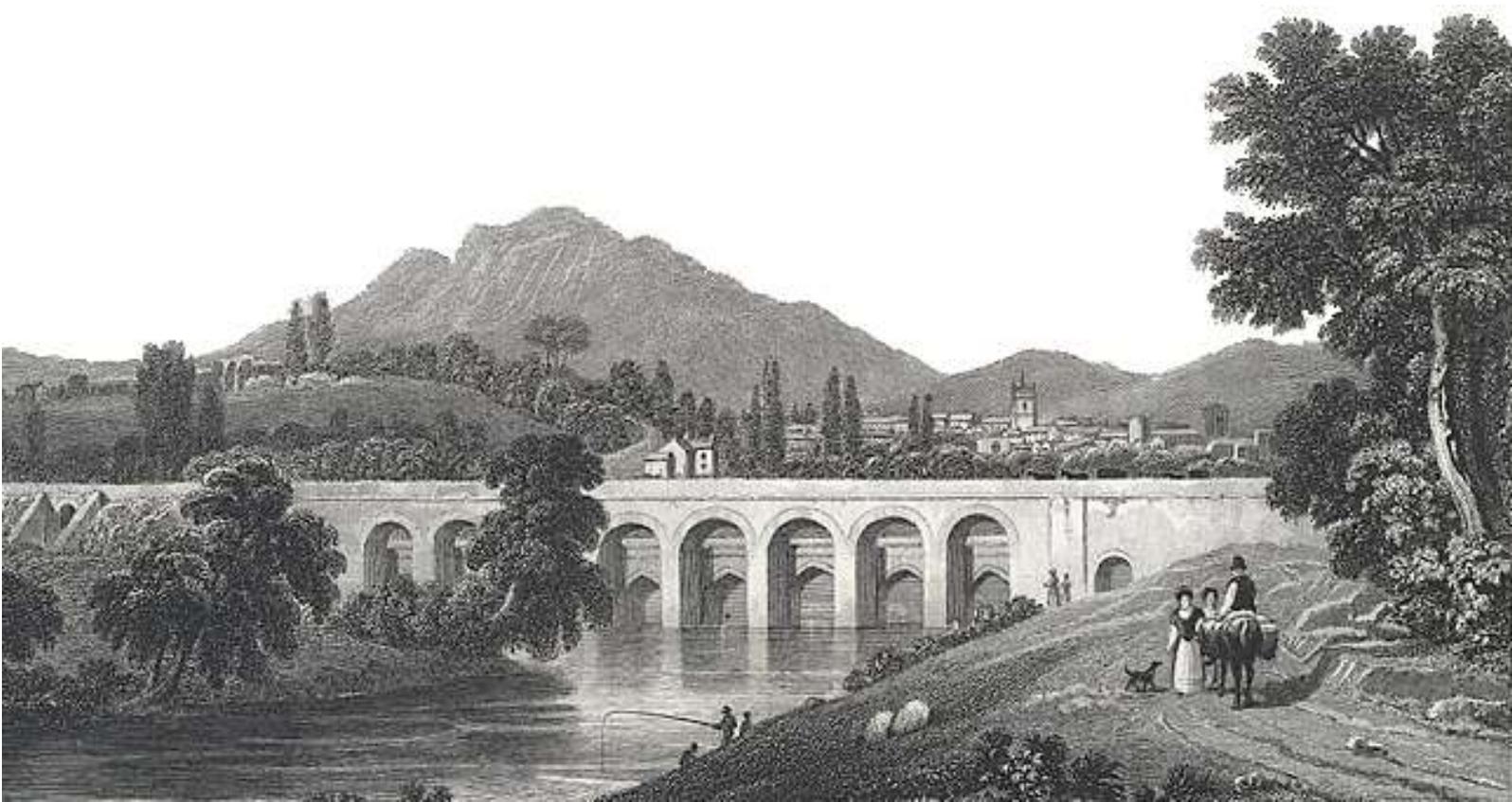


No 1 - January 2024



GOBANNIUM GAZETTE

The Journal of Abergavenny Local History Society



Introduction

Welcome to the NEW Gobannium Gazette! The people who work so hard in the Research Group were a little hesitant about publishing something about what they had done, feeling that it was not ‘academic enough’. The purpose of research is to spread the knowledge to others and that cannot be done unless the results are in the public domain. Transcriptions of documents are available on the website, but other information was less accessible. It was felt that this local journal for the members of our Abergavenny Local History Society would be an interesting read for our members, and a source document for the future about what had already been extracted from local records.

‘Gobannium’, thought to be derived from ‘river of the blacksmiths or ironworking’, is the name given to Abergavenny in the record of the Roman fort built here. We felt it was a suitable title together with the more modern ‘Gazette’ derived from the Italian ‘Gazetta’, a name given to informal news sheets published in Venice in the mid-16th century - as well as being pleasingly alliterative.

In future, we will be happy to consider short research articles from anyone, particularly from ALHS members. The Gwent County History Journal and The Monmouthshire Antiquary provide other publication opportunities; consult their criteria to work out which is most suitable. Please contact ALHS Research alhsresearch@email.com for more information about how to join the Research Group, guidance on writing an article, or further information.

Gill Wakley (Editor)

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A History of Two ALHS Street Surveys

The first ALHS street survey came into being between 1979 and 1984, covering Cross Street, High Street, Frogmore Street, Nevill Street, Market Street and Flannel Street.

There were doubtless many committee meetings followed by volunteers going into the town centre streets with a questionnaire, gathering information on ownership of the property; the type of retail or office; the history and previous uses of the building. For dates from 1937 onwards, advertisements and newspapers plus local memory were relied on. Information between 1832 and 1937 was mainly taken from the trade directories that still existed.

When the time came start transcribing this information onto a pre-designed form, I volunteered. My working life had always involved the use of a typewriter. The phrase “word-processing” had not been invented. Now, keyboards take up a couple of square inches on a phone, I really don’t know whether the physical act of putting words on a screen has any name, nor would even be thought of as a “skill”.

Swirls of mist and sci-fi music - time receding to a far-off date

It’s 1983. Culture Club’s Karma Chameleon is at No.1 for 6 weeks.

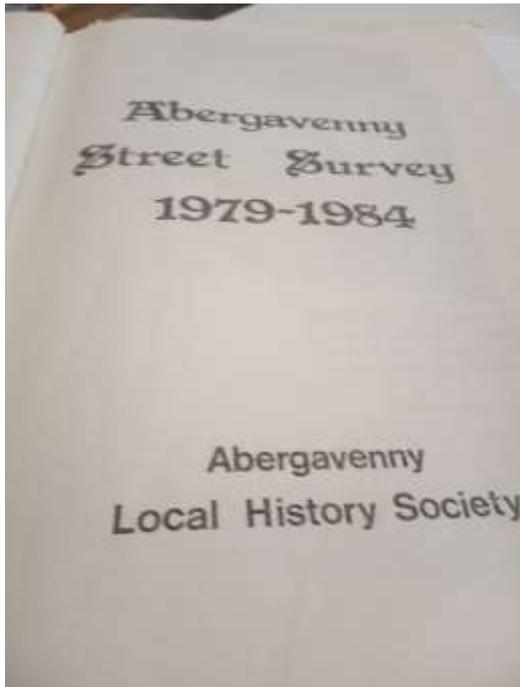
Armed with my Olivetti portable typewriter and not particularly aided by my pre-school son, I made regular journeys to Beryl Pullen’s lovely old stone house on the edge of Abergavenny. (Then surrounded by fields, unfortunately now surrounded by houses).



Olivetti Lettera 32 portable typewriter
Via Wikimedia Commons

I seem to remember the house was freezing most of the time. We ploughed through the work, copying from various levels of legibility and spelling, a new page for each property. Typos had to be amended with the liberal use of Tippex otherwise the whole page had to be re-done.

I recently visited the library to look at the board-covered copy of the survey that still lurks in the recesses of the reference section.



Title page of the original ALHS street survey

Surprisingly, the pages were easy to read and looked both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. There were schedules of records, maps and family trees and a lot of historical background.

There was of course no means of ever changing or updating it. Eventually the pages were combined into one book. There is a cutting from the Abergavenny Chronicle dated 13 March 1986: "Survey reveals development of Abergavenny".... "the development of a country market town with its increasingly complicated expectations and the people who have lived and who now live here....." There is a photo of the handover of the document by Beryl Pullen to a staff member in the reference section.

What may have been viewed as "complicated expectations" in 1986 now seems so much simpler than the 21st century.

Swirls of mist and sci-fi music – we are back to the nearly-present day

It's 2015. Wiki lists Justin Bieber as one of the top chart acts of the year. The typewriter is in a museum; a small electronic machine called a laptop has replaced it.

It was decided to compile a new survey, described in its introduction as "designed to reflect Abergavenny in the 1980s and then to use the present as a starting point to whorl backwards to discover the past".

I was keen to be involved (Again? Why? I hear you ask. The honest answer is "no idea").

It was decided at the outset that the new version would cover the same streets as those from the first survey, as these "reflected the most commercial pressure for change of use and modernisation". I made a short-lived attempt to visit shops and

businesses with a questionnaire, but this soon unravelled for me. I found a marked reluctance on the part of many shop owners and tenants to divulge anything. Many were already worried about where information may end up, even when some of that information was already in the public domain.

Alongside this attempt to gain an insight into the uses of each property, we spent many hours in the possibly haunted room at the top of the Chronicle offices in Nevill Street, reviewing past editions. Each volume of newspapers weighed a ton. I used the laptop to enter the information onto a basic spreadsheet: name and previous uses of a property between the early 1980s to early 2000s. The newspaper archive proved an invaluable resource. It was a time when many businesses advertised their products, when they had sales, their address and phone number. Apart from local memory, which can of course be unreliable, the archive provided a trustworthy and, for me, really interesting way to acquire knowledge and fill in a lot of gaps.

A website was designed by a local computer expert, after which a few of us tried to learn how to input the updated information, along with photos from “then” and “now”.

The website is now professionally hosted by Penguin Internet Ltd; written on WordPress which works in conjunction with a lot of other minor apps – so one can easily see where the phrase “works in conjunction with” could go wrong. There have been some website problems which have mostly been solved. For now. The world of technology is of course open to outside interference and following an attempt to hack into the Street Survey website, changes were made which now includes 2-factor password authentication.

Perhaps the nervousness of shopkeepers to divulge information wasn’t just paranoia.

The digitised version has the capacity to be endlessly updated and this is a role I have also taken on.

During the pandemic, walking around to look for changes to businesses was put on hold. Happily, we are again managing to keep up to date although still within the limitations of lack of first-hand information from landlords and tenants.

From a personal view, the most difficult aspect now is the virtual impossibility of knowing what may be on the upper floors of a shop that only seems to have a ground floor presence. Is it storage for that shop, are there flats, either tenanted or empty. Who is the Landlord? Sometimes the answer is “Alan Griffiths” but of course not always!

I am constantly on the lookout for scaffolding, closing down sales, opening soon notices, Facebook announcements especially Abergavenny Voice, Focus magazine or any other useful sources that may point to imminent change.

I admit to mixed feelings about how I came to be involved in the two projects almost 30 years’ apart but do enjoy the challenge of trying to keep up the survey up to date.

Bianca Emberson

Leaving No Stone Unturned – the search for a new Cemetery site for Abergavenny

In October 1853 there was a communication from the “Rate Payers” of Abergavenny to the Church wardens stating that the burial place in the parish had become insufficient and so crowded that it was dangerous to health. They requested that a meeting of the Vestry be convened to determine whether a new Burial ground should be provided for the parish according to an act of Parliament¹ which allowed for the burial of the dead beyond the limits of the Metropolis. A meeting of the Vestry was to be held on the 14th of November 1853 to decide whether a cemetery should be provided and at that meeting it was agreed by the Vestry that they would seek to provide a new cemetery. They appointed a board of nine members to investigate the best place for such a cemetery to be created.

The Board was certainly very hard working. They met weekly to discuss what they needed to do and any progress they had made. They were hindered by certain legal bindings that, although the recent Act of Parliament allowed for burial grounds to be placed outside of the metropolis, they still needed to be within easy reach of the town. Most difficult however was the rule that any land which was not already being used for Burials could not be used without the consent of the owner Lessee and occupier of the land if it was closer than two hundred yards from any dwelling. This was to be the biggest hurdle to their efforts. The Board looked at various sites which they thought might be at a convenient distance from the town and would fit the parameters they had been set. As can be seen from the following reports, they looked extensively all around the town. I include some of their searches to give you an idea of how diligent they were.

On the Hereford Road some suitable land was owned by the late Captain Roberts, Sir Thomas Hastings and Messrs. Richards and Woodale, who did not want to sell. They also looked at land further away near Llwyny Lane and, although the owner was willing to sell, his tenant refused to give up his lease. The owners of the Priory refused to sell any of their land for a burial ground. Lands beyond the Maiddiff Bridge Toll Gate were inspected but not considered suitable.

On the Brecon Road they took their enquiries out more than a mile from town. They looked at the area between this road and Llanfoist and were in touch with owners and tenants of this land. They were unable to succeed in finding any sites, either because of lack of consent of the owners, or the proximity of dwellings.

Between the Brecon Road and Llanfoist, there were two fields owned by Crawshay Bailey opposite the Union Poor House and containing seven acres, two roods and twenty poles. Mr Bailey was willing to sell these fields including the timber for £900 being under £120 an acre. However, Mr Overton, owner of the gas works situated in under two hundred yards from the field, refused to give his consent.

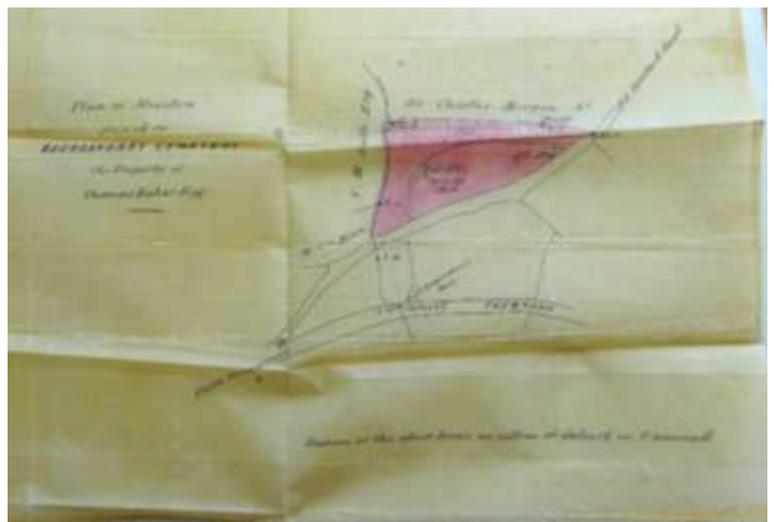
On the Monmouth Road initially, the only lands they thought would suit were owned by four different men: the late Captain Roberts, Mr Wilson, Mr Hanbury Williams, and Mr Steel, none of whom were willing to sell the land. Between the Monmouth Road and the Lunatic Asylum there were several pieces of land owned by various people: Mr. Rogers, Mr James Williams Mr Walter Powell, and Mr John Jones. The

board actually got an agreement from all of these to sell their lands. Unfortunately, Mr John Jones' field was within two hundred yards of the railway station and so permission was required from the Railway Company - which was refused.

