

18122. **WILLIAM MORGAN**

Born

Died 29 Mar 1582 Monmouthshire, Wales

Married 18123. Elizabeth Mansel

Born

Died

Children (order of birth unknown):

9056. Edward Morgan

b. c1550

d. 26 Mar 1633/4 Monmouthshire, Wales

m. (1) 9057. Elizabeth Smith

(2) Margery Hasel

Florence Morgan

b.

d.

m. William Herbert

William Morgan of Pentrebach and Llantarnam was a son of John Morgan of Caerleon, Esquire, and Elizabeth, daughter of Lewis ap Richard Gwyn (Gwynn) of Van, Esquire. Elizabeth Mansel was a daughter of Sir Rice Mansel of Margam, Knight,<sup>i</sup> and his second wife Anne Bruges, daughter of Sir Giles Bruges of Coberly in County Gloucester, Knight,<sup>ii</sup> and his wife Isabel Baynham, daughter of Thomas.<sup>iii</sup>

Elizabeth Smith who married Edward Morgan was a daughter of Hugh Smith of Long Ashton, Esquire. Long Ashton is in Somersetshire. His second wife Margery Hasel was a daughter of Hugh Hasel, Esquire.<sup>iv</sup>

Sir William Herbert, Knight, who married Florence Morgan, resided at St. Julians and was a descendant of Sir George Herbert who founded the Herbert family of St. Julians (Gillians) upon Usk. Sir George was a son of Sir William Herbert, Lord of Raglan, 1st Earl of Pembroke, K.G., by his first wife Anne Devereaux.<sup>v</sup>

Mary Herbert, daughter of Sir William Herbert of St. Gillians, married Edward Herbert, 1st Lord Herbert of Chirbury, in 1596 when she was 22 and he was 15 years old.<sup>vi</sup> Given a birth year of about 1574, Mary was of the generation to be a daughter of Florence Morgan Herbert, whose brother was born about 1550.

William Morgan was a man of wealth and importance, being connected, through both his father and mother, with the leading families in Gwent and Morgannwg. He was Bailiff of Abercarn and Mynyddislwyn in 1552, sat as a Member of Parliament from Monmouthshire during the years 1555-1571 and served as Sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1568.<sup>vii</sup>

In 1554 William Morgan began acquiring the lands of Llantarnam Abbey which had been founded about 1175.<sup>viii</sup>

Llanfihangel Llantarnam

The full name is as above, Llanfihangel having been adopted from the dedication of the parish church. It is generally known as Llantarnam, a name sufficiently descriptive, as there is no other parish or place in Wales so called. It is a large parish, bounded on the east by the river Afon Lwyd, and stretches a distance of five miles from near Pont-hir to the top of the mountains called Mynydd-maen at a height of 1500 feet. Until about the year 1855 it was a thinly populated parish, since which time iron and brick works with other industries have been established at Cwmbran, employing many men, while several villas have been erected which are inhabited by people engaged in business at Newport.

As to the word Llantarnam (the suggestion, so often quoted, that Llantarnam is for Llantorfaen (tori maen) - the church on the stone cutting river - may be dismissed in the opinion of Welsh scholars, as outside the range of possibility. There is no evidence that the Afon Lwyd ever was called Torfaen.), it would appear to be for Nant Teyrnion, according to other similar examples where Nant (brook) has in the course of time become changed to Llan, as Llancafan for Nant Carfan, Llanthony for Nant Honddu. In the deed of about the year 1175, referred to farther on, the place is called Emsanternon, doubtless intended for Ynys sant Teyrnion (the island - Ynys is often used for land by the side of a brook - by the brook of Teyrnion). Teyrnion is considered to be a man's name. In the *Mabinogion* (*Mabinogion*, edit. 1887, p. 20) Teyrnion is spoken of as lord of Gwent Iscoed and the best man in the world. He is called Teirnyon Twryf-Vliant (Teyrnion of the rustling fine linen).

The place sometimes appears as Llanfihangel Ddeuma. In a poem by Lewis Glyn Cothi to Thomas ap David ap Watkin ap Henry it is mentioned as Deuma (Gwaith Lewis Glyn Cothi, p. 96), where a footnote by the editor concludes that the monastery was dedicated to St. Deuma (Vide *History of Monmouthshire*, by Henry Owen, iii., 298). The dedication, however, of the parish church may have been to St. Deuma, and afterwards changed to St. Michael, but the monastery at its foundation was dedicated to St. Mary.

