

Breach Farm, Llanblethian

A classic example of a direct entry house of the mid-17th and 18th century. The gabled dormer windows were a typical Glamorgan feature.

RCAHM, Vol IV part II, Farmhouses and Cottages

Authority	Vale of Glamorgan	Grade	II
Community	Cowbridge with Llanblethian	Date Listed	20/11/1974
		Date Amended	16/09/1999
Locality	Llanblethian	Grid Ref	2971 1736
		Record No	13391
Name	Breach Farm House		
Street No, Name	Llantwit Major Road		
Street Side	S		
Location			
About 1.8km W of Llanblethian, and 300m S of road.			
History			
C17, and circa 1800. See reconstruction drawing, and photo in RCAHM Inventory.			
Exterior			
A two-unit, one-and-a half storeyed house with symmetrical front. Stone (rendered), slate roof, end chimneys in brick. Central doorway covered by large porch with catslide roof. Two gabled dormers with 2-light mullion and transom windows under hoodmoulds. On ground floor, similar 3-light window to l, 2-light window to R. To L, added block with one narrow window to each floor. To R, long attached agricultural range, stone, corrugated roof. To rear, at right angles, kitchen block with large brick chimney to N gable; 2 windows, one-and-a-half storeys, upper windows in small dormers, door under lean-to porch. Outshut rears ro main and service blocks.			
Interior			
Internally there have been some alterations but the main beams survive. The stone stairway was made wider when a rear kitchen was added.			
Listed			
A well-preserved example of an early gable chimneyed house, rare in Glamorgan.			
Reference			
RCAHM (Wales), Glamorgan Inventory, Vol IV... Part II, Farmhouses and Cottages, London, 1988, pp224-225.			

Settlement on the lands of Breach farm occurred as early as the Bronze Age. The road from Cross Inn to Nash cut through a number of tumuli or burial mounds; excavation of one of these round barrows in 1937 showed that the turf and clay mound enclosed a circular stone wall. This in turn surrounded a central cremation pit containing bronze implements and flint arrowheads. The finds are now in the National Museum at Cardiff.

The farmhouse, a grade II listed building, is of mid seventeenth century date, with gabled dormer windows. Its nicely carved doorway is covered with a porch, to the left of which a three-light window, with

stone mullions and hoodmoulds, gives light onto the hall or main ground-floor room of the house. Internally, stone stairs, beams and a clay bake-oven add to the charm of the house.

The first reference that we find to Breach is in the will of Robert Savours 'of Breach', which was proved in 1711; the house stayed in the possession of the Savours family until well into the nineteenth century. Throughout most of the eighteenth century, the occupants were the Williams family, originally of Llysworney. John Williams (1700-1785), son of Henry Williams of Llanishen, gentleman, lived there in 1721; he had married Mary Jenkins of Stembridge. As well as his lease of Breach, he also leased land in Llysworney, St Mary Church and Newton Nottage, and as the Carne fortunes declined, he acquired more and more land in Llysworney. He was friendly with Howell Harris, one of the fathers of Welsh Methodism, and also helped to arrange for one of the circulating schools of Gruffydd Jones to be held in Llanblethian (1738-39) and Llysworney (1757-58). Of their children, Elizabeth married Robert Taynton of Cowbridge, a naval lieutenant, while Thomas, who attended Jesus College, Oxford, became headmaster of Cowbridge Grammar School on the resignation of Daniel Durel, and held that post until his death in 1783.

It would seem that after the death of John Williams, the subsequent occupants were William Hopkin in the rest of the eighteenth century, and then Edward Lewis between 1804 and 1821. A deed of 1809 describes the house as 'a messuage, one barn, one stable, one orchard, three gardens... called The Breach'.

By 1840, it was being farmed as part of Hugh Entwisle's Marlborough estate, with no named occupant of the house. In the 1851 census, however, the resident farmer (of 77 acres) was Daniel Thomas of St Bride's. 1861 saw Richard Howell of Cadoxton, Neath, there with his wife, two sons and two servants. Richard and his wife died in 1864 and 1865 respectively, but the farm was taken over by the sons, with Rees Howell named as head of household in 1871. William Jenkins and David Evans were tenants for a short time, before Morgan Griffiths, from Maesteg, who came in about 1880. Henry Jones, born in Llysworney, and his wife Elizabeth from Llanblethian, had taken over by 1884; in the 1891 census they are shown as having one domestic servant and two farm servants. The Joneses were still farming Breach in 1906, though by 1913 George Rees had taken over. Then for a short time it was leased by Owen Williams as part of his large Crossways estate.