On the Monmouth road, the lands were owned by Mr Charles Rogers, Mr James Williams, and Mr Walter Powell. Mr Rogers's field opposite the Lunatic Asylum was 2 acres, three roods and 22 poles of grassland. He was willing to sell for £350 - just over £120 an acre. Unfortunately, it was within two hundred yards of dwellings, one of which was the Lodge House of the Lunatic Asylum. Up to the time of presenting the report, the Board tried tirelessly to get permission from the Committee of Visitors to the Asylum, but without success.

Mr James William's field was only one acre eleven perches, and he was asking £200 for it. Alone it wasn't enough but with Mr Roger's field would have been adequate. Mr Walter Powell's land was some seven acres, and he was asking £160 an acre. Unfortunately, it was also close to several dwellings including the Lunatic Asylum Lodge. It was thought that eventually permission would be granted from the Visitors to the Asylum, however there were other problems with this piece of land as it had a very steep approach which the Board didn't think could be overcome manually. They also approached a Mr Williams of Coldbrook, sending him a plan, but he was unwilling to sell.

The Board decided that if Mr James William's field was too small, then the choice would come down to either Mr Baker's field or Mr Walter Powell's land subject to the relevant consents being obtained. Although they were not entirely happy with the options they had to offer to the Vestry, they felt these were the best they had found. The remaining piece of land which was thought to be acceptable was Mr Baker's field on the Old Hereford Road. This was three acres, one rood and three poles in size. The asking price was £600 just £103 per acre. In this field was a public well which might have been affected by the burial site, but the Board had made enquiries and were satisfied that the drainage in place would ensure that there would be no leakage or contamination for the well.



Plan of the ground for the new Cemetery

The report of the findings was submitted (only five months from the date the Board was formed) to the Vestry at a Meeting for their decision on 10th of April 1854. The Burial Board had certainly done a great deal of research into suitable sites. Because so many people were involved, landowners, tenants, and dwellings the time taken to gather this information was much longer than anticipated. After this meeting the decision was taken on April 24th to go ahead and use Mr Baker's field on the Old Hereford Road. A letter was composed to the Lord Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasurer.

In this letter it was made clear that the population of Abergavenny was 5506, that the cemetery was totally inadequate and was becoming dangerous to people's health. The Vestry suggested shutting down the current cemeteries as soon as possible and providing a new cemetery that would be adequate for the people's needs. They informed the Commissioners that there had been a meeting of the ratepayers in Vestry on the 14th of November 1853, where it was decided that a burial ground should be provided in accordance with the Act passed in the 16th and 17th years of the reign of Her Majesty and that nine rate payers had been appointed to the Burial Board to find a suitable site.

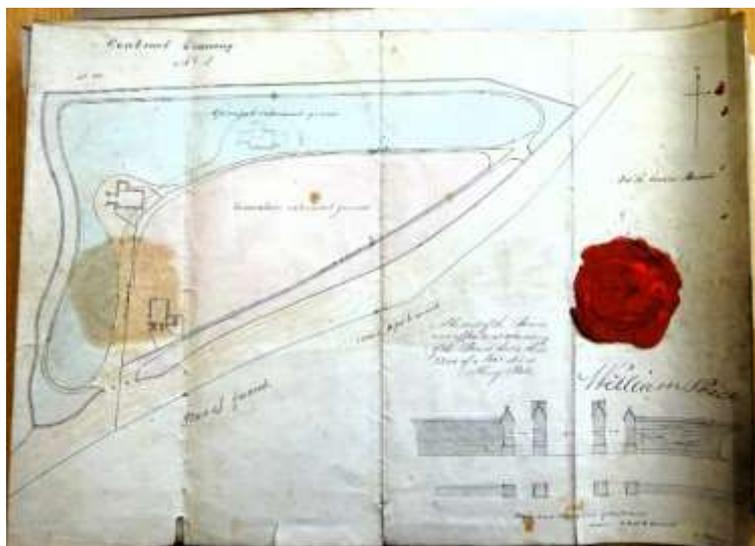
They included the information that at a subsequent meeting of the rate payers in the Vestry on 22nd of April 1854, it was sanctioned to purchase a piece of land, 3 acres, 1 rood, and 4 poles,² the cost of which was £600. The site was approved by Lord Palmerstone, (the current Home Secretary). The estimated cost of building boundary walls, making drains and roads and to create two chapels would amount to nine hundred and sixty pounds. They further estimated that the conveyance of the land and other expenses would amount to four hundred and forty pounds, so that the overall total would be £2000.

At a meeting of the Vestry on the 16th day of June, the Burial Board was authorised to spend up to £2000 to provide and lay a burial ground for the Parish and to build two chapels on that ground. The Burial Board requested the loan of £2000 from the Government to carry out the work, which would be repaid from the poor rates and interest gathered. On the 14th August 1854, the Burial Board received a letter from the Treasury Chambers stating that the Lords Commissioners had approved the loan for the Cemetery.

In the journal the London Gazette dated 11th December 1854 the Right Honourable Sir George Grey stated that:

“The Cemetery at Abergavenny was to be discontinued forthwith in the Parish Church, in the Independent Chapel, Castle Street, and in the Baptist Chapels in Frogmore Street and Lion Street: and from after the first of June, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, in the Churchyard. In the Burial Grounds of the Independent and of the two Baptist Chapels, burials to be confined to the families of those already buried therein.”

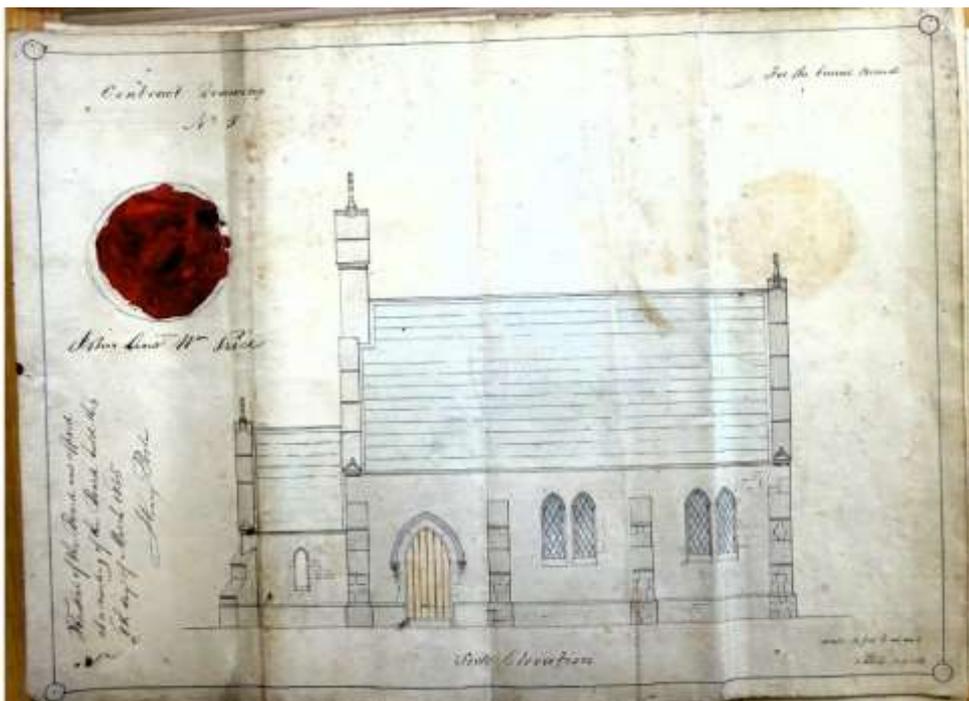
On the 11th of May 1855, the Burial Board was granted a licence to create a burial ground by the Archbishop of Llandaff in the place where the board had decided on the Old Hereford Road i.e. Baker's land. Work then had to be started. Now there is only one Chapel in the Graveyard but two were initially built. One was for Church of England burials and one for Non-Conformist burials.



Detailed lay-out of the new Cemetery

There are estimates for the work to be done which are interesting to see.

<i>Cost of the land</i>	£600
<i>Cost of the Chapels which were to be 28 feet by 18 feet to hold approximately forty people. The Chapel for Church of England burials was to be controlled by the Archdeacon of Monmouth. The plans of the Chapel for non-Conformist burials were already approved by Lord Palmerston.</i>	£420
<i>Cost of Boundary walls and Iron Gates</i>	£350
<i>Cost of pipes and drainage</i>	£190
<i>Conveyance of land, consecration of part of it, surveyors, and architects and other incidentals</i>	£140
<i>Charges for extra contingencies</i>	£300
Total	£2000



Side Elevation of the Chapel

There are details of the construction of the two chapels provided by Messrs. Richard and Seddon, Diocesan Architects. They are very specific about the materials to be used and the finish obtained. The chapels were completed in 1855 and served the community until the new cemetery in Llanfoist was opened in 1894.

Irene Hofayz

Notes:

All documents used for this article and images may be seen at Gwent Archives: D874.110

1. During the 1850s several new laws - beginning with the Metropolitan Burial Act of 1852 - initiated a national system of new public cemeteries. Burial places considered dangerous to health were closed.
2. 9 square feet = 1 square yard, 30 1/4 square yards = 1 perch, 40 perches = 1 rood/rod, 4 roods = 1 acre, 5 1/2 yards = 1 perch, pole or rod!

Marriage in Abergavenny Around the Time of the Marriage Act of 1753

Introduction

Members of the research group of the Abergavenny Local History Society have been transcribing the records for St. Mary's Priory church. The earliest records were in Latin but by the 18th century they were written in English. However, a significant shift in the way that marriages were recorded occurred in the middle of the 18th century. Prior to 1754 a typical entry would be one such as this from 1750:
Rowland Vaughn & Anne Griffiths of Trevethin were mar May 28 L.

This recording of a marriage would be found interspersed with recordings of Baptisms and Burials occurring in the same year. The cleric recording the marriage appears to have done his best to conserve ink (or time) by using the abbreviation 'mar' for marriage and the single capital letter L to indicate that the marriage was by licence rather than by banns.

Following 1754 the marriage records can be found in a separate book and include a lot more details. A typical record is this one from 1754:

Richard Watkin of the Parish of Goytre and Susanna Philip of this Parish were married in this Church by Banns this 21 Day of May in the year 1754 by me Evan Eustance Vic. This marriage was solemnized between us The mark of Richard Watkin, The mark of Susanna Philip. In the presence of William Thomas, William Phillip.

This follows an earlier entry detailing the reading of the Banns of marriage in Church.

The Banns of Marriage between Richard Watkin of the Parish of Goytre and Susanna Phillip of this Town of Abergavenny have been duly published in this Church on three Several Sundays viz. April 28th, and May 5th & 12th 1754. Evan Eustance Vic.

This change in recording was a result of the church conforming to the Marriage Act of 1753.

The Marriage Act of 1753

The Marriage Act of 1753¹, also known as Hardwicke's Marriage Act, and the Clandestine Marriage Act, was promoted by Philip Yorke the Lord Chancellor Lord Hardwicke and came into force on 25th March 1754. It was also described as An Act for the Better Prevention of Clandestine Marriage. The main reason behind the Act was that, at the time, there was no agreement within society about how a marriage might be considered legally binding. Prior to the Act a marriage could be conducted anywhere provided that it was before an ordained clergyman of the Church of England. It was thought that this had encouraged what were regarded as 'irregular' and secret marriages where at least one of the couple was underage and marrying without parental consent or the marriage was in fact bigamous. It was considered that these irregular marriages were more likely to occur amongst those of a wealthy background. One such case had reached the House of Lords and is likely to have influenced subsequent legislation. After the death of Captain John Campbell of Carrick in 1746 two women claimed to have been married to him. Jean Campbell had

lived with him for twenty years, but Magdalen Cochran claimed this was an irregular marriage and that he had previously secretly married her. After a court case that ran for seven years the Court of Session upheld the Commissary Court's decision that Jean Campbell was the lawful widow².

The Marriage Act (1753) set down several conditions that needed to be met. The main condition was that all marriages were to be conducted in a parish church or chapel of the Church of England in order to be considered legally binding. The only people exempt from this were Jews and Quakers. Both Catholics and non-conformists were required to be married in a Church of England. This restriction remained in place until 1836.

Prior to the Act marriage had been governed by the Canon Law of the Church of England³. People had married either by banns being called or obtaining a marriage licence, but this was a direction from the Church and was not mandatory. The Marriage Act made it a legal requirement. The purpose of the reading of the banns was to enable anyone in the church to raise an objection to the marriage on the grounds of canonical or legal impediments. Examples of impediments included a previous marriage that had not been dissolved or annulled, lack of consent, a vow of celibacy by one of the couple, and the couple being related within the prohibited degrees of kinship. A table of Kindred and Affinity had been provided in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer⁴. For example, a man was prohibited from marrying his mother's sister and a woman her husband's father.

The publication of banns had been in place since 1200 when the Canon of the Synod of Westminster in London declared that no marriage shall be contracted without banns thrice published in the church. The Lateran Council of 1215 made the publication of banns compulsory. Marriage licences had also been in place since the 14th century as an alternative to banns. They were usually granted by an archbishop, bishop, or archdeacon. The marriage licence, if granted, allowed the couple to marry quickly without having to wait the three weeks for the banns to be read. It also allowed people to marry in a parish which was away from their usual home parish. The issuing of a licence was a three-stage process with a marriage allegation first being sworn by one of the parties, usually the groom. The allegation normally gave the names, parish, approximate age and marital status of both bride and groom and the occupation of the groom. The second stage involved a bond being entered by the groom declaring that there was no impediment, and that the marriage would meet the requirements of the Church of England. This carried with it the stating of a sum of money by which they were bound and would have to pay if the marriage proved false. Finally, the licence was issued stating in which parish the marriage could occur and was valid for three months. What the Marriage Act (1753) did was to affirm the existing ecclesiastical law and include it in statutory law and also prevent marriage away from a church.

The Act also reinforced the age of consent for marriage as being 21. It stated that if a person who was under this age intended to marry, they would need the consent of their parents or guardians. It was generally considered that the minimum age was 12 for women and 14 for men. This was further enforced by the Marriage Act by introducing a penalty for any clergyman who disobeyed this with 14 years transportation. The Act listed the order in which consent should be obtained; 'the father (if living) or if dead the Guardian or Guardians of the person so under age,

lawfully appointed, or one of them; and in case there shall be no such Guardian or Guardians of the Person, then of the Mother (if living and unmarried) or if there shall be no Mother living and unmarried, then of a Guardian or Guardians of the Person appointed by the Court of Chancery'. The Act also covered the situation where the Guardian or mother may be non compos mentis (mentally incapable) or in 'Parts beyond the Seas' or unreasonably withholding their consent. This allowed the person who wished to marry to petition the Lord Chancellor.

In order to prevent abuse of the registers of marriage (e.g. removal of a page to conceal a marriage) the Act required the Church Wardens of every parish to provide 'Proper books of Vellum, or good and durable Paper in which all Marriages and Banns of Marriage respectively, there published or solemnized, shall be registered, and every Page thereof shall be marked at the Top with the figure of the number of every such Page, beginning at the second Leaf with Number-one, and every Leaf or Page so numbered shall be ruled with lines at proper and equal Distances.' From March 1754 onwards we find the new records in the new authorised books in St. Mary's Church.

The Act also provided the format for the recording the Evidence of Marriage along with the signatures of those marrying and the signatures of two or more credible Witnesses. The Act goes on to stress that if anyone makes a false entry, forges, or counterfeits an entry or wilfully destroys the Register the offending person being lawfully convicted shall be judged guilty of Felony and shall suffer Death as a Felon, without Benefit of Clergy. So, a pretty strong punishment! Interestingly the Act did not cover the Marriages of any of the Royal Family. The Act was read out in churches in the years 1753 to 1755 to inform all parishioners including those who were not literate.

The impact of the Marriage Act (1753)

It is generally thought that the Act achieved its aims, particularly in London. Prior to the Act it had been quite common for people to marry in the Fleet prison area where the clergy performing the ceremony were not at all diligent about checking the details of the couple, provided a large enough fee was paid. The registers record 3,547 marriages took place in the Fleet in 1720 and 5,551 in 1740⁵. Following the Act, the number of 'Fleet marriages' was significantly reduced. Probert and Brown⁶ argue in their case studies of rural and proto-industrial areas that the Act was largely successful in channelling marriages into a standard form. However, they suggest this is largely because it was not such a radical break with the past and that such clandestine marriages as had occurred prior to 1754 outside London tended to be celebrated in church. They suggest that, after the Act came into force, couples continued to marry in church but paid more attention to the requirement concerning their parish of residence and this is responsible for the increase in numbers sometimes observed.

Marriages at St. Mary's Priory Church Abergavenny

So, what impact did the Marriage Act have on Abergavenny? Records of marriages for the ten years prior to the implementation of the Act and the ten years after the Act were compared. Unfortunately, those for the ten years prior are not complete, for example most of the records for the years 1751 to 1753 do not record whether the marriage was by banns or licence.

In the period from 1744 to 1753 there were a total of 90 marriages recorded at St. Mary's Church. Of these 29 were recorded as being by Banns, 28 by Licence and 33 had no record. The number of marriages per year is shown in Fig.1.

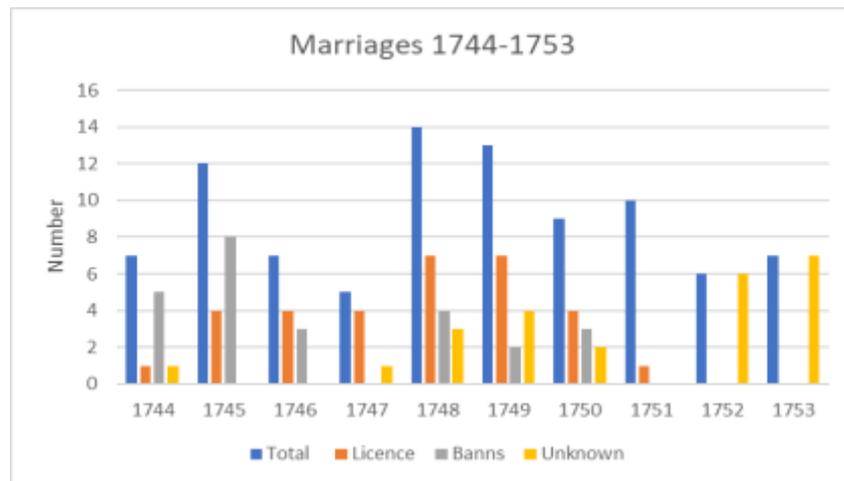


Fig 1. Marriages in St. Mary's Priory Church Abergavenny 1744-1753

In the period from 1754 to 1763 there were a total of 127 marriages recorded at the church of which 77 were by Banns and 46 by Licence with a further four being unknown as they occurred in the first three months of 1754 before the Marriage Act came into force. The number of marriages per year is shown in Fig. 2.



Fig 2. Marriages in St. Mary's Priory Church Abergavenny 1754-1763

The increase in total number of marriages over the latter ten-year period could be explained by the implementation of the Marriage Act but equally could be a consequence of an increasing population in the town. It is noteworthy that marriage at St. Mary's appear popular in the two years after the Act with a total of 13 marriages in 1754 and 17 in 1755. The graph shows a general trend for an increase over the ten-year period.

Marriage by Licence

It is interesting to examine the popularity of marriage by licence at St. Mary's. The incomplete nature of the records prior to the Act makes it difficult to draw any firm

conclusions as to why a couple chose to marry by licence. However, nearly a third of all marriages recorded were by licence. There are some clear examples where one or both of the couple comes from a neighbouring parish e.g. in 1743

Frances Morgan Of Llanover and Sarah Bevan of Goytre were married Feb 6 L

Other examples give no indication of why a marriage was by licence. e.g. in 1748
George Kemble & Mary Turvey were mar Oct.10 L

The trend for marriage by licence continues after 1754 with 46 out of a total of 127 marriages being by licence: again, approximately one in three.

Marriage by licence could occur when one of the couple resided in another parish but could also be because the couple wanted to avoid the calling of banns. This could be because they wished to marry quickly or wished to have an added degree of privacy to their wedding. This could be because the groom was on leave from the Army, the bride was pregnant, or that the couple differed significantly in age or social standing e.g. the squire marrying his maid. One possibility after 1754 is that the couple were either Catholic or non-conformist and hence did not wish the banns to be read in the Anglican church. In her research Probert⁷ gives the example of Catholics who were married in Cohn Court in Warwickshire who held two marriages, often on the same day, the first in a Catholic church and the second to comply with the law in an Anglican church. Pope Benedick XIV had given his sanction to Catholics complying with the legal status of a marriage in an Anglican church. A possible example of this is the marriage in 1760 of Mary Gunter if she is part of the Catholic Gunter family.
Edward Jones & Mary Gunter Both of Abergavenny were married in this Church by Licence the 2^d Day of August 1760 by me Evan Eustance Vic

Examining the marriage records reveals a significant number of marriages by licence where both parties were resident in Abergavenny. One suggestion that has been made is that marriage by licence carried with it a certain status due to the additional cost to the couple. Richard Grey recorded in 1730 that a licence would cost five shillings. Only those of adequate means would be able to afford to marry by licence. Undertaking a comparison between marriages by licence and those by banns in the years post the Marriage Act and looking particularly at the literacy of the couple gives some further information. Table 1. examines marriage by licence and shows whether both or either member of the couple were able to sign their name and the number of couples where both parties made their mark as unable to sign.

Year	2 signatures	1 signature /1 mark	2 marks	Total
1754 (part year)	2	0	0	2
1755	4	1	1	6
1756	3	1	0	4
1757	1	3	0	4
1758	2	1	0	3
1759	3	0	1	4
1760	2	0	2	4
1761	6	1	0	7
1762	5	3	1	9
1763	0	1	1	2
Total	28	11	6	45

Table 1. Number of those marrying by Licence in St. Mary's Priory Church who were able to sign their name or made a mark.

The number of couples marrying by licence where both made a mark indicating that they were not literate was 6 of the 45, a percentage of 13%. Table 2 shows similar data for those couple who married by banns.

Year	2 signatories	1 signatory/1 mark	2 marks	Total
1754	1	1	5	7
1755	3	2	7	12
1756	0	2	2	4
1757	0	1	4	5
1758	0	0	3	3
1759	1	3	4	8
1760	2	2	3	7
1761	1	1	5	7
1762	2	2	6	10
1763	4	5	5	14
Total	14	19	44	77

Table 2: Number of those marrying by Banns in St. Mary's Priory Church who were able to sign their name and those who made a mark.

The number of couples marrying by banns where both made a mark was 44 out of the total marriages of 77 or 57%.

The difference between the levels of literacy of those marrying by licence and those marrying by banns supports the suggestion that those marrying by licence were more likely to have at least one partner with some level of literacy which in turn would give access to the increased financial resources necessary to procure a licence.

Celebrant and Witnesses

The majority of marriages in the ten years after the Marriage Act were conducted by two curates, George Jenkins and Thomas Lloyd, with the vicar Evan Eustance also taking some marriages. Evan Eustance was vicar both before and after the implementation of the Marriage Act serving from 1720 to 1763⁸. There does not appear to be any pattern as to when the vicar took a marriage service although he did officiate at the marriage of other clergy.

The Revd. Rice Powell of the Parish of St John the Evangelist in the Town of Brecon Batchelor and Mrs Mary Meeke of the Town of Abergavenny were married in this Church by Licence the 9th Day of September in the Year of our Lord 1754 by me Evan Eustance Vic.

He also took the marriage of his curate.

The Rev Thomas Lloyd Cler and Mrs Elizabeth Mason Both of Abergavenny were married in this Church by Licence Feb^{ry} 12th 1756 by Evan Eustance Vic

It is tempting to think of marriages in Abergavenny in this period being like marriages in the 21st century with family members present and often acting as witnesses. However, the registers indicate that the witnesses were very rarely family members. The vast majority of marriages were witnessed by one Walter Powell. He may have been the parish clerk. A 'Walter Powell' is mentioned in the Vestry book ⁹ indicating that he was involved with the administration of the parish and there is also mention of a Walter Powell as an inn keeper. He is usually accompanied by another male witness. Sometimes this is Walter Charles. The vestry book tells us he was

Sexton at the church at this time. This use of male witnesses who were able to sign their names may have been an effort by the church to ensure the presence of 'two or more credible Witnesses'. There are a few examples where one of the witnesses alongside Walter Powell appears to be a family member, for example:

John Gabriel of Abergavenny and Susannah Davies of the Town of Brecon were married in this Church (by Banns) the 23d Day of June 1760 by me Tho: Lloyd Curate . This marriage was solemnized between us John Gabriel by mark, The mark of Susannah Davies. In the presence of Walter Powell, William Gabriel.

It is difficult to know why William Gabriel witnessed the marriage. One possibility could have been that his son John was underage and he was giving consent to the marriage. However, we have no birth records to prove this.

Even rarer are the examples where a woman serves as a witness but there are a few. One is:

Francis Sawyer of the Parish of St Stephen in Bristol & Anne Saunders of the Town of Abergavenny were married in this Church by Licence the 25th Day of March 1759 by me Evan Eustance Vic. This Marriage was Solemnized between us Francis Sawyer, Anne Saunders In the presence of Sam Saunders, Elizabeth Saunders.

There is a record for Anne Saunders, daughter of Samuel Saunders, being baptised in 1735 in Abergavenny which would suggest that she was aged approximately 24 at the time of her marriage. It may be that both parents wanted to express their approval to the marriage of their daughter to someone from as far afield as Bristol.

There are no obvious marriages of those under the age of consent in the ten-year period. However, as Probert (2010) points out if the parents gave consent to a marriage by banns their acceptance would be shown by their not objecting to the banns. The first marriage by Licence in St. Mary's of someone under the age of consent occurred in 1768 fourteen years after the implementation of the Marriage Act.

Robert Henry Whitney Batchelor & Anne Davies Spinster a minor both of this Town were married in this Church by Licence with Consent of Parents this thirteenth Day of July 1768 by me John Williams Cur. This Marriage was Solemnized between us John Henry Whitney, Ann Davies in the presence of J. G. (indistinct signature) Walter Powell.

Due to the bride's common surname, it is not possible to search for a possible birth to ascertain her age and the witness signature does not appear to be of her parent. However, it is noteworthy that she was able to sign the register herself.

Conclusions and Further Research

It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the marriage register as to whether there was any significant impact of the Marriage Act of 1753 on marriages in St. Mary's Priory Church Abergavenny. It is not likely that there were a significant number of clandestine marriages occurring locally before 1754.

While there was an increase in the number of marriages in the ten years after the Act compared with the ten years before this could be because of an increase in the population of the town. Factors which may have an influence include the fact that the church is large and impressive and has been referred to as the Westminster Abbey of South Wales. This could certainly have influenced the number of marriages

by licence both before and after the Act with those who wished to marry in an impressive church prepared to apply for a licence. Unfortunately, as licences were not required to be retained, they tend not to survive and hence we cannot find more information on the reason for the marriage from them. Examination of other church records for the same period for example those of Llantillio Pertholey and Llanover may provide a good comparison particularly in relation to the number of marriages by licence. The records after 1754 do provide additional information and it would be interesting to examine the nature of the witnesses over time and make a comparison with other churches. Examination of the records over a longer timeframe might also give an indication of the influence of the growth in population.

Christina Maciejewski

¹ Clandestine Marriages Act or The Marriage Act 1753 or Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act 26 Geo 2. C 33

² Lenehan, L. (1999) 'The Scottish Case that Led to Hardwicke's Marriage Act'. *Law and History Review* 17.1 Spring 1999.

³ *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical*, 1604.

⁴ *Book of Common Prayer*(1662)

⁵ Roger Lee Brown, 'The rise and fall of the Fleet marriages' in R.B. Outhwaite ed. *Marriage and society* (London ,1981), 123.

⁶ Probert R. and d'Arcy Brown Liam (2008) The impact of the Clandestine Marriages Act: three case studies in conformity. *Continuity and Change* 23(2) 309-330.

⁷ Probert R. (2010) Tracing Marriages in 18th Century England and Wales: a reassessment of law and practice. The National Archives, podcast 21st May 2010.

⁸ Clergy of the Church of England Database.

⁹ Gwent Archives Document D874.92 Abergavenny Vestry Book 1707 to 1804.



"Abergavenny Church" John Cullum, engraver

Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru – The National Library of Wales

When was the Plague in Abergavenny?

For many of us, the plague means the Black Death with its plague pits and abandoned villages or the Great Plague with men in black robes with beaked hoods or the villagers of Eyam isolating themselves. We usually forget that there were many occurrences of plague over several centuries and that waves spread across different parts of the world each time, right up until the end of the 19th century. And it is still around today. Each year there are more than a thousand reports of plague cases worldwide. Our recent experiences of pandemic make it easier to understand that cases can appear in isolated places at different times. All this makes gauging the full extent of a disease like the plague much more difficult to track through history.

It is believed that the Black Death first travelled to Monmouthshire from England at the end of the 1340s, most probably by sea or overland from Bristol, and was recorded in Caldicot and Monmouth in 1349. It had spread as far as Builth Wells by 1359. Abergavenny suffered many deaths in 1348 and 1349. The Lordships of Usk and Brecon were also affected, but to a lesser extent and generally the devastation caused by the plague varied greatly between towns, even between villages and hamlets. The inquisition of Laurence de Hastings, Lord of Abergavenny in 1349, showed that the hamlets of Abergavenny Manor yielded on the whole about one-third of their former pre-plague rents (though some were less affected than others, both by the plague and by the murrain and failed harvests of 20 or 30 years previously). *“The rents of assize of Werneryth fell from £13 los. to £1 14s. 6d., and those of Trefgoythel from £3 10s. 6d. to 6s.”*¹

The Inquisition of Laurence de Hastings also states *“[In] the lordship of Bergavenny there is there one messuage of no value beyond the charges; a fishpond without fish; 1 fulling mill formerly worth 33/4, now only 6/8 yearly because of the murrain; 142 acres - rood of arable worth 18/10 (12d. an acre; 261 acres of pasture at 2d. an acre; 27 acres of wood of no value because there are no buyers owing to the murrain. There used to be there of rents of assise of free and customary tenants £12 yearly but now only £4 and that because many of the tenements lie empty and derelict for lack of tenants. The works of customary tenants used to be worth per annum 22/0+, and now 16/- for the same reason.”* Monmouthshire suffered very badly again when further waves of plague arrived in 1361 and 1369 affecting many areas including Trellech and Caldicot. In these waves young people were the majority of the victims, meaning that gradual recovery of agriculture and commerce following the first wave was slowed or halted. In the 15th and 16th centuries the incidence of plague reduced with just isolated occurrences until it yet again became more frequent and widespread in the 17th century. For example, Presteigne was visited by plague epidemics in 1593, 1610, and 1636.