The river Afon Lwyd, which bounds the parish on the east, has its origin near Blaenavon, and is said to be so called from the discolouration of the water by the refuse from the iron and other works. It is hardly possible that this is the case, for the suffix, though comparatively modern, was used before the iron works were established. In the boundaries of the manor of Wentsland and Bryngwyn in 1659 it is simply Afon (Vol. I, p. 465). The earliest record I find of its being called Afon Lwyd is in the extent of the lordship of Edlogan in 1677 (p. 115); the next the deed of partition of the estates in 1707, referred to farther on; the next is in a surrender of land at a court-baron of the manor of Magna Porta, dated 2 May 1722, when lands called Ysland containing four acres were surrendered by Thomas and Andrew Edwards (p. 206) in the use of Thomas Phillips. The

boundaries are given as -

inter terras domini manerij predicti, rivulum vocatum Avon Lwyd, et ad  
viam equestrem ducentem a Lanvihangel versus Pen y hewle.

In an indenture, dated 30 August 1728, relating to land in Trevethin, between John Lewis of Llantilio Crossenny, yeoman, youngest son of Richard Lewis, late of Lanhilleth, yeoman, deceased, Mary his wife, and Lewis Lewis of Llannnewi Rhydderch, yeoman, eldest son and heir of the said Richard Lewis of the one part, and Thomas Edwards of Caerlleon, mercer, of the other part, the river is called Yr avon arw (the rough river).

The parish is approached on the north by a bridge over the Afon Lwyd, known as Pont-y-garnedd (the bridge of the heap of stones). The main road from here towards Croes-y-mwyalch (the cross of the black-bird) was made in its present form about the year 1836, when the park wall was built. The old road can be traced inside the park. At some early period a road ran from the church, following the present public footpath through the park, to Pont-y-pare, from whence a grass road, broad and straight, leads towards Malpas.

The village surrounding the church is called colloquially in Welsh Y fynachlog (the monastery), though the monastery or abbey stood on the site of the present mansion-house.

The park is often referred to as Ton-y-groes (the glade of the cross), and the parish is sometimes mentioned as Llanvihangel Ton-y-groes, in allusion to the cross roads known as Croes-y-mwyalch, where is an inn under the sign of the Three Blackbirds.

Adjoining the churchyard is an ancient inn known in English as The Green House and in Welsh as Y Ty gwyrdd. Over the porch is a wooden tablet on which is carved a table and two men sitting at it; on the table is a candlestick, a jug and a mug. The following is the inscription: -

Ty Gwyrdd  
1719  
Cwrw da  
A Seidir i chwi  
Dewch y mewn  
Chwl gewch y profi

(The Green House, 1719, Good ale and Cider for you, Come in: you shall taste it.)

The Abbey and Manors

The Cistercian abbey of Llantarnam, dedicated to St. Mary, was founded by Howel ap lowerth, lord of Caerlleon, known in history as Sir Howel of Caerlleon, about the year 1175, which was the year of his death (*Vide*, pp. 187,190). He may have been influenced to perform this work by his mother, who was the daughter of Uchtryd, bishop of Llandaff.

The property settled on the monastery (some of these estates may have been conferred on the Abbey by subsequent benefactors, but no documents have come to light to confirm this) consisted of the manor of Magna Porta or Porthmawr, so called from the great entrance to the demesne; the manors of Wentsland and Bryngwyn, comprising the parish of Llaniddel or Llanhilleth with that part of Trevethin situated on the western side of the Afon Lwyd; the manor of Edlogan, comprising the parishes of Panteg, Llanddewi Fach and Llanvrechva; the advowsons of Panteg and Tredynog; valuable fishing rights in the river Usk; the granges of Pulpen in Caerlleon, Mynachdy'r Waen in Llanfihangel Gilgoegen, Cil-llonydd in Mynyddislwyn; Abercarn and the greater part of Mynyddislwyn parish; and Penryse in Glamorganshire.

Sir Howel ap lowerth appears in a deed undated, but about 1175, with the consent of his father lowerth, as giving for the commutation of the tithes of Emsanternon, where he founded white monks (*ubi albos monachos institui*), certain lands for the maintenance of the monks of Bassaleg (*Adami de Domesham historia de rebus gestis Glastoniensibus*, Edit. Tho. Hearne, 1727, p. 604).