The last tenuous link with the Savours family as owners was severed with the death of Anne Howe of St Mary Church in 1886 (a Joseph How had married a Mary Savours at the turn of the eighteenth/nineteenth century), when it passed to the Morgans of Woolcombe in Somerset. In 1930 it was purchased by Glamorgan County Council as one of their smallholdings, and only reverted to private ownership towards the end of the twentieth century.

1686 (11/11) Court Baron of Manor of Llanblethian

Surrender by Richard Savours of one messuage commonly called Breach with buildings, orchard &c to Francis Williams and Richard Sweeting as feoffees in trust of sd messuage, barns, cowhouse and all other edifices, buildings, orchards, gardens, curtilages and easements thereto belonging and all the parcels of land called Cae Ysh Law y Ty, the acre on the N side of sd messuage, the 4 acre and 5 acre adj to Heol y Malbrough, the 2 parcels of land called Caia'r Cutler and the sd 3 acres called Tair Erw Llanfrynach, and lands commonly called Kitelands of 18 acres, totalling 42 acres - to use of Richard Savours and Mary Leyson his intended wife, and their heirs

CL/BRA 437/50

1708 Premarital agreement (Robert Savours of Breach gent. to marry Susanna, dau. of E Thomas of ? Ham and Gwenllian Lewis (Button) of Cottrell)

Richard Savours of Llb and Robert savours his only son to Gwenllian Lewis and Susannah Thomas her dau - close of 4 acres called The Breach in Llb betw customary lands late of Dd Turberville Esq and now of Richard Savours on E; lands of Edw Carne on S, W and N

CL/BRA 437/39

1710 Death of Robert Savours of Breach aged 22

WAH Fisher Bk.18

1711 Deed betw Susannah Savours, widow of Cottrell, widow of Robt Savours late of Breach, Richard Savours and Gwenllian Lewis, stating 'whereas the pses conveyed by indenture of 1708 are too intermixed with the demesne of Breach'

CL/BRA 437/40

1713 Richard Savours occupied Llandough Castle *H Thomas, Morgannwg XXXIII, 1989*

1747 Death of Susannah Savours aged 72 *WAH Fisher Bk.18*

1721 John Williams married Mary Jenkins 'Mr Williams and Miss Jenkins. His father was a lawyer and lived in the large house outside Penllyn gates. Their son ran away with Miss Jenkins of Stenbridge. they were married at Llandaff and Llanblethian and went to Llandaff fair -

he took his wife home to his father's house: but the father said "If you choose to take a wife without consulting me, you must find a home for her without consulting me". Breach Farm being vacant they took that and lived there for 60 years - and 10 children who married, some up and some down.

Although Mr Jenkins turned his daughter out for marrying John Williams he went to live with them afterwards at Breach and died there'

notes made by Emma Edmondess from information from FW Edmondess.

John Williams was 21, his wife 20. Their children's deaths, buried at Llysworney, are listed as - Mary, died 1726 aged 4, Eleanor, died aged 2 1726, Thomas, died aged a few months, Mary, died 1777 aged 44, Ann, died aged 55 in 1795 and Jennetta, died 1816 aged 73.

Buried at Cowbridge was Thomas, who died 1783 aged 53 (Revd Thomas Williams) and Elizabeth, died 1814 aged 76. Buried at Cardiff was another Eleanor who died 1813 aged 87, and buried in Quebec, Canada was Jenkin, died 1819 aged 84.

Eleanor, who died in 1813, was married to Thomas Lewis of Llandaff in 1761. He died in 1776 aged 48.

From John Edmondess of Ewenney family notes

1730 Thomas Williams born at Breach. Headmaster CGS 1764-83, Vicar of St Donats Fellow Jesus College, 1758-65

John Edmondess / Iolo Davies

1764 Will of Thomas Jenkins 'of Breach' (f-i-l of John Williams of Breach)

1765 Society of Freemasons - sermon preached by Revd Mr John Wms of the Breach, teacher of the Free school now Mr Durel resigned'

Diary of Wm Thomas

1771 Marriage intended between Robert Taynton and Elizabeth, d of John Williams of Breach

Bute M18/75

1778 Mrs Savours

Bute R6/17-19

1783 Robert Savours of Llantrithyd gent. surrendered to the court one mess., one barn, one stable, one orchard and three gdns., commonly called the Breach +