A volume titled: *The Plague Book – Orders Thought meete by her Majestie and her privie Council to be executed throughout the Counties of this Realme, in such Townes, Villages, and other places, as are, or may be hereafter infected with the plague, for the stay of further increase of the same.* was published by order of Queen Elizabeth 1 in 1578.² While it does not specify any particular method of indicating plague victims it does require ministers to keep a record.

9 Item, the Ministers and Curates, and the Church wardens in every Parish, shall in writing certifie weekly to some of the Justices, residing within ye Hundred or other limit where they serve, the number of such persons as are infected and doe not die, and also of all such as shall die within their Parishes, and their diseases probable whereof they dyed, and the same to be certified to the rest of the Justices at their assemblies, which during some convenient time would be every xxi. dayes, and thereof a particular booke kept by the Clerke of the peace, or some such like.

This must have presented a considerable administrative burden, and many parishes would have been unable to comply. Where separate books were kept of victims of epidemics, they risked greater likelihood of being lost or destroyed over the centuries than the normal parish records would. Where mortality records have not survived researchers have generally taken the difference between the average burial rate and those of a plague year to indicate the number of plague deaths, but we are left with no idea of numbers affected but not killed by plague.

After the Great Plague of 1665 incidence of the plague throughout Europe gradually reduced and the last major epidemic in Europe was in 1720 in the Marseilles area. Smallpox took over as the disease to fear most but spasmodic isolated epidemics of plague were recorded intermittently over the next couple of centuries. The last incidence of the plague in Bristol was recorded in 1916.

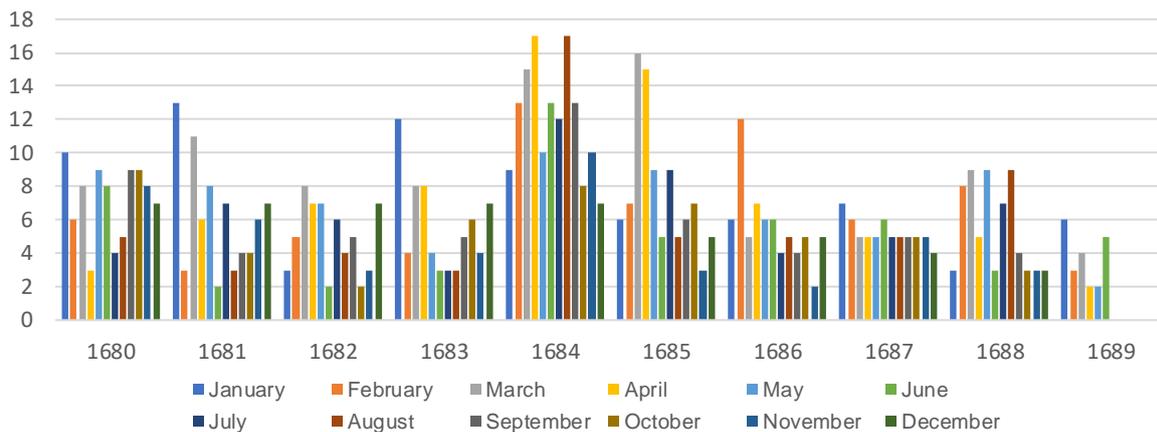
Finding plague deaths in parish records is not easy. The Westminster Burials Collection has what is believed to be the first record of a plague death in April 1665. It is of Margarit daughter of Dr John Porteous Buchurch. There is a tiny 'pla' written beside the record. Usually it is only possible to spot an epidemic by the sudden increase in numbers of burials, though even that number can be affected by the break-down of normal recording methods in times of disasters. The London Bills of Mortality made it relatively easy to track the progress of epidemics across the city but there is no comparative information for the rest of England or Wales. Spotting records of isolated plague outbreaks is additionally complicated in the period after 1666 by the additional need to record the swearing of affidavits to comply with the Burial in Wool acts of Parliament of 1666 to 1680. Some parishes recorded the affidavits in a separate book and some alongside the burial record in the parish register, or simply with an A.

By the sixteenth century, in parishes where causes of death were not indicated in the parish burial records, burials of victims of the plague were not always shown with a letter P beside the name or in the margin but with alternative marks. The use of a letter P was the method used in Presteign in 1593 but fifty years later alternatives were more usual. In the register of Bedwellte, Monmouthshire, the victims of the plague of 1638 were marked with an asterix and the following note is written at the end of the burial entries for the year: "So there died in the said year 1638 (in Bedwelltie) 109 persons, whereof there died of the Plague, (as is aforesaid) 82, & 27 of all other diseases."

Was there an epidemic of plague in Abergavenny in the 17th Century?

The parish records of St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny, do not show any obvious signs of calamities by sudden increases in burial numbers before the 1680s. The graph below shows how the burial numbers spike each year in January, February or March of the years 1680 to 1689.³ The pattern of increased burials in the first few months of the year changes markedly in 1684. The spike starts in February, as in the previous years, but then the death figures continue to rise right through the summer and into the autumn. Close inspection of the original records reveals a number of burials in this period marked with a small P in the left-hand margin. In 1683/4 there are 41 deaths marked with a P recorded between February and October.

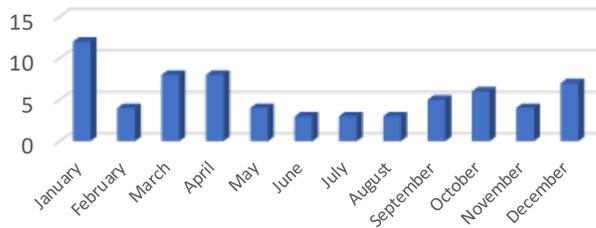
Burials at St Mary's Priory Church 1680-1689



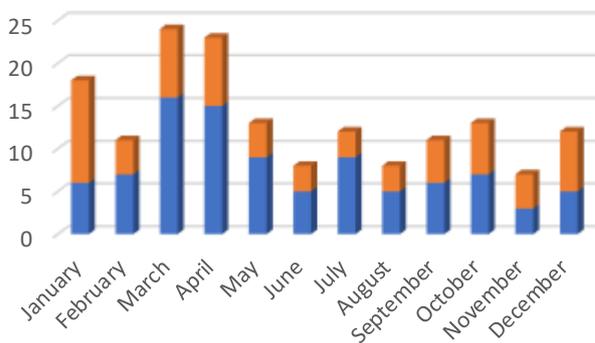
The trend is repeated in March and April of 1685 and in February 1686 but there are no burials marked by a letter P in those years. Increased death figures in the summer can be a feature of some epidemics, as are increased numbers of child burials. The winter of 1683 was one of the five harshest ever recorded in the UK with the ground recorded as freezing to a depth of several feet in Somerset and Lancashire. It must be assumed that Wales suffered in a similar way. The terrible winter was followed by a hot and dry late spring and summer with droughts recorded. Again, Wales must have been affected by the unusual heat if not by the droughts.

The vicar of St Mary's Abergavenny from 1663 to 1691 was John Greenhaugh. Very little is known about him, not even where he took his degree, but Greenhaugh is name found in Lancashire and probably originated there so it is possible he was in Lancashire before he took the Abergavenny ministry. If that was the case, he so could have experienced the serious plague epidemics in Lancashire of the 1630s and 1640s when he was young. He and his wife Olive had several children while living in Abergavenny and Martha, the youngest, would have been ten in 1684, so John and Olive Greenhaugh must have followed the progress of a disease that took the lives of so many young people with some trepidation. The vicar appears to have been a scholar and it is noticeable that he used Latin in the parish records for long periods when it was not strictly required⁴. He would certainly have been aware of the use of the letter P for the recording of plague burials and of the requirements in *The Plague Book*.

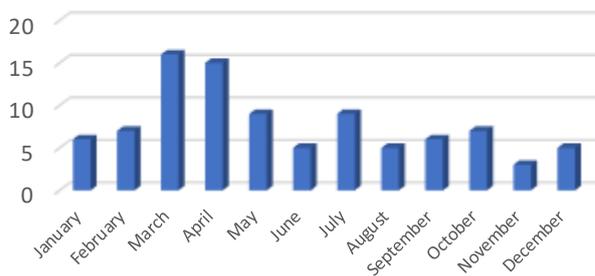
The first letter P in the Abergavenny records is beside the name of John Thomas of Llanwenarth who was buried on the 9th February 1683. His burial was followed on the 21st February by the first young person's burial – that of William, son of the late John Thomas, then there were three more in March. The year changed on 29th March at that time, so the first burial of 1684 was of James the son of James Hayles on 7th April. During April, there were eight more P records and in May there were five. June saw a jump in the numbers as there were ten P burials. In July there were seven and in August four. After a gap of several weeks the final P burial was that of Hugh, the son of Francis Edwards, a shopkeeper on 3rd October. After that there are no more burials marked with a P in the records.



St Mary's Burials in 1683

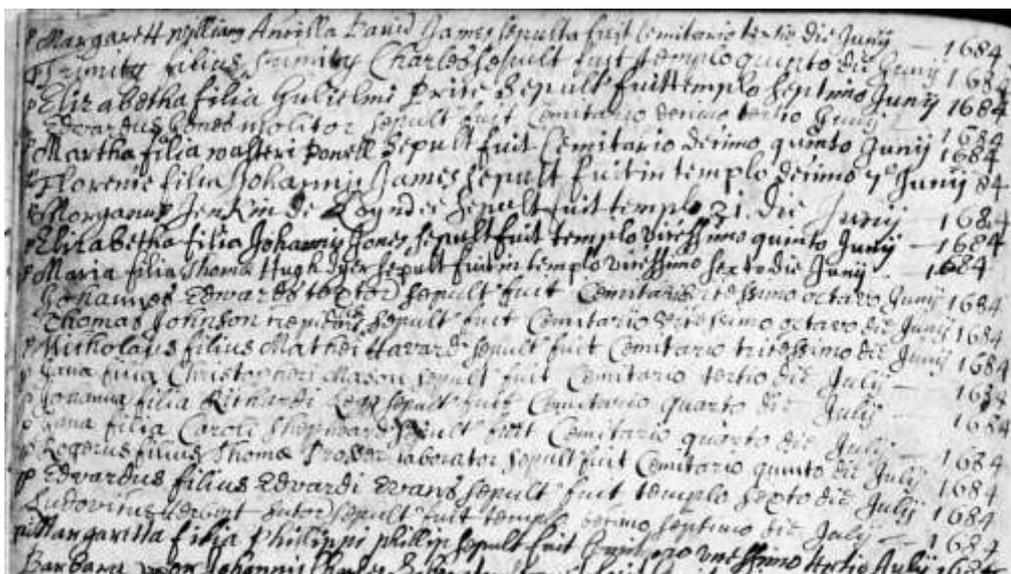


St Mary's Burials in 1684 with burials marked P burials in orange



St Mary's Burials in 1685

The P burials in 1683/4 consisted of 19 female and 21 male burials and all except two are of sons or daughters, indicating that they were probably young people. This was typical of some sorts of epidemics including plague and smallpox. Sons and daughters were generally accepted by genealogists as being young people between the ages of 0 and 19 years. The three not described as a son or daughter were John Thomas of Llanwenarth, Margaret Williams who was David James' servant (servants could be any age from about 11 upwards) and Morgan Jenkin of Lloyndee.



Some P records from the St Mary's Priory Church burial records of 1684: Gwent Archives

There are only eight burials where another member of the family was also buried. So out of the 41 families who lost someone to the epidemic, thirty-seven lost only one family member. We cannot know how many other family members caught the illness but survived. Labourer John James lost two daughters: Florence on 17th June and Alice on 9th August. William Jones, a corvisor, lost two sons: Wroth on 21st April and Richard on 12th May. Thomas Powell lost a son and a daughter: Anne on 11 April and Richard on 13th April. John Jenkins also lost a daughter and a son: Margaret on 2nd March and Benjamin on 20th March. So, whatever this affliction was, it cruelly took just one or two of the younger members in most of the affected families.

We do not have records of the population of Abergavenny in the 17th century. Brecon had a population of 2100 by 1670 and it is reasonable to assume that Abergavenny had a similar number, being another market town on good trading routes. So, this incident could have led to a loss of about 2% of the population, which seems small until you realise that it would have represented a much higher percentage of the town's children.

We are told the occupation of 15 of the fathers. One, John Davies, was a pauper. Two are given as labourers, five are corvisors (up-market shoemakers), one carrier, one dyer, one felt-maker, one shopkeeper, one basket-maker and one carithicarius (no translation available but probably something to do with carts). Only one of the burials is not given a location for the grave. All the others are given as being in the most commonly recorded locations of Templo (assumed to be the area closest to the church and cloisters) and Cemitorio, the wider graveyard. None were buried inside the church or porch. This suggests that there was no special area set aside for plague victim burials.

It is possible that the Ps could have stood for something other than plague, for example pox or pestilence⁵. In 17th century various attempts were made to quarantine people in plague areas but they were difficult to enforce, particularly in smaller towns and villages. In Presteign, the situation was slightly different as during the epidemic of 1636 outsiders were unwilling to enter the town for fear of infection. This meant a

shortage of food and led to the townspeople wandering further in search of more. A levy was charged from unaffected areas to supply food to those in need, but this was only partly successful.

The spike in the St Mary's burials in 1685 brings the suspicion that the plague may have returned with the coming of spring. But there is no indication in the records of any repeat of the previous year's catastrophe apart from the increase in burial figures. Whatever the cause of the extra deaths, John Greenhaugh cannot have believed it to have been the plague. Of the 31 burials in March and April 1684/85, 14 were of young people: 9 daughters and 5 sons. One possibility is that people who had contracted the disease the previous year remained in a weakened condition and less able to survive the normal privations of March and April.

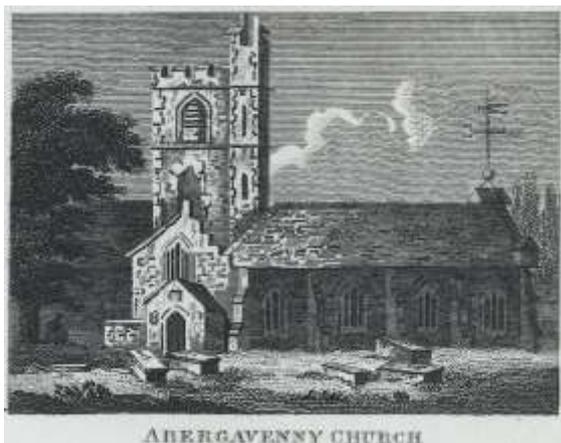
Because this episode of possible plague in Abergavenny came at a time when in most areas of Britain, the plague was much rarer, there are no records in other towns with which we can directly compare the Abergavenny records. Where records may have existed in the past many have not survived because have been lost or destroyed, particularly those from Bristol which would have been useful to check for evidence that disease spread from there. John Greenhaugh was also vicar of Llantilio Pertholey so those records were checked but revealed nothing relevant.