In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas 1291 the possessions of the institution are returned as: -

The Abbot of Kerlym (Caerlleon) has at the Grange of			
Pelren (Pulpen) 6 carucates of land, value of each one	1	0	0
From 3 carucates and another 3 carucates, value of each	0	13	0
Fom the meadow there 10 acres, and at the monastery 8 acres, value of each	0	0	6
At Kynemot 4 acres, value of each	0	6	8
A Grange Court of 4 carucates, value of each	0	6	8
At Brangwayn (Bryngwyn) 3 carucates, value of each	0	10	0
At Mayster 3 carucates, value of each	0	5	0
At Torald 2 carucates, value of each	0	4	0
At Conesiding 1 carucate	0	4	0
At Pemrmenny 1 carucate	0	4	0
At Menethestlyn (Mynyddislwyn)	0	4	0
At the Old Abbey 1 carucate	0	4	0
At Russok 1/2 carucate	0	2	0
At Cadlonet (Cil-llonydd) 1 carucate	0	4	0
At Crip land worth by the year	0	3	0
At Gaynet do.	0	3	0

At Enefnacrinet do.	0	3	0
At Wenny rents of assize	2	13	4
At Lestalelond (Llys Tal-y-bont) do.	1	6	8
Rent elsewhere	1	10	0
At Kenmoys (?Kemeys) 2 acres of meadow worth by the year	0	4	0
Sum L	18	8	4

In 1317 the abbot and convent of Karlion petitioned the king -

that whereas their Abbey was the richest and most enfeoffed abbey of all Morgannok that the Earl Gilbert de Clare, father of the Earl Gilbert, ... died, took from them in the name of discharge the greater part of their possessions and promised them the equivalent in lands and rents and other things and nothing was done. In like manner the Earl Gilbert the son promised a little before he went to Scotland that at his first return he would render all to us, and for the grievous chance that happened to him (he was slain at Bannockburn 8 July 1314) nothing further was done, by which your abbey is so poor that it cannot there sustain except barely 20 months where there were wont to be, before their possessions were taken away, 60 monks serving God and more. Wherefore they pray God, both for the King's soul and for the souls of the Earls aforesaid, that the King will have mercy and pity on them and that he during the wardship may grant to them their lands and possessions which were taken from them as is aforesaid, so that the service of God which is there abated and destroyed may be renewed in honour of God and our Lady in whose honour the said abbey is founded. Moreover they shew that your foresters of Macheyn sell by force their woods and their predecessors have been peaceably seized since the first foundation of the abbey.

This is endorsed:-

The King is not able to give or grant lands lest it should be to the prejudice of the heir, but he wills and grants that the Abbot and Convent may receive an annuity of 10 marks, &c. (*Ancient Petitions*, No. 8368).

In the same year an order was issued to the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer allowing Bartholemew de Badlesmere eight marks yearly from 4 March, 8 Edw. II., for so long as he had the custody of the lands of Gilbert de Clare, to be paid out of the issues of the said lands to the abbot and convent of Caerlleon (*Cal. Rot. Claus.*, 10 Edw. II., m. 8).

Among those who held office under Gilbert de Clare was a Welshman named Llewelyn ap Rhys or Llewelyn Bren. On the death of the earl in 1314 at Bannockburn he was dismissed from office, which so angered him that he collected a force of 10,000 men, and on 28 January, 1315, took Caerphilly castle, making prisoners of William de Berkerolles, the sheriff of Glamorgan, and William, rector of Westbury in the Forest of Dean, and killing thirteen other

Englishmen who were with them (*Flores Historum* by Matthew of Westminster (*Reum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores*, III., 339 et seq.).

On 6 February, 1316, Hugh de Audley, the king's kinsman, and William de Montacute were appointed commanders of certain men-at-arms to act against Llewelyn ap Rhys, described as a Welshman of the land of Morganwg, who had committed many homicides and depredations therein (*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, Edw. II., 1313-17, p. 384). That their efforts were successful is shewn by a commission, dated 26 March, 1316, to William de Montacute, Henry de Pembridge and Robert de Grendon, as Llewelyn Bren and his accomplices had surrendered, to enquire by oath touching such rebellion (*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, Edw. II., 1313-17, p. 492). On 18 September the same year a mandate was issued to John Giffard of Brymmesfeld, keeper of the lands of Glamorgan and Morganwg, the king intended to demise mills to farm that had been destroyed by Llewelyn Bren, and out of the farm thereof to execute necessary repairs. A mandate of the same date was also issued to the said John Giffard to deliver John Odyn, burgess of Cardiff, from Cardiff gaol, where he had been confined on a charge of having supplied corn, wine, etc., to Llewelyn Bren, as he had petitioned the king that he was ready to stand trial. On 10 November 1316, John Giffard and Robert Grendon were appointed to receive into the king's peace certain men who were in insurrection with Llewelyn Bren.