Cae ysh Lower Ty 7a

+ parcel north of mess. 1 a

+ parcel nr Heol y Marlborough 4 a+

+ parcel nr highway 5a

+ Caia Cutler 5a

Tyr Erw Llanfrynach 3a
 Kitelands 18a Total: 43 a

to the use of Robert Taynton and Chas Bassett in trust, on the intended marriage of Edw. Savours (son of R S) and Elinor Gibbon of Cowb. a). for R S and w. Mary b). for survivor c). Edw. Savours and w. Elinor d). survivor e). sons f). daughters *Bute P 304*

1784 Mr Williams paying £2 12/- *Llb. Tithe accounts P/13/1*

1785 John Williams - “ “

1785 Was buried Mr John Williams of the Breach, aged 86, brother to Thomas Williams of Llanishen *Diary of Wm Thomas*

1785, 6th January Revd David Lewis of St Donats and Anne Williams of Breach married by licence at Llanblethian *Glos. Journal ***

** See notes on Anne Williams below

1786 Mrs Williams “ £2 1s *Llb. Tithe accounts P/13/1*

1788-96 William Hopkin of Breach “

1789 Death of Mary Williams of Breach widow of John and mother of Ann), aged 88. She and her husband were both buried at Llysworney.

1796, 14th November Death of Anne Lewis (nee Williams); buried Llysworney church Parish records

1800 Death of Llewellyn Hopkin of Breach *Llb parish records*

1801 Mrs Savours *Bute R6/17-19*

1804 Mrs Savours owned, Edward Lewis occ. £2 *LTA*

1806, 12th July Death of Revd David Lewis *Llysworney parish recds.*

1809 Surrender by WH Taynton and Joseph How of St Mary Church (H. of late Mary Savours) to use of Eleanor Savours Mess, 1 barn, 1 stable, 1 orchard. 3 gardens etc called the Breach *Bute M 18/150*

1820-23 Mrs Savours *Bute R6/17-19*

1821 Mrs Savours o, Edw. Lewis occ. £2 *LTA*

1831 Mrs Savours o, David Edwards occ. £2 3s 6d “

1836 Digby Mackworth of Glan Usk to William Morgan of Cowbridge, fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge – one and three quarter acres near Breach. *J Alden notes*

1840 Robert Savours, owner. Part of Hugh Entwisle’s Marlborough estate. 61 acres *Tithe 87*

- ca 1840 William Morgan of Brecon, Breach farm Elect Reg - Cowbridge Hundred
- 1841 Dunraven to William Morgan – lease for one year and conveyance of field (Y Saithe Quarter one acre 3r.32p.) south of the road from Cowbridge to Nash, on the south close of land of Wm Morgan, Cae Newydd, on the east close of land of Wm Morgan, on the west close of land of Wm Morgan, now in the occupation of Hugh Entwisle.
Dunraven deed.
- 1851 Daniel Thomas, 28, farmer of 77 acres, b st Brides + w Janet, 21, b Llandow + daughter Mgt, 1 *Census#6*
- 1852 Miss Savours, o, Daniel Thomas, occ *Llb Rates, R13 2/5*
- 1855 recites : 1821 Elias Bassett to John Bassett, four closes of land (4 acres, 3 acres, the acre plus one half, the acre?), then in the tenure of Sam Howells butcher (were known as Caea Hunt), also Caer Odyn two acres, Erw Burthin one acre to the use of John Morgan (will to Elizabeth Morgan wife, died 1823) and Wm Morgan of... *DxC, J Alden's notes difficult to read*
- 1859 William Thomas, Breach farm *Electoral register*
- 1861 Richard Howell, 58, farmer of 82 acres + w Mary, 58, + 2s, Rees, 20 and William 18, both farmers + 2servs *Census#19*
- 1864 Death of Richard Howell of Breach aged 59 (his wife died 1865) *Llb. parish recds*
- 27/11/1867 Robt. Howe admitted tenant of Breach and assocd fields (as in 1783) on surrender of Frances Taynton and Jn Bevan *Bute M18/195*
- 21/2/1868 Robt Howe admitted tenant of 3 additional parcels (Caia Cotton and Perrioc) on surrender of Anne Bassett *Bute 1519, p 235*
- 1871 Rees Howell, farmer of 80 acres + br + 3 servs *Census#5*
- 1874 Wm Jenkins, occ, Mr Robert Howe, o, Breach farm, 77 acres (in pencil, David Evans, occ) *Glam County rate #3*
- 1878 David Evans, Breach farm
David William, Breach - voters occ £12+ RV *Electoral register*
- 1880 and 1881 Morgan Griffiths had children baptised *Llandough parish recds.*
- 1881 Morgan Griffiths, 40, farmer of 80 acres, b Maesteg + w Ann, 30, b Bridgend + 2ds, Margaret, 3, b Llangan and Mary, 1, b Llb + 1 serv *Census#1*
- 22/10/1882 Death of Robert Howe of St Mary Church. Will of Robert Howe - to Anne Howe for life and thereafter to Revd Lewis Morgan *Bute Vol 1519, p236*