Unless new evidence comes to light we will never know for sure if the plague visited Abergavenny in 1684 but the evidence is strong that some extremely unpleasant disease visited the area and caused the deaths of 30 of the town's children.

Sue Smith

Notes:

1. *The Black Death in England and Wales, as exhibited in Manorial Documents* by Wiliam Rees, M.A., D.Sc., 1923. Accessed from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/003591572301601605>
2. *Historical Collections at the Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, University of West Virginia*. Accessed from: <http://historical.hsl.virginia.edu/plague/pages.cfm%3Fpg=1.html>
3. The records suddenly stop in June 1689 for several years.
4. The Latin John Greenhaugh used was not standard and it is even tempting to suspect that he made up Latin words when his Latin primer was not adequate for his needs. He probably owned a copy of Lily's *Short introduction of Grammar*, the most popular primer of the time that was used for several centuries.
5. Some records in Lancashire in the 1640s are labelled *Pox* even though the likelihood is that they were in fact plague deaths.
6. *Powys Digital History Project*. Accessed from <http://history.powys.org.uk/history/prest/plague2.html>



Abergavenny Church

Artist unknown, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol
Cymru – The National Library of Wales

The Medieval Market in Abergavenny

An imagined scenario: The year is 1290 and the family cooking pot (made of an alloy of copper and tin) has been patched and patched. The family brought the pot with them from England when they took up a settlement offer from the Lord of Abergavenny to have a plot of land near the new town of Abergavenny. The family were enabled to build a house of their own on the 'Englishry'¹ manor and grow crops, with their men liable for armed service for the Lord. They hear of fighting in the north of Wales, but locally they only hear of the demands for more archers from the Welsh population and men going off to war. Their worries are more mundane. The pot cannot be mended anymore, so a new pot is needed to hang over the fire to make pottage. This can be a thick white porridge made with oats, a runny pottage made with peas, or a white porridge made with leeks. A popular and welcome dish is made of peas, herbs, some bacon and white beans, possibly with meat stock and thickened with breadcrumbs – almost anything can go into the pot². Iron is used by the smith for horseshoes at the manor but is much too expensive to use for a pot, and the manor blacksmith does not have the skills to fashion a new pot, whereas the more skilled artisans in the town are able to make pots of various quality and decoration. The roads are poor, slow, and often dangerous, but packhorses regularly take grain and any other surplus crops, cheese, and animals to the market in Abergavenny from the manor, which is still fortified with a bank and a palisade against the Welsh. The family talks about it for many hours and consults with others in the small community. It will be a major expense and they may have to borrow money³ against future sales at the market. Eventually, it is decided that it is a priority. The small group set off just at daylight as usual to reach the market as early as possible, the journey taking about two hours to cover the five miles or so, at the slow plod of the horses and walking pace. As they near Abergavenny, they join others bringing their surplus to sell and they wait in a long line to enter through the town gate to pay their fee to enter. In the queue are many packhorses, asses (donkeys) and some carts with two wheels pulled by an ass with their loads of surplus produce, and animals to sell. Inside the gate is the inn where those needing accommodation for themselves or for their horses are milling around, some breaking their fast with cheese and bread, others already starting by drinking the wine available from casks at the inn. Their group will be lucky if they manage a tankard of ale during the day, their finances are under great stress with this extra outlay.

Once inside the gate they make their way to their usual street where tables can be hired for the market day, and another fee paid. The stalls are laid out in rows grouping like goods with one another, the food produced by those in the countryside piled onto the tables for the customers to inspect and haggle over, except for those whose price was set. It was, for example, illegal to buy up grain early in the morning and then re-sell later at an increased price (forestalling). The price of bread is fixed, and bread and pies can only be baked in the ovens belonging to the Lord. Maslin (a mixture of wheat and rye), or just dark rye bread will be the cheapest. Those who have paid to use the ovens carry the goods on trays through the market shouting out what is available to buy. Some of the artisans who have a burgage plot have their front shutters raised up to shelter their goods and the bottom shutter supported to form a table to display their goods. A few burgage dwellings must be entered to view the more delicate and expensive goods such as cloth with gold or silver thread. Sugar in various forms and spices were also often sold from within the building rather than

on the open stall where the weather might affect the quality. Their small party were not able to afford such luxury goods as sugar and used honey for sweetening rather than the expensive imported sugar. Everywhere are the Lord's men, checking all fees were paid, and that weights are as authorized.

Nearest the North and West gates are the stalls with the live animals brought in. These are the main routes also in from the Welsh areas, and nearest to the ditches into which the debris, together with the ordure from the houses, is swept outside the walls at the end of the day, producing a fine stink. The animals, sheep, with lambs prized for tenderness and flavour by the townspeople, and the cattle, that would look very small to our eyes, mill around in their enclosures. They are usually killed there and jointed up for sale, as few town dwellers have the room for keeping anything but a few pigs. William and Marjorie leave the other two to sell the produce and, with the old cauldron, make their way to the metal workers area of the market. On a few previous visits, they have visited this area of the market where the skilled artisans have their wares displayed inside the front part of the house with the workshops and smithy stretched out behind and their living accommodation above. They had brought back to their family ideas about cost and size and had their eye on one stall which had goods within their small allocation of money. Marjorie would like one with decoration around the rim and in quadrants round the body, but William wants a plainer one, thinking it will be cheaper. They argue, with Marjorie pointing out that the decorative ribs strengthen the pot and will make it last longer, and the stallholder's wife adds her practiced persuasion to that of Marjorie. They haggle at the stall, William still with his hand over his purse attached by strings to his belt – the extra coins in it have been making him anxious since he left home, and he comes to the market less regularly than his wife who usually does the trading. Eventually, a price is agreed, and the old cauldron surrendered as part exchange for part of the price. William and Marjorie are now just as nervous guarding their new purchase tied into sacking on one side of the ass and make their way back to the others at their stall. They have sold their small supply of surplus goods and are impatiently waiting to go – no staying to exchange news and a drink of ale from one of the many alehouses today, and they have bought any other purchases asked for by others where they live. It is important for all the people who live at the manor that they do not spend too much time away – there are many tasks to do and service for the lord of manor to be undertaken while they are at home. They make their way home, although the animals will walk no faster than they came, despite their anxiety.

How did the market come to be set up?

Earlier, at the turn of the eleventh century, Welsh Society appears to have been under the control of a class of warrior freemen who governed their small kingdoms through 'heroic values and aggressive militarism⁴. Pillage, plunder, and tribute taking were frequent, which made any permanent or larger scale trading settlement a target vulnerable to attack. Any agricultural surplus produced by peasants that might, in England, have gone to market were collected or consumed by Welsh rulers on their progress through their holdings. Along the border, some agricultural surpluses may have gone towards England to be sold. Any purchase of luxury goods before about 1070 appears to have been small scale, involving goods such as wine or silks, and largely orientated towards trade by sea.

At first after the Norman conquest, there were no markets in Wales. Abergavenny was one of the first to be established as the King encouraged the Marcher Lords to

move in to control the area. The March was a frontier zone between Wales and England and although the Marcher Norman lords owed *personal* allegiance to their King, their *lands* were exempt from royal taxation. They were given rights to create markets and boroughs (elsewhere these rights were only available to the king) and had their own system of law.

In 1063, Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex (and future King of England) defeated Gruffydd ap Llewelyn. In 1065 he built a fortified burgh⁵ at Porthskewett in Gwent, which seems to have been built as a protected commercial centre for *English* merchants on the *western* shore of the Severn Estuary. Within weeks of construction this was sacked by the new king of Gwent, Caradog ap Gruffudd. In 1067, William fitz Osbern campaigned in Gwent and set up fortified settlements at Striguil (later called Chepstow) and Monmouth. More fortified settlements followed but they remained protected behind walls for many years. The ‘manor’ or ‘Englishry’ was the part of the Lordship which had been militarily subjugated and economically re-orientated towards the production of surpluses, particularly grain, of which wheat was the most profitable. Later, by the fourteenth century, most places in Gwent were within a day’s journey of a market. Oats were more suitable for this wet climate, and the three-field rotation gradually introduced other crops such as barley, rye, peas, and beans by that time.

The Anglo-Norman castle represented the authority, rights and power of the Lord holding it. The castle housed the officials including the treasurer, or ‘receiver’, who collected the money raised by taxes on commercial exchanges and property transfers, from the court fees from leasing the assets of the lordship, such as mills or fish weirs, and from appointed posts such as the forester, the armorer, or the hayward looking after the hay meadows. The receiver was also responsible for maintaining the castle and the payments for soldiers who garrisoned the castle. The shift from a society based on payments in kind to one in which money dominated was made possible by the introduction of towns. Trade was concentrated in formally constituted towns in prescribed markets districts which compensated the Lord for the enormous outlay in building the castle and settlement and maintaining a garrison of soldiers to protect it. A minor lord might be given the right to build a fortified manor and was required to provide fighting men for his overlord, as Sir Roger de Hastings was given the right to build a fortified settlement at Pen y clawdd, Llanfihangel Crucorney, perhaps originally owing fealty to Lord Abergavenny, although according to documents recorded postmortem it belonged to the Earl of Pembroke in 1349⁶. Pen y clawdd manor, five miles from Abergavenny, was within walking distance of the market and there would have been many others established to provide the rule of the Marcher Lords in the area, some under minor lords and others directly under the control of Lord Abergavenny.

The establishment of these areas under Anglo-Norman rule in Wales displaced the native Welsh to more upland areas less able to produce agricultural surpluses. These could not produce crops profitably and were largely reliant on cattle rearing, and later, sheep, wool and flannel. The hardship and extreme poverty caused by the displacement of the local population must have contributed towards the willingness of the native Welsh to serve in the armies of the Anglo-Norman King and local Marcher Lords. Many men did not return from fighting, increasing depopulation of rural areas and maintaining the dispersed settlement pattern of isolated homesteads rather than groups of houses in rural areas. However, the establishment of towns,

where the majority were Anglo-Norman immigrants, invited and encouraged by the Marcher Lords, also required continued immigration – towns always increase mortality due to the unsanitary conditions. The other important occupants of towns were the artisans – the smiths, carpenters, the tanners, the pewterers, the spinners and weavers and the millers amongst them - the most prosperous of whom were burgesses. These were free men who lived in a borough established around the castle, paying rent to the Lord. Burgesses held a plot of land (usually less than half an acre) and paid a fixed rent for it. They were not required to provide agricultural service to their Lord, but usually owed military service of some type. Their rights to this piece of land were quite extensive. They could sell it (or leave it to someone who would in turn become a burgess), sublet it or mortgage it. They also had the right to sell and buy goods in the town's markets without having to pay tolls. The pattern of housing along some streets in the central area of Abergavenny, like in Nevill Street and upper Cross Street, are long narrow plots which were the original burgage plots of land leased by the Lord. Some burgesses prospered and held a burgage in another Lordship town to increase their buying and selling power, although it seems difficult to reconcile this with owing military service to different Marcher lords who might be fighting each other.

Hamelin de Ballon appears in a charter dated before 1100, in which he grants his chapel in Abergavenny castle and the site and resources for the building of a principal church within the settlement that Hamelin was laying out beside his castle, including permission to create its own faubourg (suburb). (They spoke a type of French and their documents were in Latin.) He also granted another church within his Lordship (unnamed, possibly St John's). By the mid-12C, Abergavenny Priory was defined in claims of the abbey of Le Mans. The Welsh were dominant *outside* the encircling walls of Abergavenny with small holdings suggesting that they were mainly concerned with raising livestock, rather than the profitable grain. The manors owned or controlled by the Lordship of Abergavenny were large, included settlements, and grew crops. Abergavenny was a border stronghold guarding the crossing of the River Usk and protecting against incursions of the Welsh from the north and west, so murage grants (to provide walls for defence) were made in 1241-6 and 1259-64, making a reinforced bank and ditch, later converted to stone walls between 1295-1301 and again in 1314 -197.

The first reference to the markets and fairs in Abergavenny can be found in the accounts of the Lordship of Abergavenny in 1256-57. Temporarily, the Lordship was under the control of the Crown because the heir to the estate was underage. *“William Herman and John Poth ...render account for £10.11s. 61/2d for the toll of the market per annum and for £4.6s.10d for the toll of the fair at the Feast of the Exaltation of the holy Cross (Sept 14th) ...the same render accounts for the 40s 9d from the chensers⁸ of the burgh that they might sell and buy as if they were of the liberty of the town at the two terms of the year viz, at the Feast of St Martin (Nov 11th) and at the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary (March 25th)”*

Burgesses could trade any day of the week, but on market day, extra stalls were set up and a wider range of customers attended. Anyone who did not hold a burgage plot had to pay to come into town, pay per head of their animals, or for measurement of their goods, as well as pay for a place in the street market. The less frequent fair days went on for several days and included entertainment and visits from traders from further afield – a social occasion and break from routine.

Despite a lack of written evidence, it seems usually assumed by historians that market traders (burgesses) moved from one market to another. An example suggested is: Crickhowell (Monday), Abergavenny (Tuesday), Grosmont (Monday & Friday), Monmouth (Wednesday, Saturday) and Ross (Friday) in the north of the county⁹.

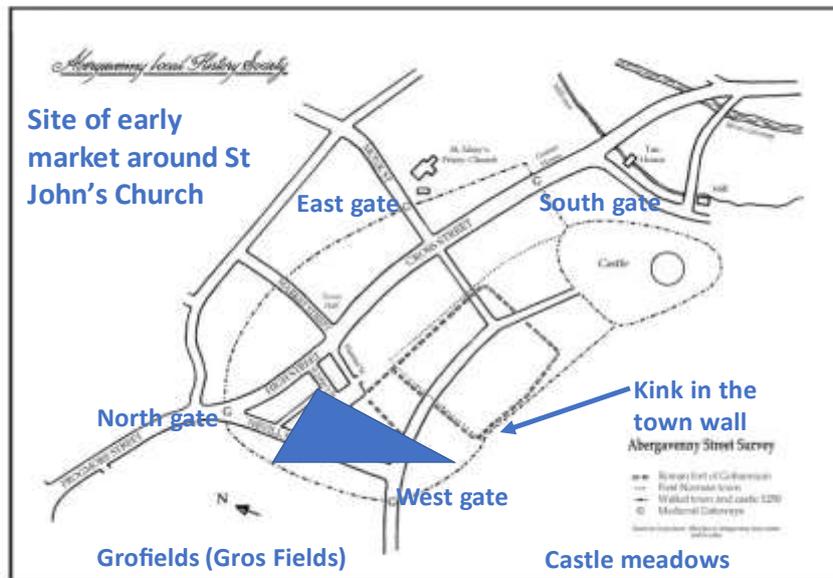
However, I have doubts about the practicalities of a 'trader circuit' given our knowledge of the behaviour of market traders today and the difficulties of transport between towns. Taking analogies from modern times, traders need time to produce their goods, and would not want to be away selling more than one or two days a week. The 'better' roads largely followed old Roman routes, or parallel to those routes where the going was poor. Other routes were made cross country by frequent use and were often impassable or very slow in poor weather. There are few rivers in Gwent suitable for larger boats, and a coracle would have been too small for two people with goods. Between 1256 and 1267 Lord Edward held the lordships of Abergavenny, Monmouth and Three Castles. It is suggested that a circuit would have grown up between these places. Grosmont held a market on Monday, Abergavenny on Tuesday (12 miles away), then 16 miles to Monmouth for a Wednesday market, ten miles from Monmouth to Ross on a Thursday, Ross to Newent for Friday 8 miles, or back to Grosmont (Friday) and then Monmouth (Saturday). A Monday market was held in Crickhowell and it is only 6 miles to Abergavenny for the Tuesday market¹⁰. It seems impractical and exhausting for a trader with his horses and panniers, or even slower, a cart, to be able to leave a market at the close of trading and ride to the next town to set up in time for the opening of the market at daybreak. There were artisans making goods and selling in each community and they would have to have a very large advantage over neighboring products to make travelling between markets profitable. It seems more likely that the longer distances would be travelled by the traders to fairs, where they would be present for several days and selling goods more exotic to the area, rather than the everyday wares of pots, pans, buckets, leather goods and foodstuffs.