The end of Llewelyn was that, unable to withstand forces sent against him, he, with his two sons, surrendered to the lord of Hereford and was brought to London. His wife Lucy (Lenky) was also brought there and imprisoned with them in the Tower. He afterwards was conveyed to Cardiff, dragged by horses round the town and put to death, his entrails being burnt and distributed throughout Glamorgan (*Carnhuanawe - Hanes Cymnru*, p. 765 - says he was captured in 1322 by a force under the earl of Hereford and William de Montmorency, but the above is what Matthew of Westminster says).

During his temporary possession of this district he had put pressure on the abbot and convent of Llantarnam to grant him certain lands, as is shewn by their petition:

that Llewelyn Bren had desired part of their lands, and because of the influence which the said Lord Llewelyn had in that country they did not dare to deny it to him, but they granted to him part of their lands to farm for term of his life and the other part for term of years. And since the said Llewelyn is now unable by felony to hold lands of anyone, they pray that they may have their lands aforesaid to hold them in their hands without disturbance of the king's bailiffs.

Moreover they shew that their people who held land from them in the mountains are now put to ransom like other people of that country by reason of the war, and that all their chattels belonged to the abbot and

convent and their church, wherefore they pray the King will grant them the ransoms of those people. And their people will not engage in war except they are surrounded on all sides by men of war.

They also pray that the keeper of the lands of Glamorgan and Morganwg will give them the ten marks which the King granted them during pleasure.

This is endorsed:-

To the first article order is given to enquire. To the second nothing can be done because it has been testified before the King that they were in war against the King.

In 1398 the abbey had suffered either from fire or from an attack by neighbours, for an indulgence was granted by the pope to those who would give alms to the monastery, the buildings, books, etc., having been devastated, dated 8 March, 1398.

In the same year a renewal of letters was granted to the abbot and monastery exempting farmers and tenants of the lands of the order from jurisdiction of any ecclesiastical judge ordinary, and to declare null any sentences of archbishops against the under-tenants and farmers, dated 22 March, 1398.

This fire is referred to by Adam of Usk, who notes in 1400 the death of John ap Gruffydd, the abbot of Llantarnane, who had in a few years restored his monastery, which had been burnt to the ground.

In 1405, as narrated on page 6, Griffith, son of Owen Glyndwr, attacked Usk castle, where he was captured and the abbot of Llantarnam killed. Of this battle an account has been printed which is worthy of reproduction, by which it appears that the victory of the English was due to the fact that certain Welshmen of Glamorgan had been bribed so that they should fight in the battle on the side of their countrymen and then take flight and induce the others to do so also:-

Henceforth Henry VI., not daring himself to return, committed the execution of his design to his eldest son, who craftily corrupted with gifts and promises the more valiant Welsh, as they were at least considered, i.e. the men of Glamorgan ... For when the same Henry, prince of England, who also obtained the title of Wales, went to Wales with a great army determined to destroy it utterly, he sent forward the lords Cobham and Gray de Codnor and David Gam to exterminate them ... Many were killed and slain, and Griffith ap Owen, the illustrious son of the prince of Wales, and the eminent warrior Hopkin ap Thomas, with many others.

The abbot was John ap Howel, called here John Powal, and it would appear to have been mainly by his exhortation that the attack on Usk castle was made.

The death of the abbot is thus described:-

The abbot personally heard confessions and gave absolutions before the battle, continually crying aloud and not ceasing to pray earnestly until the army was in battle array. He was by no means frightened at this, but to such an extent was he fired with zeal for the liberty of his country and nation that, although he could have lawfully fled, he nevertheless refused to do so, and, along with the rest of his own Welshmen busily slaying the Saxons, at Usk (Brinbiga) on the river Usk, this regular priest, as learned-speaking as a canon, if I may say so, as warlike-speaking, along with seven hundred Britons suffered temporal death and gained, as it is hoped, everlasting life.

Occasional references to the monastery are found, as when dispensation is granted to Leyson ap Morys, a Cistercian monk of Llantarnam (who is a priest, and was lately dispensed as son of a priest and an unmarried woman, to be promoted to all, even holy orders, and to hold a benefice even with cure), to be promoted to any dignities, even abbatial of his order, dated 22 April, 1438.

The next notice of the abbey is in 16 Edw. IV. (1476), when John, abbot of Llantarnam, in his proper person comes before the justices of the duke of Buckingham, lord of Newport and Wentllwg, and proffers to the court a claim of divers liberties:-

First he claims to have his court from three weeks to three weeks, also to have in the same court cognizance of all pleas, to wit, pleas of detention of chattels, covenants, debt or any other contract under 40s. And that the same abbot by his bailiff can distrain his tenants for rent in arrear, &c., as his predecessors were accustomed to do, and to punish those convicted, &c.

These claims were allowed.

A reference to the abbey and church occurs in the will of Morgan Jones of Roxford (Roxford) in Hertfordshire, dated 1 July, 24 Hen. VIII. (1532) and proved 30 December 1532 (Roxford is a manor in the parish of Hertingfordbury), of which the following is an abstract:-

To the high awter of my parish church of Hertingfordbury for tithes and oblations unpaid - the 4 orders of ffreres in London to sing 4 trentalls of masses for my soul - to the monasterial church of Lanternam in South Wales 10 marks sterling to buy a vestment in the Lady chapel of the said monastery to be prayed for there - a stone of marble with scripture graven in letters purporting my name with these words In'v X'te fili Dei, miserere mei - Anne my wife my household goods, &c. - the abbot of Lanternam, as long as he shall find my son John, the farm of the King's park by the town

of Usk in South Wales called the Old Park -Alice Jones my daughter dwelling with my sister Wenllyan Jones in Bergavenny - 10L to the abbot and convent of Lanternam towards the making of an arch at the entre of the church out of the cloisters -ll'us (Lewis) Blethyn my gown furred in black - my brother Christopher Vachen (Vaughn) - Thomas my wife's son - ex'ors the right reverend father in God, Morgan, abbot of Lanternam, Thomas Roberts of London, gent., and ll'us Blethyn.

In the 27 Hen. VIII. (1535) the rents and possessions of the abbey were presented to the commissioners by Jasper, the abbot, as follows:-

The manor of Magna Porta	8 0 0
Abercarn within the lordship of Machen	28 23 1/2
Penryse within the lordship of Miskin	9 4 2
Wentsland and Bryngwyn within the lordship of Abergavenny	8 0 9 1/2
Pulpen within the lordship of Caerlleon	4 17 9
Demesne land of the lordship of Caerlleon, the Grange of Pulpen	8 0 0
The Grange of Seybor-court	
The Grange of Lys-Tal-y-bont within the lordship of Glamorgan	1 6 8
The Grange of Mynachdy Waen within the lordship of Usk	2 0 0
The Grange of Cil-llonydd within the lordship of Machen	1 0 0
Oblations	7 6 8
Tithes of sheaves and hay of the chapel of St. Michael	1 0 0

Annual deductions

	s.	d.
To Henry earl of Worcester, chief steward there	40	0
To the bailiff of Magna Porta and Pulpen	40	0
To the bailiff of Abercarn	40	0
To the bailiff of Wentsland and Bryngwyn	13	4
To the bailiff of Penryse	13	4
To the auditor for his yearly fee	13	4
	L	8 0 0
And so remains clear to the use of the monastery of Llantarnam	L	71 3 2

There were then only six monks in the abbey.

By act of Parliament dated 4 February, 27 Hen. VIII. (1536), the monastery with all of its valuable possessions was surrendered to the king, who received his first rents of the estate at Michaelmas 1536 as from Michaelmas 1535.

Jenkin ap Morgan was the collector of the rents, who had been bailiff previously

to the abbot, by his letters patent, and he was empowered to hold courts twice a year, viz., at the term of Hockday and Michaelmas, with a fee of 40s.

The demesne lands were let to John Parker, gent., at the rent of 106L. 0s. 8d. by indenture of lease. Jenkin ap Morgan was also bailiff of Abercarn, and Watkin levan of Wentsland and Bryngwyn.

At Michaelmas 1537 John Parker, the farmer of the abbey lands, paid in rent 100L. 0s. 14d. for divers parcels as well spiritual as temporal, viz., for the site of the abbey 106s. 8d., Magna Porta 22L. 12s. 4d., the town of Wentsland 18L. 11s. 10 1/2d., Mynyddslwyn 35L. 16s. 11 1/2d., Parc-y-pil 10s., Penryse otherwise Tavern house 40s., Llys Tal-y-bont 40s., Mynachdy Waen 40s., Cil-llonydd 40s., perquisites of court 3s. 4d., and the chapel of the blessed Mary of Penryse 10L.

He also rented lands of divers other lordships and manors leased to him, including the chapel of St. Derfel and fishery on the river Usk.

On 31 December, 1539, the site of the monastery was granted to John Parker, described as one of the esquires of our stables, in consideration of a certain surrender of an annuity of 10L. which the same John had from the treasure of our chamber. The grant comprised the house and site of the late monastery of Llantarnam within the bishopric of Llandaff, and also the church, belfry and churchyard, messuages, lands, etc. Also lands called Seybor-court and the park called Le Park, which said park and lands were reserved for the personal occupation of the late abbot. Also the woodland called Therwes lying next the park containing 30 acres, and messuages, lands, etc., called Gelli-las, parcel of the manor of Magna Porta. The tenement lands, etc., called Traws-mawr, the grange and lands called Cil-llonydd within the lordship of Abercarn. All to be held in chief by the service of a twentieth part of a knight's fee and rendering 21s. to the Court of Augmentations at the feast of St. Michael yearly.

In 1552 John Parker was dead, and Walter ap Jenkin was his assignee, and William Morgan, afterwards purchaser of the abbey, was bailiff of Abercarn and Mynyddislwyn, William ap Richard being his deputy.

John Parker having died without issue, the site of the monastery reverted to the Crown, and on 26 May, 1554, the queen granted to William Carpenter and William Savage, gentlemen, the said site and lands. The said Carpenter and Savage on 29 May the same year conveyed the site to William Morgan of Pentrebach.

he Grange was also, on 11 June, 1554, granted to the same William Morgan, escribed as now or late in the tenure of Lewis Blethyn.

On 24 July, 1558, the manor of Magna Porta was conveyed to William Morgan in consideration of the sum of 989L. 6s. 3d., described as part of the possessions of

the late earl of March, and afterwards assigned to the lady Katherine of England as her jointure.

On 10 January, 1560, queen Elizabeth granted to William, first earl of Pembroke of the second creation, all the town of Mynyddislwyn within the lordship of Abercarn described as late parcel of the possessions of the late monastery of Llantarnam, also the lands, etc., known as Wentsland and Bryngwyn, with all rights, etc., to be held by the twentieth part of a knight's fee. In 1561 the earl of Pembroke had license to alienate this property to William Morgan.

William Morgan, who thus purchased the whole of the valuable property of the abbey of Llantarnam, was the eldest son of John Morgan of Caerlleon, M.P. for the county 1553-4, son of Sir Thomas Morgan of Pencoed ... He died on 29 March, 1582, and at his Inquisitio post mortem held on 15 October of the same year the jurors returned -

that the aforesaid William Morgan was seised in his demesne as of fee of and in the site and capital messuage of the late monastery of Lanternam and lands in the parish of St. Michael's next Lanternam, and of and in one tenement called Kidlonedd in the parish of Mynythusloyne, and also of and in all the manor of Magna Porta and the manor or grange of Pulpen in the parish of Christchurch, and of and in all that grange of Kevenminnick (Cefn-y-mynach) in the parish of St. Michael's next Lanternam, and also of and in all that park called Park Pen y beall (Pen-y-pil) in the parish of St. Cadoc next Carlion, and also of and in all that manor of Kemes Com'ander, and also of and in the manors of Edlogan and Langston, Witston (Whitson), Kilpale and Porton, and of lands, &c., in Christchurch, Nashe, Kemmis Yssa, Henllis, Mynythusloyne, Malpas, Bettws, &c. the said William Morgan died on the 29th day of March last, and Edward Morgan, aged 32, is only son and heir of the said William.

Dafydd Benwyn, the bard, sang an eulogy in praise of William Morgan:-

Here is an ode to Mr. William Morgan of Llantarnam.

Let us go to the generous, gold-gifted, armed hawk easily.  
Let us go as far as the monastery.

His word, for his money  
To the world is (spread) over the four quarters.

He is found to be of two great parties, without secret.  
Mistress Elizabeth Mansel  
Being his wife, a near angel  
Who, far from all, has taken the ball.

William is the most generous of all the generous,  
The most courageous, most gallant of gallant men,  
The handsomest, most elegant of all elegant men,  
The most becoming, wisest of wise men.

Dafydd Benwyn sang it.

[Translated from the Welsh language.]

William Morgan made his will 2 November 1581, proved (P.C.C., Tirwhitt, 14) 1582:-

To Elizabeth my wife the house called Pentre and lands belonging and 100L. annuity, also during her life the use of a basin and ewer of silver, a salt cellar of silver and cover, an ale cup gilted of silver, a dozen spoons of silver which are to revert to Edward Morgan my son - to my wife 32 milch kyne that I have in Penrose and 6 plowe oxen and such money and cattle as are in London - Edward my son shall suffer Sir William Harbert of St. Julians and Florence his wife my daughter to have three score years, if they live so long, of the tithes of Smorton (Somerton) - my son Edward ex'or - 4L. per ann. to Thomas Meredith - overseers Sir Edward Maunsell and Thomas Lewis of the Van, and Mr. William Lewis of St. Pierre.

Pentrebach (Pentre-bach, Pentre Bach) was described in 1860 by Mr. Wakeman of the Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiquary Society:<sup>ix</sup>

It was part of the possessions of the abbey of Llantarnam and called the Grange of Cefn-y-mynach (the Monk's Ridge), and was granted 7 Edw. VI. to John Russell, earl of Bedford, described as parcel of the abbey and late in the possession of Lewis Blethyn (brother-in-law of William Morgan). The earl must have soon sold it, as it was shortly afterwards the property of William Morgan, the owner of the other abbey lands. William Morgan commenced building on the site of the grange on such a large scale that the place acquired the name of Pentrebach (the little village). The estate descended in the same way as the abbey, through the Morgans and so to the Blewitts, and was eventually sold about 1888 to Mr. Richard Parfitt of Newport.

The buildings comprise two separate houses, each complete in itself, and, when all in a state of habitation, of great size and extent, capable of accommodating a family with a host of retainers. The oldest portion is that now occupied as a farmhouse, and with its windows with stone mullions appears to date back to the monastic times. This house is entered by a porch from the courtyard with a passage running right through into the garden. On the right is the hall, a low room with remains of a decorated plaster ceiling. This has of late years been divided into smaller apartments. On the left is the kitchen, still used as such.

The other house is at right angles to the former one. This, says Mr. Wakeman, is of the time of James I, or Charles I, but I take it to be a few years older and to be the addition made by William Morgan, which caused it to be called Pentrebach. It is larger and higher than the former house, the hall having been 50 feet long, 15 feet wide and 20 feet high. This house is entered from the north by a porch of the height of the roof and with a passage dividing the hall from the offices. It has for many years, perhaps two centuries, been utilized as a barn and other farm buildings.

Pentrebach, though of such large and imposing proportions, was never the seat of the head of the family, but was used as a dower house or as the residence of a younger son. William Morgan ... left it to his wife Elizabeth ... William Morgan, brother of Sir Edward, the first baronet, in his will dated 1641, is described as of Pentrebach, and his brother Henry is also so described.

For very many years Pentrebach has been let as a farm-house.

Soon after the dissolution of the monasteries the farm of Cefn-y-mynach was held by Lewis Blethyn, who had been the tenant under the monks. He was a kinsman of William Blethyn, who a little later was made bishop of Landaff, and was husband of Jane, sister of William Morgan, the purchaser of the abbey estates. He seems to have been a considerable agriculturist, occupying lands at Pulpen and at Roath near Cardiff. Described as of Carlyon, gent., his will is dated 29 September, 1542, proved (P.C.C., 12 Spert) 16 November, 1542, by Jane the widow and William Morgan, priest:-

To be buried in the church of St. Cadock in the town of Carlyon - to the curate there for forgotten tithes 2s. - cathedral church of Landaff 3s. 4d. - to my wife Jane v John my farm in Pulpen to my wife for life, also my farm at Rothe, co. Glamorgan, also woods, meadows, &c., as John William Blethin my uncle holdeth of me by lease; also lands in St. Woolos wherein Thomas Goldithe lives, and after to John Morgan son of the late Morgan John - lands in Mathern to remain as before - to William Jenkins of Newport house & lands in said town, he to pay my ex'ors xvij[[1?]] sterling - to my mother 40s yearly for life - to the above John William Blethin 40s yearly for his life - residue of farms, rents, &c., to my said wife and her brother William Morgan, they ex'ors. Witnesses - William ap leu'n, vicar of Carlyon; Sir Philip ap d'd, curate of Christchurch; Lawrence ap John; John Morgan, and James ap Rees.

Llantarnam Court, which was one of the principal farms on the estate, was in the eighteenth century the residence of the family of Lawrence ...

In his will Lewis Blethyn identified his wife in the Welsh form, as Jane v John which represents Jane verch John and means Jane, daughter of John (John Morgan).