- 1884 Henry Jones, farmer *Kelly's*
- 28/9/1885 All that messuage, 1 barn, 1 stable, 1 orchard, 3 gardens with outhouses, etc commonly called the Breach as in 1867 and 1868, to Anne Howe, sister of Robt Howe, and Revd Lewis Morgan of St Hilary *Bute 1518, p144*
- 21/10/1885 Anne Howe (sister of Robert) and Revd Lewis Morgan of St Hilary to William Henry Mathias of Porth - mortgage - all that messuage, 1 barn etc as in 9/1885
- 1886 Death of Anne Howe, 13/2/86 *Cowb church records*
- 1891 Henry Jones, farmer, 51, b Llysworney, bi-ling, + wife Elizabeth, 51. b Llb, bi-ling + 3 servants *Census#42*
- 1892 Death of Revd Lewis Morgan, leaving estate to wife Louisa Catherine Morgan, of Woolcombe, Wellington, Somerset *Principal Registry*
- 1895, 1906 Henry Jones, farmer *Kelly's*
- 1912,1914 George Reece/Rees *Kelly's*
- 1920 Fire in farm buildings; farmhse. and most of buildings saved. Farmhouse occ. by Harry Morgan, bailiff to Mr Owen Williams of Crossways *Cowb. Fire Service recds.*
- 1925 Admittance of LHG Morgan to the Breach, 31/12/25 (mother, LCM, had died 1924) *Bute vol 1519, p 233, 1520, p 94-5*
- 1926 (7/1) Sale advert *Western Mail*
- 1930 Gwladys Lilian Morgan to Glamorgan County Council – 178.5 acres 'Marlborough estate'.
- 1930 G Morgan to Glam. County Council – 127.5 acres including Breach and Marlborough.
- Crossways cattle sheds built by German prisoners in WW1 (wood). Burnt down 1985. David John Carne had 4 blackhorns – competition with Crossways *Notes of J Alden*

**** Notes on Anne Williams**

In 2013 Breach was visited by a Mr and Mrs Dickinson from Swindon. He had come across an 18th century book in his area written by Anne Williams and was intrigued to find out more about her.

He described the book : ‘The book itself is not a journal a commercially printed almanac and ladies pocket book, one of a series published by Cardanus Rider in the second half of the eighteenth century. ...consists of two parts bound together (‘Rider’s Merlin 1776’ and ‘The British Ladies Complete Pocket Memorandum Book for 1776’). Between the two is a fold-out engraving of the coronation of Louis XVI of France in 1775. The book seems to be a high-quality item with a cover of red tooled leather and a silver clasp on the back, which would probably have been used originally to hold the covers together with cords.....there are two thin card pockets inside each cover (? for visiting cards). On the outside page of the front pocket is the name plate – ‘Miss Ann Williams of Breach, Glamorganshire’. The book holds a lot of fascinating information and insights into genteel life at the time Complete calendar for the year with gardening tips, lists of historical events, roads and fairs, a description of the latest fashions, country dances and new songs.....just three pages have hand-written lists of accounts. Some of these are in pencil and not easy to read, but the clearest is in black ink and reads ‘Chipping Norton bill no. 220 for £21/ Wapshott, Palmer, Matthews and Palmer/ Messrs. Down, Thornton and Free bankers London/ 5 August 1791/ draft 10 days after date’.

Brian James subsequently researched this record – Wapshott, Palmer, Matthews and Palmer were the local bankers in Chipping Norton, and Down, Thornton and Free were London bankers at 1 Bartholomew Lane where their bills (cheques) were payable (source : Universal British directory, vol 2).

He recorded also the memorial to Ann Lewis (nee Williams) in Llysworney church – ‘This last tribute is credited to the memory of Ann Lewis, wife of the Revd David Lewis MA, Vicar of St Donats and Pentyrch in this County and daughter of the above John and Mary Williams, who died 14 November 1796 aged 55 years.

Also of the said (David Lewis) who died 12 July 1806 aged 68 years.’

Sources/references :

GRO = Glamorgan Record Office

D/D = deeds in the GRO, which holds most of the documents, like Kelly’s directories, used here

Dunraven deeds are mainly held in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth