

Llanblethian Farm

Very little remains of *Llanblethian Farm* today - some converted outbuildings and the roadside wall of the farmhouse, part of the new development of executive houses opposite *Great House*. Yet it was in that farmhouse that Hubert Thomas of Cowbridge was born, in the building earlier described by David Jones of Wallington as an “excellent specimen of a true old Welsh farm house. First the old part of the dwelling house with one chimney; then as they grew richer a parlour, and best bedrooms added beyond that; on the other side of the kitchen came the dairy, then the barn, and lastly (in this case) the stable; all under one (thatched) roof.”

In the 1660s, this was part of the lands conveyed by the Earl of Pembroke to the Carne family of Nash and Cowbridge, and it stayed in the ownership of the Carnes until 1917.

The Revd John Carne’s accounts show the tenant in the 1760s to be William Jones, and in the 1770s Watkin Richard, but in 1780 Carne wrote “Watkin being much in arrears I distrained on his goods, on which I was paid by him in full, and he this year quit the farm.” The next tenant was Evan Morgan. He had married Mary Rees, and they had five children - Rebecca, Mary (who married David Howell of Coychurch, and whose son was Dean Howell, the noted Anglican cleric), Thomas, Evan (who eventually took over the farm) and Jane, who married John Nicholas, a carpenter of Llanblethian.

Evan Morgan died in 1794, and his wife continued the lease which was taken over by Evan junior on her death in 1806. It was this younger Evan who was described by David Jones as being responsible for the ox-roast in the *Great House* in honour of the Blosses; he it was who used a rope to suspend the ox over the fire, and so it was he who was blamed when the rope burned through and the carcass collapsed into the flames and ashes!

The conditions of Evan Morgan’s lease of 1811 are interesting in so far as they reflect the development of the agricultural revolution, with conditions aimed at preventing monoculture of grains, at using sainfoin or clover to restore nitrogen levels in the soil, at using lime and manure on the soil, and at using the wheat straw for the repair of the thatched roofs.

Evan gave up his tenancy in 1820, and was succeeded by David Davies, until his death in 1843, when he was succeeded by his widow Anne. In 1851, she is described as having four daughters, one son and a servant living in the house. By 1861 the son, Ebenezer, is shown as the head of the household, employing two men and farming eighty acres. He was a man of some importance in the village, and became census enumerator in 1891.

John Jones, born in Ewenny, had taken over the farm by 1878, and had increased the acreage farmed to 96 acres; he had two servants to look after him. He is recorded as being in the farm at least until 1910.

Owen Williams of Crossways bought the farm from the Carnes in about 1917, in his short-lived, initially successful but eventually ill-fated, venture into agriculture. The land was then farmed by Thomas Thomas, the father of Hubert Thomas of Cowbridge. When Owen Williams had to auction the farm in 1924, Thomas Thomas had moved into *Great House*, though he still farmed the land, and a T Brewer lived in the farmhouse.

- 1668-9 Part of property conveyed by Philip Earl of Pembroke to Thomas Carne of Nash and John Carne of Cowbridge *D/D C 75-87*
- 1763 Llanblethian Farm - about 50 acres let to William Jones at £48 p.a. *D/D C E/1*
- 1766 Revd John Carne's Accounts: "Leased to Wm Jones for 11 years from Feb 2. Having made an addition to the house the rent is to be £56 - 6 - 3 p.a. The grates and locks are mine" *D/D C/E1*
- 1770 "The whole farm together is let to Watkin Richard, commencing 2/2/1770 at £70 p.a." *D/D C/E1, p50*
- 1780 "Watkin being much in arrears I distrained on his goods on which I was paid by him in full, and he this year quit the farm" *D/D C/E1, p51*
- 1780 "On Watkin Richard's leaving the farm, I have divided and let the land lying on the side of the river next to Cowbridge to Mr John Walton...and the rest of the farm with the House and Pond Mead I have let to Evan Morgan for 3 years from 2/2/1780 at £43 p.a., I to allow him £10 towards putting it in repair and he to keep it so and I to pay land tax *D/D C/E1, p52*
- 1784 Llanblethian Tithes - Evan Morgan for farm, £2. 4s *D/D P/13/1*
- 1785 Evan Morgan of Llanblethian, £2. 0s 6d "
- 1789 Evan Morgan, £2. 11s. "
- 1794 Evan Morgan died; lease continued with widow, Mary Morgan *D/D C/E 1*
- (Evan had married Mary Rees; they had 5 children, Rebecca, Mary (m David Howell of Coychurch), Thomas, Evan (who eventually ran the farm, and had a son Evan), Jane (m John Nicholas, carpenter of Llŷ) *Will: LL/1795/41*
- 1796 New bargain made with Mary Morgan at £55p.a. *D/D C/E1*
- 1806 Death of Mary Morgan of the Farm *Church records*
- 1808 T. Markham, o, Evan Morgan occ, ho and land, £3.11s.8d (redeemed) *LTA*
- 1811 7 year lease - Thos Markham of Nash to Evan Morgan, Edward Lewis of Llanblethian and David Rees of Coychurch... all that tenement, buildings and lands (51 acres) in tenure and occ of Evan Morgan (the son of the Evan Morgan who died in 1794) (see below for conditions of lease) *D/D C 102*