How was the market laid out?

There do not seem to be any accounts of what was for sale in Abergavenny market, but the murage grant given to Crickhowell in 1281¹¹ gives an indication of what would have been available locally. It lists corn, wheat and oats, various types of livestock, including sheep, pigs, hens, horses and oxen, and more luxurious items such as silks (with gold finishing), linen, Irish cloth, and French wine. Raw materials included alum and copperas used for dyeing. A levy of a half penny was made on every thousand herring and a farthing (a quarter penny) for an individual salmon. Hardware included brewing cauldrons, millstones, horseshoes, and various types of nails, including those for roofing tiles and wheel rims.

The medieval market in Abergavenny was set up in a roughly triangular site near the old church – St John's. It is likely that a market started here because cattle and sheep could be brought through the north and west gates, from the nearby Castle Meadows and Grosfield pastures, into temporary pounds to guard against Welsh attacks on this small Anglo-Norman town. The church also provided a focal point for the town and the churchyard an open space not built on. You can see on the plan (and still visible in the Castle car park wall) the kink in the town wall where the wall was extended to protect a larger area of the town. The burgage plots were long and narrow with the narrow end of the building stretching back from the streets. The end

nearest the road was the shop and living quarters with workshops and garden behind, each connected with the individual trade. A shutter at the front of the house could be let down to provide a selling area and premises would have had carved or painted signs outside indicating their wares.



How the market survived

The market suffered many difficulties over the years. Especially notable was the epidemic of the Plague (later known as the Black Death) in 1348/9, which is thought to have killed between a third and a quarter of the population. The rents were not paid to the lordship and goods could not be traded. This followed poor weather conditions and a cattle murrain^{12,13} in 1319-20 which caused famine conditions. Further outbreaks of Great Plague in 1361-2 seem to have been more devastating in coastal areas but there was another epidemic in 1369¹⁴ which killed many young people locally. The economic pressure exerted on the remaining tenants by the lordship trying to recoup their losses may have contributed to resentment building up against the overlords and aiding Owen Glyndŵr's campaign against the Marcher Lords and the King. In 1401, the villeins (the unfree proportion of the tenants of Abergavenny, who had to provide agricultural service to the Lord) rose against their Lord, killed the steward, and released prisoners. Following this in 1403/4, Owain Glyndŵr's army attacked the town of Abergavenny, and although he did not manage to take the castle, archaeological evidence suggests burning and destruction occurred in the town itself. Trading suffered both from a lack of people to make, buy and sell and from a dearth of produce as the adverse weather conditions severely reduced any possible surplus. Those who survived illness suffered greatly from famine and it took until the Tudor period for fortunes and population to recover.

The Post-Medieval Development

The right to hold two weekly markets and three yearly fairs continued and was confirmed various charters (1504, 1542, 1639) in the charters of incorporation for the borough. The market town began to flourish again as the town opened to rebuilding and an influx of outside investment especially following the establishment of the Tudor dynasty. With a 'Welsh' king and family and replacing the previous custom of preferring the English to the local Welsh, more people from the surrounding areas moved in. The town extended outside the town walls which were no longer important

for defence and increased the proportion of Welsh owners and traders. Space within the walls was filled and the roads narrowed by building. Especially in the open market space, infill reduced the area for stalls, and shops selling fabrics, spices and other more expensive goods began to be established. The need for stalls to sell food produce continued as few houses had gardens, or if they did, they had insufficient land to provide their food – it was much easier just to go to market and purchase what was needed (if you had the money to do so). The emphasis on food sales led to the establishment of the first market house in the upper wider area of Cross Street. This was a timber-framed two storey market house, the upper floor of which could be used for business such as a court room when not in use for the market. The money for this came from the will of Phillip Jones of Llanarth in 1603.

Another charter granted by Oliver Cromwell in 1657, confirmed these rights. Despite the charter being annulled in 1689, because the officers of the corporation refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the Protestant William and Mary, the fairs and markets continued under the control of the Parish Vestry, followed by the Town Commissioners from 1794. The later markets altered as the inhabitants and aspirations of those who lived in the town changed. The more prosperous inhabitants were prepared to lend money to the town to establish paving, greater cleanliness, a water supply and a new market house which did not obstruct the highway. The Improvements Commissioners and later the Town Council, gradually altered the forms of the markets, clearing the streets, moving the stalls partially under cover and eventually removing the sale of animals from the streets to bring us today the covered market, the outdoor market and recently the removal of the livestock market to a more rural situation. A very different picture and experience, especially for the olfactory senses, from the medieval market.

Gill Wakley

¹ ‘Englishry’ was often the name given to such settlements. If a man was murdered there, a heavy fine had to be paid to the King or Marcher Lord, unless he could be shown *not* to be of Norman descent, that is, English. Because it was so profitable, the law was not changed until 1340, although with intermarriage it had been increasingly difficult to tell for a couple of hundred years!

² Mortimer, Ian. *The Time Traveller’s Guide to Medieval England*. The Bodley Head, London. 2008.

³ Briggs, Chris. *Credit and Village Society in Fourteenth Century England*. Postdoctoral Monograph, OUP 2009.,

⁴ Stevens, Matthew. *The Economy of Medieval Wales 1067- 1536*. University of Wales Press.

⁵ Ralph A. Griffiths (Ed) *The Gwent County History, Volume 2. Age of the Marcher Lords*. Univ. Wales Press, 2008.

⁶ The remains of a Norman motte and bailey are still apparent. The current adjoining house probably dates from the early 1600s.

⁷ Rees, W. *South Wales and the March. 1284-1415. A Social & Agrarian Study*. Oxford. 1924.

⁸ Chensers were those who purchased the right to buy and sell in a town for a set period unlike a burgess who had the right as part of their residence and paid rent to the Lord.

⁹ Weeks, Robert. *Transport and Trade in South Wales c 1100-c1400: A Study in Historical Geography*. PhD Theses 2003 University of Wales College, Newport.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Slavin P (2012) The Great Bovine Pestilence and its economic and environmental consequences in England and Wales, 1318–50. *Economic History Review*, 65 (4), pp. 1239-1266. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0289.2011.00625.x>

¹³ Schofield, P. (2018). Wales and the Great Famine of the early fourteenth century. *Cylchgrawn Hanes Cymru | Welsh History Review*, 29(2), 143-167. <https://doi.org/10.16922/whr.29.2.1>

¹⁴ Ralph A. Griffiths (Ed) *The Gwent County History, Volume 2. Age of the Marcher Lords*. Univ. Wales Press, 2008.

Gwladus Ddu¹: an exploration of her life and times in fifteenth century Gwent

Historical bias

The study of history has moved on since the time when Thomas Carlyle described it as the 'biography of great men' in the nineteenth century². The past hundred years or so has seen the study of history, as Tristram Hunt put it in an article for The Guardian, transformed into 'the study of Everyman³. He does, of course, mean this in an inclusive gender-neutral sense: he is not excluding 'non-men'. Nonetheless, when it comes to studying the medieval period, the focus has generally been on the deeds of these 'great men' – the kings and princes, dukes, earls, and barons. It is their exploits in war, their castles, and so on that fill the pages. In recent decades several attempts have been made to re-dress the balance⁴. Such is the preponderance of surviving evidence, however, that there has been an almost inevitable masculine emphasis to the story. This is certainly the case in Medieval Gwent. A quick scan of the Index to volume 2 of the County History⁵ shows that references to men heavily outnumber those to females. Despite what R. R. Davies calls 'a remarkable clutch of widows' who ruled over estates in Abergavenny and surrounding areas' in the later Middle Ages⁶, far more pages are given over to the lives of the menfolk.

The Tomb of Gwladus

It is this traditional bias that has led to the joint effigy tomb in the centre of the Herbert Chapel (now St. Benedict Chapel) in the Priory Church of St Mary in Abergavenny being typically referred to as the tomb monument of 'William ap Thomas and the Lady Gwladys'. To add insult to injury, the current display board even has 'the Lady Gwladys' below the main header and in smaller font! She has the identity of a person of subordinate status who is not granted an equal status. The information concentrates on William. The only reference to Gwladus is in the context of the Battle of Agincourt where it is noted that Gwladus' father, Sir David Gam, and her first husband Sir Richard Vaughan, died. The significance of the Lady Gwladus is implicitly reduced by her perceived subordinate identity as daughter and wife, widow, and wife again – she is not even credited as the joint forebear of the renowned Sir William Herbert who became Earl of Pembroke in 1468.

Fortunately, Gwladus has a new champion. Professor Emerita Madeleine Grey has recently re-appraised this joint tomb effigy in a series of lectures and a scholarly article⁷. She has argued that it may have been Gwladus herself who commissioned the tomb during her lifetime and not her son, Sir William Herbert. If this is indeed the case, then we are now presented with an exciting new identity for Gwladus, one which grants her agency in selecting the design for the dual effigy.

Gwladus as a man's daughter, wife (twice), widow (twice) and mother and now perhaps, Gwladus as patron. Today we are used to the idea of people having several identities, but was this something that Gwladus would have recognised? If Gwladus could tell her own story, how would she describe herself? Did she see herself as a pawn in the marriage market of the gentry families of fifteenth century Wales, a way that her male relatives and suitors could achieve position, status, and advancement, forever living out a role subordinate to the menfolk around her? Was she, as Maddy

Grey has argued, one half of the ‘power couple’ that was Gwladus Ddu and William ap Thomas, skilfully climbing the greasy pole of fifteenth century political life in their part of Wales? Or was she the real driver in all of this, the ambitious wife driving her menfolk to greater heights? An exploration of her life and times may help us to form our own opinion.

What is known about Gwladus?

Like so many people from the medieval era, hard facts about her life are hard to find. We know that Gwladus was the daughter of Dafydd Gam who died in 1415. He was a member of a prominent family located in what later became part of modern Powys. His family claimed a descent going back to the ancient kings of Brycheiniog⁸ but Dafydd owed his rise to fame and fortune to his support of the Kings of England. He was a king’s esquire by c.1400 (under Henry IV) and supported the English crown during the Glyndŵr Revolt. He fought with Henry V in France during the Hundred Years’ War where he died a hero’s death on the battlefield of Agincourt⁹. His then son-in-law, Gwladus’ husband Roger Vaughan, also died at Agincourt. Her next husband, William ap Thomas reputedly fought there too. Dafydd has the rare distinction of being mentioned by Shakespeare in the short list of those who died at Agincourt¹⁰.

We do not know when Gwladus was born. Indeed, there does not seem to be any hard evidence for when she died either, though a date of 1454, around nine years after her second husband, is generally accepted¹¹ although other dates from 1380 have been suggested. Prichard, in his remarkable compilation of biographies of ‘Celebrated Women of Wales, has a chapter on Gwladus¹². He writes imaginatively about the life of the ‘Lady Gwladys’. He suggests a birth at the family’s main residence at Petyn Gwyn, near Brecon sometime before 1402 (apparent date of death of her mother). He then has her accompanying her father to the English Court. Next, around ‘her seventeenth year’ she marries Sir Roger Vaughan of Bredwardine, Herefordshire, and returns to Wales. They have five children before his untimely death at Agincourt in October 1415. The only certain date in Gwladus’ early life, is that of the Battle of Agincourt. A first marriage when she was sixteen is a possibility, but equally, she could have been a little younger or older. Medieval legal theory stipulated a minimum age for marriage of 12 for women but in practice, much depended on physical maturity tempered by dynastic need¹³.

To have given birth five times before October 1415 would suggest a likely date for the marriage to Roger Vaughan between 1408 – 1410 and a date for her birth around the mid-1390s. That Gwladus had these five live births and then went on to have at least a further four with her second husband illustrates another feature of fifteenth century life – the positive correlation between fertility rate and social status/wealth in this period. At that time, wealthier women were more likely to fall pregnant and remained fertile for longer. The richer people were, the larger their families tended to be¹⁴. They were better fed and used wet-nurses, so their fertility was not restricted by breast-feeding. During the period of her marriage to Roger Vaughan, Gwladus lived at Bredwardine, on the banks of the River Wye in west Herefordshire. Roger’s family was one of the more prominent local landowning dynasties¹⁵.

The Vaughans traced their descent back to a pre-Norman Conquest lord of Brycheiniog. Gwladus bore him two daughters, Elizabeth, and Blanch, and three sons, Watkin or Walter (died 1456) who inherited Bredwardine; Thomas, who was

made Constable of the castle of Huntingdon near Kington (Herefordshire) in 1422 and acquired estates at nearby Hergest. He died 1469 at Edgecote with his Herbert half-brother, William, and Roger who later was given the use of Tretower by his half-brother William Herbert around 1450. Tretower had been acquired in 1429 by Roger's stepfather, William ap Thomas, from the Berkleys, who were the family of the husband of William's late first wife, Elizabeth Bloet. Roger went on to begin the building of Tretower Court¹⁶.

Gwladus as a widow

1415 was a momentous year for Gwladus, as it was for so many others who lost menfolk at the Battle of Agincourt. Shakespeare immortalised the battle in his play 'Henry V', with the rousing speech before the battle. It is no coincidence that Laurence Olivier's film of the same name was made in 1944. It was deliberately chosen to boost morale during the later phase of the Second World War, depicting as it does, the heroic stance of the English/British against foreign foes. It rather skates over the great grief of those left behind - the womenfolk in particular. Nowadays we are hopefully more alive to the other faces of war, and its impact on wider society. This was acknowledged in the 2015 exhibition at the Tower of London marking the 600th anniversary of the battle¹⁷.

Gwladus seems to have remained a widow for at least the next five years, bringing up her young family, presumably still at Bredwardine. She was now likely to have still been in her twenties and, as a widow, enjoyed more freedom than as a wife. As Peter Fleming put it: 'Widows assumed new freedoms and responsibilities or re-married into a new family' ¹⁸. It must be remembered however, that although there is no evidence that she travelled far from the family's estates, she was more than just a typical widow of a member of the landed gentry. She had experienced life at the Royal Court with her illustrious father, and presumably had acquired more than a little knowledge of how upper-class society worked. She would appreciate the importance of allegiances and alliances, and of what we might call politics and international affairs. The background to her early years was the usurpation of Richard III by his cousin, Henry IV; the Owain Glyndŵr rebellion when her father supported the English, Lancastrian, king against the Welsh; and the resumption of the Hundred Years' War against the French in which she lost her father and first husband.

