so grateful to the Vicar for the opportunity to preach at Mattins; to Mrs Mogford for a welcome cup of coffee; to Miss Evelyn Hopkins for giving me such a wonderful (if delayed because of my visit to a former Youth Club member Winnie Jones, now Mrs Chris Williams) lunch, which she called "a bite". In Church, where I used to preach with the Grammar School boys behind me and the High School girls among the congregation in front of me I was pleased to meet the Reverend J.J.Thomas, an old friend of Cowbridge days, by Ken Hutchings, Mr Carswell and his daughter, Miss Vera Morgan of Cusop, Mr Selwyn Davies, the Mayor and so many others.

Memories came crowding back of Evelyn Cross (later John) the newsagent, Mr Williams the Chemist, the former Chemist, Mr Llewellyn (who extracted teeth) and Maud, Mr Prett the Duke, Mr Williams the Bear, Doctors Mellor, Evans, Evan Thomas and Gallagher, the Reverend Gilbert Williams, the Fitzgeralds and the Cross family, Gilbert Thomas (Bonvilston), B.T.Roberts, Harold Bishop, Evans and Eurya Davies. The wonderful hospitality of Mrs Williams at the Vicarage with its "Saus Intransitibus Pox In Exeuntibus", the Hollowes, the Crawshays, the Homfrays, Mrs Gwen Tilley, my landlady, her son David, the Phillips at the Slade Farm, the Wayne Morgans and so many others. I remembered Councillors Hopkins, W.A.Phillips (whose son greeted me after service), Charles Davies, Tom Yorwerth, the Gayns, Solicitor Miles, Mr Corne Williams and Mr. Ellis, bankers, Police Superintendents Burston and Bees (whose daughter, Cynthia Thomas, my first bride, came to Broadway House to see me.... How I feared Miss Knapton, the most efficient Sunday School head, and Mr J.P.Marks, the Organist! Memories, too, of the County Cricket matches and J.C.Clay (who died so recently), Cowbridge Show, the Schoolmasters Williams at the Grammar School and the Slomans at the Primary School, the Evans family, who kept Llanblethian Church so beautifully, the James and Jenkins, the Baverstocks and Pennys, Mrs Reynolds, the Cases, the Davids, the Miles family (opposite the Town Hall) and all of the Youth Club, G.F.S, M.U, Since leaving Cowbridge I have met some of the David (Thatcher), Johns (the Verlands) families, Evie Evans at Porthcawl last Easter, the Revd.Billie MacAdam outside the Sistine Chapel in Rome. How I used to look forward to my weekly visits to Crossways and Bridgend Hospitals.

How I recall my three happy years in the "28 Public Houses", one mill between Piccadilly, Broadway, Mount Ida, Saint Quentin - now so greatly changed which I left with such good wishes and wonderful gifts from all denominations some forty years ago.

P.S. Since leaving Cowbridge and Cyncoed I have served in Perth and Ripon Cathedrals and in parishes in Yorkshire and Nottingham; taught and still teach in Grammar and Comprehensive Schools for over thirty years and now live in retirement but still teaching and acting as Church organist; living at 88, Blake Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham (Tel. Notts 811886).