1819 7 yr lease - Thos Markham of Nash to Evan Morgan, David Howell of Coychurch
and John Morgan of Yscoed, Llansannor as 1811 *D/D C 103*

1819 Notice to quit on 2/2/1820 on behalf of the 3 aforesaid *D/D C 104*

1829/31 Mrs Markham, prop, David Davies &c, occs; houses and land, £3.11.8 *LTA*

1840 Elenora Markham, o, Davd Davies, occ *Tithe#283*

1843 Death of David Davies aged 55 *Church records*

1851 Anna Davies, widow, + 4 daughters + son, Ebenezer, + servant *Census#44*

1861 Ebenezer Davies, farmer of 80 acres, emp 2 men, b Llanblethian +
3 sisters + servant *Census#32*

1871 Ebenezer Davies, farmer of 60 ac emp 2 men, 40, + 3 sisters +
2 servants + nephew *Census#61*

1878 John Jones, The Farm , Llb *Electoral reg*

1881 John Jones, farmer of 96 ac + 2 servants *Census#61*

1891 John Jones, dairy farmer, + 2 servants *Census#14*

1896 John Jones, paying £50+ rent *Reg of electors*

1906 John Jones, farmer *Kelly's*

1914 Marriage of Frank Heke, 22, of the Farm, Llanblethian *Llb church records*

1923 Thomas Richard Thomas, farmer “

1924 Sale by Owen Williams of Llanblethian Farm, occupied by Mr TR Thomas
(fields) and Mr T Brewer (house)

Farm house - (Stone and thatch) contains : parlour, kitchen, back kitchen, pantry and dairy on
ground floor; 3 bedrooms, box room and cheese room on first floor.

Farm buildings - cowshed (stone and thatch) to tie 10, with racks and mangers, feed walk, and
bull house; open cart shed with loft, stable with loft, 2 pigs cot, chaff house, out house with
copper, tool house with hen house over. *D/D GG 12/1-19*

Conditions of lease, 1811: the tenants agree

to take no more than two crops of corn successively from any part of the said arable land, one thereof being barley or oats, and when such barley or oats shall be a second or successive crop of corn always to sow a sufficient quantity of good clover saintfoin or other proper grass seeds to remain one year five months at least for the purpose of being fed or mown

to make a clean summer fallow with or without turnips, cabbages or some other hoeing crop once at least in every 5 years on each part of the said arable land, such fallow to be manured with at least 20 crannoeks of lime to every statute acre or as much dung as shall be equal thereto

to lay down and sow with clover, saintfoin or other proper grass seeds the close called Saith Erw Ycha at least 2 years before the expiration of the lease

to grub, clear and reduce into tillage the close called the Woodlands or such parts as are capable of being cleared

to put and keep in good repair all the hedges, ditches, etc

to render in reeds so much of the wheat straw to be produced as may be required for the repairs of the thatched roofs.

1950s See memories of Ralph Stone in 'Sunnyside' folder.

Sources/references :

GRO – Glamorgan Record Office

D/D = deeds in GRO

Register of electors in GRO

Kelly's directories and tithe accounts – in GRO