Whilst married women in the later medieval period did not exercise what has been called 'public, legitimated authority' ¹⁹, they certainly had opportunities to exercise authority in the absence of their husband, e.g. when he was away on military campaign. They often took over the running of the estates and all that involved. A widow with young children like Gwladus might be in an even more privileged position than a married woman, especially if she had been well-provided for. Depending on how her jointure or dower was set out, she could be fully entitled to exercise the powers of lordship formerly held by her husband ²⁰.

Widows were common in the later medieval period: it has been estimated that around two thirds of noblemen and gentry left widows²¹. Some chose to remain a widow, others re-married, whether through choice or coercion. The later Middle Ages have been referred to as almost a golden age for propertied widows²², but it is all relative. In practice there was often a window of opportunity for an advantageous remarriage. Unless she was a substantial heiress in her own right, or had a sizeable

and secure life settlement, a re-marriage might become more urgent as heirs of the first marriage came of age and succeeded to their father's estate. Whether this was the case with Gwladus, we do not know. There is no evidence about what sort of settlement she received from her father upon her marriage but, as she had at least one brother, Morgan ap Dafydd Gam, she was probably not regarded as an heiress. The Vaughan family, into which she had married, were prominent local landowners, but there is no evidence of great wealth. It is noticeable that upon her second marriage to Walter ap Thomas, she seems to have moved the family to live with him at the manor of Raglan. Bredwardine went to the eldest son of her Vaughan marriage (Watkin), but there is no record of any Vaughan family inheritance left over for the younger two sons.

Gwladus' second marriage

What did she have to offer as a second wife for Walter ap Thomas, who had already begun to make his mark on local and national society, a man who had no heirs? She was not an especially wealthy widow. She had already demonstrated that she could give birth to sons, and, we must assume, she was still of childbearing age. Or perhaps she was a great beauty - 'arm candy' in today's tabloid parlance? The principal surviving evidence is, of course, her tomb effigy. Maddy Grey writes of the tomb effigy that 'her face is almost ethereally beautiful'²³. Unfortunately, however, this is unlikely have been a 'true-to-life' depiction of Gwladus as she appeared in the fifteenth century. Rather it is an idealised version of an upper-class lady of the time²⁴. Details of the garments worn by the effigy may reflect clothes Gwladus wore, but we cannot really infer very much about her actual looks from the appearance of her effigy. The alabaster effigy reflects her identity as a lady of a certain status and lineage; the choice of subject matter for the side and end panels for the tomb may reflect her piety and learning²⁵. We may infer certain attributes, but we cannot extrapolate details of her looks and appearance from this effigy.

She is frequently referred to as Gwladus Ddu, 'Ddu being an adjective used with a range of meanings ranging from the colour black, sable, or dark, or used figuratively in the sense of sad, gloomy, wicked, and by transference, to things which are black in colour, e.g. mourning garments, or even to a Black person'²⁶. Historians and antiquarians have tended to opt for 'dark-haired'²⁷ when referring to Gwladus ferch Dafydd Gam. Another possibility would be 'dark-eyed', as was apparently the case with an earlier Gwladus Ddu, Gwladus Ferch Llywelyn (died 1251)²⁸. She was a daughter of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth also known as Llywelyn the Great, Prince of Gwynedd who died 1240, and his wife, Joan, an illegitimate daughter of King John. The standard Welsh dictionary would support a late Medieval Welsh usage to refer to eyes²⁹. Pritchard, discussing the earlier Gwladus Ddu considered that the word referred to her dark complexion 'there being no Welsh word for 'Brunette' which would be the proper designation'³⁰.

Was Gwladus ferch Dafydd Gam also a brunette/dark-haired/dark-eyed? We do not know. If she were, then this would be contrary to the generally accepted 'ideal' of beauty during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The art and literature of that era favoured ladies with a pink and white complexion, golden hair, and light-coloured eyes (though intriguingly, with black eyebrows)³¹. Gwladus is poetically referred to as having 'the aspect of Helen', i.e. Helen of Troy, by the contemporary poet Hywel ap Dafydd ap Ieuan ap Rhys³². Another famous fifteenth century poet, Lewis Glyn Cothi (1420-90), described her as 'Seren Y Fenni', 'the Star of

Abergavenny’, saying that she was ‘like the sun – the pavilion of light’³³, which as Pritchard notes, might seem to indicate that she was, in fact, a blonde. He also notes, however, that the poet compares her to her namesake, the earlier Gwladus Ddu³⁴. Perhaps this, then, is the reason for the designation of ‘our’ Gwladus’ as ‘Gwladus Ddu’: less a recognition of her looks than a reference to national Welsh identity and the changing alliances and aspirations of her family by the time of the Wars of the Roses³⁵.

William Herbert, the husband of Gwladus

The two elegies (marwadau) commemorating the fifteenth century Gwladus were produced under the patronage of her son William (Herbert) at Raglan. This sort of elegy was often commissioned to mark the first anniversary of the person’s death³⁶. In all, a total of over seventy poems are associated with the family during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Dylan Foster Evans suggests that one of these was commissioned from the distinguished poet Lewis Glyn Cothi years after her death, especially to reflect William’s new status as a lord³⁷. After fighting in Normandy for Henry VI against the French, in the following decade, the 1460s, Sir William decided to align with the Yorkists against the House of Lancaster during what became known as The Wars of the Roses. He was well-rewarded for this after Edward (son of Richard Duke of York, d.1460) ascended to the throne as Edward IV in 1461, becoming Baron of Raglan, and then a Knight of the Garter (1462) and finally Earl of Pembroke in 1468. Raglan was made a Marcher Lordship in 1465³⁸.

William’s first marriage had been to a wealthy widow and heiress, Elizabeth Berkley (nee Bloet) of Raglan. Elizabeth Bloet, heiress to the substantial manor of Raglan was married to Sir James Berkley by 1399. She re-married soon after his death, to William ap Thomas, in 1406³⁹). They were presumably living at Raglan when she died in 1420. Elizabeth had been related to the Beauchamp Lords of Abergavenny and, at some point, William entered their service though he continued to live at Raglan as a tenant of the Berkley family from whom he purchased the manor in 1432.

Creating the family genealogy and status

The fifteenth century was a period of political and social change, not least amongst the gentry in Wales. As the century wore on, more of the Welsh gentry participated as office holders and major landowners, replacing English families in these positions⁴⁰. It is against this background that William Herbert became the first member of the Welsh gentry to be elevated to the ranks of the English peerage⁴¹.

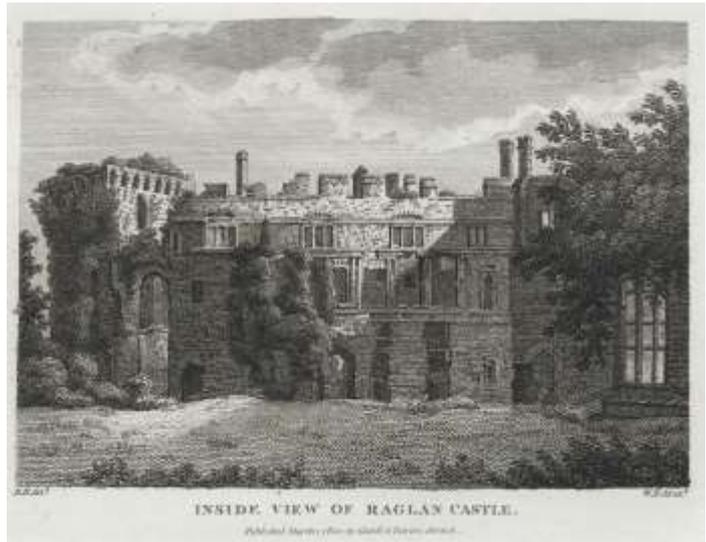
There were both winners and losers during this period, and the winners had to work hard to maintain their position and favour at court. One way of doing this was through patronage, as with the poets who could be commissioned to produce suitable propaganda⁴². The poet Hywel ap Dafydd ap Ieuan ap Rhys described Gwladus as ‘the mother of great lords’⁴³ and Lewis Glyn Cothi spoke of how ‘from their (i.e. Gwladus and William’s) family of noblemen evermore we will choose a prince’⁴⁴. Another way was by re-affirming status through genealogy, even if this required some rather creative research into one’s putative antecedents. This was certainly the case with Gwladus and William’s son, William (Herbert). As part of a move to reinforce the family’s position further, William (and his younger brother) began using the hereditary surname of ‘Herbert’ rather than the more traditional Welsh patronymic, ‘ap’, ‘son of’. He claimed this as his right by tracing his paternal descent back to a descendant of a certain Herbert ap Godwin, who in one version of the

genealogy was an illegitimate son of Henry I (d.1135). This genealogy was eventually formally recognised around the year 1461⁴⁵.

The fact that their son had to create a suitably distinguished paternal genealogy reinforces the view that the actual ancestors of William ap Thomas lacked status. Arguably, therefore, it may have been Gwladus' status as the daughter of Dafydd Gam that was of paramount importance to William ap Thomas a generation earlier when he married her, rather than her looks. He was only a fifth son, issue of a local gentry family⁴⁶, but he was clearly a man of ambition and aspiration. It has been claimed that William fought at Agincourt, perhaps in the entourage of Dafydd Gam, but his name does not appear in any of the contemporary sources. Perhaps this reflected glory as the (posthumous) son-in-law of Dafydd Gam mattered to him.

In 1421 William is recorded as Steward of the lordship of Abergavenny and he seems to have been closely allied to the Beauchamp Earl of Warwick, a close confidant of Henry VI. Within five years he had been knighted by Henry VI. William's career went from strength to strength during this period⁴⁷. He clearly built up his wealth, as indicated by his purchase of Raglan for 1,000 marks (£666.66, now around £686,409 according to the Bank of England's online inflation calculator tool⁴⁸).

Interestingly, he served both the Lancastrian King Henry VI in Wales and went to France in the service of Henry's relative, Richard of York (1411-1460) who at that time was loyal to Henry VI (Richard was second cousin once removed to Henry).



Inside View of Raglan Castle Sir Richard Colt Hoare
Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru – The National Library of Wales

Gwladus' second marriage

Gwladus married William ap Thomas sometime around 1421. He seems to have been born in the 1380s, but this is far from certain, so he may have been about ten years older than Gwladus. They had at least four children together: two daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret, and two sons, William (d.1469, Edgecote) and Richard (d.1469, Edgecote). The blended family lived at Raglan. It is claimed that William (ap William ap Thomas, later known as William Herbert), and his youngest stepbrother Roger Vaughan (d.1471) were particularly close, as evidenced by Roger Vaughan's installation at Tretower by this William c.1450⁴⁹.

The 1420s and 1430s see Gwladus bringing up her children at Raglan, while husband William busied himself as a loyal administrator for first the Beauchamps and then the Crown; with Richard of York in France, and then again across south-east Wales and even into West Wales in the early 1430s. His freedom of movement was surely enhanced by his wife's capabilities running his estates in his absences. By now, the old manor house of Raglan was in the process of being replaced by the grand edifice we see today at Raglan. Whilst it is not certain exactly how much of the later castle

was constructed under their direction, it is generally accepted that at least the Great Tower and the main approach at the South Gate date back to their time in residence. This is supported by both the work of the fifteenth century poet, Guto'r Glyn, and by the seventeenth century Herbert family chronicle⁵⁰.

By the time of William ap Thomas' death in London in 1445, the foundations had been laid by William and Gwladus for the subsequent elevation of their family line. As Griffiths notes, by the time he died, the so-called 'Blue Knight of Gwent' William ap Thomas, 'had few peers in the south-east' of Wales⁵¹. I would venture to say that something similar could be said about his widow, Gwladus. Now a widow for a second time, she was probably in her fifties. She had lived through the decades of uncertainty and upheaval of the late fourteenth and first part of the fifteenth century, a time of economic and social change. A time when significant upward social mobility was possible for those gentry families who were able to acquire financial and political success – families like that of Gwladus and William. But, as the saying goes, 'what goes up, can also go down'. It was not enough to arrive, one had to fight hard to stay there and prosper. Building a grand castle like Raglan was a powerful statement of status and intent. Holding court there, entertaining your peers, having eminent poets sing your praises, as mentioned above, were also demonstrations of power and status.

The effigy tombs in St Mary Priory Church

Commissioning a grand effigy tomb in the regional religious centre was another statement of power and status. For Gwladus and her late husband, a simple burial in the local parish church was not good enough, although by the fifteenth century this had become the norm⁵². The tomb of the founding parents of this new dynasty needed to be something, and somewhere, special to reflect their status as the pre-eminent family in this part of Gwent. Hence the choice of alabaster – the ultimate status symbol for funerary monuments⁵³.

The joint effigy tomb of Gwladus and William sits centrally in the Herbert Chapel in St. Mary's Priory Church in Abergavenny, just in front of the chapel's altar. It is the earliest of the family's effigy tombs here. To one side sits the joint effigy tomb of their younger son, Sir Richard Herbert of Coldbrook (d.1469) and his wife Margaret. On the other side, along the outer wall, is the tomb of a grandson, Sir Richard Herbert of Ewyas (d. 1510). He was an illegitimate son of Sir William Herbert (d. 1469). William, the elder son of Gwladus and William, had written in his will of his wish to be buried in Abergavenny but, unfortunately, his wishes were circumvented by the monks of Tintern Abbey⁵⁴. In effect, this chapel became the Herbert family mausoleum, presumably partly chosen because St. Mary's was also the final resting place of the families of earlier lords of Abergavenny, the Braoses and Hastings. The tomb of Eva de Braose (d.1255) is the oldest monument in the church; the main Hastings' tombs are dated to the mid-fourteenth century. An important statement was therefore being made by locating the joint effigy tomb here. It is one of



*The tomb of Gwladus and William
in St Mary's Church*

entitlement, right and continuity. Studies have shown the significance of choice of location for matters of family stability and permanence. Dynastic continuity was reflected by the sense of continuity of burial in a chosen place, especially when it was a monastic church. A new, incoming family could try to give authority to its claim by appropriating the old dynasty's burial location⁵⁵. There was also a tradition of using funerary monuments as evidence in legal cases over disputed inheritances⁵⁶ if this should be needed in the future.

The earliest known example of a joint effigy tomb in the British Isles comes from Scotland. This is the sandstone tomb monument of Mary and Walter Stewart lying within the ruins of Inchmahome Priory on an island in the Lake of Menteith in Stirlingshire (dated to late thirteenth century)⁵⁷. Like Gwladus, she lies on his right-hand side, though in this example the couple are embracing. Conventionally, the woman would be lying on the man's left-hand side, denoting lesser status. When the woman is found on the man's right, it is argued that this reflects the higher status of the woman, for example when she was a known heiress whose wealth and estates transferred to the man through marriage, especially if they conferred legitimacy to claims to lands and/titles⁵⁸.

This was certainly the case with Mary and Walter Stewart. It was also the case with the joint effigy tomb of the heiress Blanche of Lancaster and her husband, John of Gaunt, the third surviving son of Edward III. He commissioned the joint effigy after her untimely death in 1368. Made of alabaster, it was sited in old St. Paul's Cathedral⁵⁹. We have far more information about this monument, even though it is now lost, due to the high status of the individuals commemorated. The first payment towards the monument was made in 1374, six years after Blanche's death but 25 years before John of Gaunt died in 1399⁶⁰. It demonstrates that whilst it was customary for the monument to be erected within a year after death/burial, some tomb effigies were not commissioned after the death of both parties but could be commissioned well in advance. This was true in both examples just noted. This then led to an ongoing relationship between the tomb effigy and the still-living patron.

Maddy Grey has argued that this was the case also in the example of Gwladus and William's tomb⁶¹. He predeceased her, in c. 1445 and her death followed around nine years later. Previously, it was assumed that their son, William Herbert, commissioned the joint effigy tomb as a statement of his position in society. Maddy Grey convincingly argues that the subject matter and details of the sides and end panel of the Annunciation would fit better with the interests of a female patron.

The position of Gwladus on William's right could also be relevant here. It has been suggested above that Gwladus' status as the daughter of Dafydd Gam was of major importance for the union of William ap Thomas and Gwladus. As such its significance was primarily relevant to William and Gwladus and to those who remembered the Lancastrian Henry V and Agincourt. A date for the tomb perhaps around the time of the first anniversary of the death of William would perhaps work better than a date after Gwladus had died. It should also be remembered that by the time William ap Thomas died, Gwladus herself would have been well on the way to being regarded as an old woman⁶². She was likely in her fifties, possibly older, and had been married to him for over twenty years and given birth to nine children.

There used to be a common perception that in the medieval period people rarely survived beyond their forties, that hardly anyone lived out the biblical lifespan of three score and ten. Part of this is because of a misunderstanding of statistical evidence and, for example, a confusion between life expectancy at birth and the typical lifespan of a person who survived infancy⁶³. The evidence shows that those who survived past infancy could reasonably be expected to live into their fifties or sixties. The Statute of Labourers of 1349, for example, required people under the age of 60 to accept employment when offered it, under pain of imprisonment⁶⁴. This suggests an expectation that only people older than this were past their active phase of life and entering 'old age'.

This is reinforced by the findings of a recent statistical analysis of data for the elite classes ('notables' in the sense of individuals of status) which has suggested that age at death began to rise after 1400 in Northwestern Europe after the worse of the fourteenth century plague years⁶⁵. An 'average lifespan' of 54 has been suggested for members of this group in England by around 1400. The bulk of the data pertained to adult males rather than females, but it does serve to give an indication of the trend which applied to families such as that of Gwladus and William ap Thomas. The years after the Black Death saw an increase in the percentage of elderly in the population of the country as a whole⁶⁶. Gwladus may not have heard of women like Marjorie Kempe (c.1373-1438) and Julian of Norwich (c. 1343-1416), both of whom had long lives, but she may well have known, and known of, other women who lived to the age of 60 or more. Women like Joan de Beauchamp, widow of William de Beauchamp, Lord of 'Bergavenny' who the chronicler, Adam of Usk, called a 'second Jezebel'⁶⁷. She died in 1435 aged about 60. Gwladus would, therefore, have every reason to have a sense of impending mortality and every reason to commission her tomb rather than to delay.

A further argument reinforcing the idea of Gwladus as commissioner of the joint tomb concerns the politics and factional allegiances of the mid-late fifteenth century. In the decades following the death of Gwladus, other factors were coming into play for William Herbert (and his circle of poets). He proclaimed himself a Herbert; he wanted to trace his paternal descent back to the Anglo-Norman King Henry I. Would he have positioned his mother in prime position on the tomb given the significance he was giving to his father? His affinity now was Edward IV and the House of York, the same Edward who traced his descent back not only to kings of England through his descent from the second son of Edward III, but also to native Welsh princes via descent from Gwladus Ddu ferch Llywelyn ap Iorwerth⁶⁸. For William Herbert it may have felt more expeditious to have his mother, Gwladus, compared by the poets to the earlier Gwladus Ddu, ferch Llywelyn ap Iorwerth than to dwell on the Lancastrian affinity of her father. Who knows which identity she herself would have preferred!

This article has explored the several identities of a woman of a certain status in Medieval Wales. Our fifteenth century Gwladus Ddu had a momentous, not to say monumental, life. Her memory lives on through her achievements, not least her tomb effigy in the Priory Church of St. Mary in Abergavenny.

Denise Kenyon

There will be an opportunity to learn more about this monument in a lecture by Madeleine Grey to Abergavenny Local History Society on Wednesday, 22nd May 2024.

- ¹ Two spellings of her name are commonly found. Older sources tend to use Gwladys; more recent ones use the ‘more’ correct Welsh form Gwladus.
- ² Thomas Carlyle, ‘*On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*’, lecture 1, 1840, discussed in E. G. Boring, ‘*Great Men and Scientific Progress*’, *Procs American Philosophical Soc.*, 94, 1950, pp.339-51.
- ³ The Guardian, 20/11/2010.
- ⁴ E.g. J. C. Ward, ‘*Women in Medieval Europe 1200-1500*’, Longman, 2003 and G. Richards’ University of Sydney thesis of 2005 ‘*Languishing in the footnotes: Women and Welsh Medieval Historiography*’, a study of Welsh noblewomen in thirteenth century Wales.
- ⁵ R. A. Griffiths, T. Hopkins, R. Howell, *The Gwent County History, vol 2, The Age of the Marcher Lords c.1070 – 1556*, Cardiff, 2008, hereafter referred to as Gwent 2.
- ⁶ R. A. Griffiths, ‘*Lordship and Society in the fifteenth century*’, Gwent 2, p.222.
- ⁷ Madeleine Grey ‘*The tomb of Gwladus Ddu and William ap Thomas in the Priory Church of St. Mary, Abergavenny*’, *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, vol. xxxvii, 2022, pp. 35-50. See also lecture to the Church Monuments Society, ‘*Piety and Power: Gwladus Ddu and William ap Thomas of Raglan Castle*’, given in 2022 and available on You-Tube.
- ⁸ Lloyd, J. E., (1959). DAFYDD GAM (died 1415), Welsh warrior. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 1 Jan 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-DAFY-GAM-1415>.
- ⁹ Adam Chapman, ‘*The Posthumous Knighting of Dafydd Gam*’, *Journal of Medieval History*, vol 43, 2017, pp.89-105; Juliet Barker, *Agincourt*, Abacus, 2006.
- ¹⁰ Henry V, Act 4, Scene8, line 102.
- ¹¹ Chapman above.n. 9.
- ¹² T. J. L. Pritchard, *Heroines of Welsh History*, p. 416-p.441, 1854, now digitised by Google and available online on the Wikipedia Commons website, [The Heroines of Welsh History - Google Books](#) accessed 26/11/23.
- ¹³ Goldberg, P. J. P. ed., *Women in England*, Manchester 1995; K. M. Phillips, *The Medieval Maiden: young womanhood in late Medieval England*, online Ph.D. thesis, University of York 1997
- ¹⁴ E.g. metanalysis by V. Skirbekk, 2008, ‘*Fertility trends by social status*’, published in *Demographic Research*, vol.18, article 5, pp.145-180, March 2008, online open access article.
- ¹⁵ R. A. Griffiths, ‘*Lordship and Society in the fifteenth Century*’ in Gwent 2, pp.241-279, Cardiff, 2008). See also [VAUGHAN family of Bredwardine, Herefordshire. | Dictionary of Welsh Biography](#)
- ¹⁶ D. M. Robinson, *Tretower Court and Castle*, Cadw, 2010.
- ¹⁷ See the preview by Rowena Archer, ‘*The Widows of the Battle of Agincourt*’, accessed online, <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/widows-battle-agincourt/> accessed 02/12/23).
- ¹⁸ Peter Fleming, *Family and Household in Medieval England*, 2001, Palgrave, p.83.
- ¹⁹ M. E. Mate, *Women in Medieval English Society*, 1999, Cambridge University Press, p.61.
- ²⁰ Mate, above, p.67, Fleming, above, pp.84 ff., see also S. Cavallo and L. Warner, eds. *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, 1999, Longman.
- ²¹ Mate, above, n.19, p.84
- ²² Fleming, above n. 18, p. 91
- ²³ Maddy Grey, above, n.7.
- ²⁴ See discussion by R. Dressler, ‘*Identity, status and material: Medieval alabaster effigies in England*’ in *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture*, vol.5, issue 2, pp. 65-96, 2015, accessed online [Identity, Status, and Material: Medieval Alabaster Effigies in England - Identity Status and Material: Medieval Alabaster Effigies in En.pdf](#), 05/12/23)
- ²⁵ Maddy Grey, see above n. 7., 23.
- ²⁶ Online Welsh Dictionary, [Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru](#), accessed 03/12.23). I will not discuss the possibility that Gwladus had a black or ethnic minority heritage as this is a whole subject in its own right and there is not sufficient material directly relating to Gwladus’ family. It is a possibility that cannot be ruled out, however [Wales and its Black Heritage | Cadw](#)
- ²⁷ J. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, vol.2, pt.1, The Hundred of Raglan, London, 1914, p.3; Griffiths, Gwent 2, p.262.
- ²⁸ [Gwladus Ddu – Wikipedia](#), accessed 05/12/23.
- ²⁹ [Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru](#).
- ³⁰ [The Heroines of Welsh History - Google Books](#) p.405, footnote.
- ³¹ D. S. Brown, ‘*The Ideal of Feminine Beauty in Medieval Literature*’, *The Modern Language Review*, vol.50, no. 3, pp.257-269, 1955, online at [The Ideal of Feminine Beauty in Medieval Literature, Especially "Harley Lyrics", Chaucer, and Some Elizabethans on JSTOR](#), accessed Nov – Dec 2023, and Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, Yale Univ. Press pbk. 2002).
- ³² quoted with translation in J. Bradney, above, n.27, pp. 6-7.
- ³³ Bradney, above, n.27, vol 1, p. 186.
- ³⁴ Pritchard, above n.30, p.436
- ³⁵ The Yorkist Edward IV traced part of his ancestry back to native Welsh princes via the earlier Gwladus Ddu, see n.68 below.
- ³⁶ David Hale, *Death and Commemoration in Late Medieval Wales*, University of South Wales Phd Thesis, awarded 2018, available online at <https://pure.southwales.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/death-and-commemoration-in-late-medieval-wales/> accessed various dates Nov-Dec 2023).
- ³⁷ D. F. Evans, ‘*The Welsh Language its Literature*’, Gwent 2, pp.288ff. Further discussion of the role of Sir William Herbert as patron of the poet Lewis Glyn Cothi see, Barry Lewis, *Poetry and Patronage in Late Medieval Wales: the case of William Herbert of Raglan (d.1469)*, *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 2014, vol 30, accessed online [\(1\) Poetry and](#)

[Patronage in Late Medieval Wales: The Case of William Herbert of Raglan \(d. 1469 | Barry Lewis - Academia.edu](#) , 09/12/23.

³⁸ J. R. Kenyon, *Raglan Castle, 2003*, Cadw Guide, R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, pp.263ff.

³⁹ J. R. Kenyon, above, p.38.

⁴⁰ R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, p.272.

⁴¹ J. R. Kenyon, above, n.38

⁴² Barry Lewis, *Poetry and Patronage in late Medieval Wales: the case of Sir William Herbert of Raglan (d.1469)*, in Monmouthshire Antiquary, vol 30, 2014.

⁴³ Bradney, above, n.27, vol 2, pp.6-7

⁴⁴ D. Hale, above, n.35, p.345, l.63-4

⁴⁵ J. R. Kenyon, above n.38

⁴⁶ R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, 2008, pp.262 ff.

⁴⁷ R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, pp262ff.

⁴⁸ <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>, accessed 02/12/23).

⁴⁹ D. M. Robinson, Tretower Court and Castle, Cadw 2010.

⁵⁰ J. R. Kenyon, above, n.38

⁵¹ R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, p263

⁵² C. Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England, 1066-1550*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, ch. 4, pp.87-115.

⁵³ R. Dressler, 2015, [Identity, Status, and Material: Medieval Alabaster Effigies in England - Identity Status and Material: Medieval Alabaster Effigies in En.pdf](#), accessed online 13/12/23).

⁵⁴ Further discussion in Maddy Grey, above, n.7, pp.49-50.

⁵⁵ Brian Golding, 'Burials and Benefactions: an aspect of monastic patronage in thirteenth century England', in W. M. Ormod, ed., *Symposium on England in the thirteenth century*, Nottingham, 1985, pp.65-71, cited by Daniell, above, n.51.

⁵⁶ Julian M. Luxford, *Tombs as forensic evidence in Medieval England* Church Monuments Society, vol xxiv, 2009, pp. 7-25.

⁵⁷ [The Effigy of Walter Stewart, Earl of Menteith – Church Monuments Society](#), J. Barker, [Legal Crisis and Artistic Innovation in Thirteenth-Century Scotland | Issue 6 - June 2017 | Issues | British Art Studies](#), accessed online, 09/12/23. Another early example of a joint tomb effigy(alabaster) is the tomb of Katherine Mortimer and Thomas de Beauchamp, respectively Countess and Earl of Warwick, c. 1369, in the Collegiate Church of St. Mary in Warwick. Again, the wife (who in this instance was not regarded as an heiress) lies on her husband's right hand side, this time, though, the couple are holding right hands which may indicate that it was the man who had the 'agency' (illustration and description accessed online at this website hosted by the University of Iowa library, [Feminae: Details Page](#), an entry dated 2014, accessed 11/12/23.

⁵⁸ See discussion by Barker, note 56.

⁵⁹ [British Museum](#) 1664 etching, accessed 11/12/23.

⁶⁰ Discussed by J. Barker in [\(\) - Stone and Bone The Corpse the Effigy and.pdf](#) , which is Chapter 6, pp.113-136, in A. Adams and J. Barker, eds, *Revisiting the Monument, Fifty Years since Panofsky's Tomb Sculpture*, Courtauld Books online, 2016, accessed 11/12/23.

⁶¹ Maddy Grey, see note 7.

⁶² J. T Rosenthal, *Old Age in Late Medieval England, 1996*, University of Pennsylvania Press, though some of his statistical information has been discredited, see M. A. Jonker, *Estimation of Life Expectancy in the Middle Ages*, Royal Statistical Society, vol. 166, 2003, pp.105-117, accessed online [Estimation of Life Expectancy in the Middle Ages on JSTOR](#) , Jan 2024.

⁶³ This is especially the case for earlier pre-industrial societies where mortality in the first few years of life was high. This is discussed by Max Roser in his recent online article [Mortality in the past: every second child died - Our World in Data](#), accessed online Jan 2024. Other danger points were during childbearing years for women (though see Rachel Podd's article, 'Reconsidering maternal mortality in medieval England: aristocratic Englishwomen, c. 1236-1503, *Continuity and Change*, vol. 35, 2020, pp.115-137 accessed online. Jan 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0268416020000156>; and periods of warfare for males.

⁶⁴ J. A. Cummins, *Attitudes to old age and ageing in medieval society*, PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2000, pp.36-38, accessed online, Jan 2024, [2000cumminsphd.pdf](#).

⁶⁵ N. Cummins, *Lifespans of the European Elite, 800-1800*, *Jnl Economic History*, 77, 2017, pp.406-439, accessed online, Dec 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050717000468>

⁶⁶ J. A. Cummins, above, n.62, p.5.

⁶⁷ R. A. Griffiths, Gwent 2, p.246,

⁶⁸ Sidney Anglo, *The 'British History' in Early Tudor Propaganda*, *Bull. John Rylands Library*, vol. 44, 1961-2, pp. 17-48, accessed online, 11/12/23.

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