It appears that William Morgan owned most of the land between the Ebbw and Usk rivers, north of the city of Newport. Llantarnam Abbey is near the village of Llanvihangel Llantarnam, at the town of Cwmbran on the Usk River (Afon Wysg), about four miles north of Newport in Gwent, Wales (formerly Monmouthshire). The town of Caerleon is several miles southeast of Llantarnam, closer to Newport than to the abbey. Kemeys Commander is a few miles northeast of Pontypool, which is seven miles north of Newport. Malpas and Langstone are just a few miles outside Newport.<sup>x</sup>

Sir Edward Mansel (Maunsell) who was named by William Morgan as one of the overseers of his will was a half-brother of his wife Elizabeth. Sir Edward was married to Lady Jane Somerset, youngest daughter of Henry Somerset, 2nd Earl of Worcester,<sup>xi</sup> who was the great-grandfather of Frances Somerset who married William Morgan, grandson of William Morgan and Elizabeth Mansel.

The residence that William Morgan erected on the site of Llantarnam Abbey, using materials from the ruins, has been described as in the Tudor style. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy, who acquired the abbey in 1946, developed an article about the history of the abbey:<sup>xii</sup>

... in the reign of Henry II ... Howel ap lowerth, Lord of Caerleon, died in 1175, and sometime before his death, he had founded the Abbey. He obtained the site by a grant of lands to the Benedictine, Black Monks of Glastonbury and Bassaleg, owners of the tithes. The transaction was confirmed in a charter, undated, which reads, "Be it known to all the faithful of the Church of God, present and to come, clergy and laity, that I, Howel, son of lowerth, son of Owen, with the consent and assent of my said father, for my own salvation and that of my parents ... and for the Commutation of the tithes of Emsanternon (Llantarnam) where I have settled White Monks, have given ...

Llantarnam Abbey was sometimes spoken of as Caerleon Abbey. Llantarnam was not mentioned in the taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1290, though the Abbot of Caerleon was rated. So it would seem that there was an Abbot at Caerleon without an Abbey and an Abbey at Llantarnam without an Abbot. The only explanation is that there was an Abbey at Llantarnam presided over by an Abbot who took his title from the neighbouring town whose lord had been founder of the Abbey.

Like most of the abbeys of the Order, Llantarnam was dedicated to Our Lady and seems to have been founded on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen. This house was an offshoot of the Cistercian Abbey of Strata Florida, in Cardiganshire, the premier abbey of Wales. The Cistercians had been introduced in to St. Stephen Harding's own country, England, in 1128, and no order of monks had a greater influence in South Wales. Their ideals of labour and asceticism with their high religious standard won them popularity and the confidence of the people. The Benedictine rule states that contemplation must be the primary end to which all the observances of the monastery are to contribute. Seclusion fosters this ideal

and, in twelfth century agricultural England, Llantarnam must have been well secluded from the haunts of men. Surrounded by hills, well-watered by two rivers, a place untouched by anything but the cycle of the seasons, it was a fitting home for the contemplative. To give praise to God by the Mass, the Chanting of Divine Office - "Opus Dei" is the first duty of the monk and the liturgy was the life of Llantarnam Abbey in its first centuries.

Manual labour too plays an important role in the contemplative life. Both for seclusion and to be self-supporting the monks require a large area to farm. But the marsh lands of Wales presented no difficulty as their site for the Cistercians, by their labour, made them fertile. The motto "Labour is Prayer," was lived out by the monks, who made arable the waste lands, grew their own crops, ground their own corn, tended their own flocks and herds and devoted themselves to various agricultural and pastoral pursuits. As the Cistercians eat no meat, the two rivers, Avon Llwyd, renowned for its salmon and the Dowlas, for its trout, were assets as good fishing grounds. The lay brothers transacted business with the outside world. They traded in many commodities, especially wool, the staple industry of the 13th Century. The granges or out farms were also worked by the lay brothers. A group of brothers lived on the grange, as at Penrhys and Pentrebach, and they returned periodically to the Monastery.

Intellectual labour also had its place. The abbey had its scriptorium where the monks laboured daily copying and illuminating manuscripts with meticulous care.

The guest house was in constant use. In those days little other provision was made for travellers and wayfarers than the hospice of a monastery.

Of a certainty, the influence of the monastery on life around was strong. The monastery led in the agricultural life; in the trades, having its potters, weavers, cobblers; led in the intellectual life; and above all, made the only provision of the time for the poor. It was when the monasteries were dissolved that the workhouse system had to begin ...

William, the first earl of Pembroke of the second creation, from whom William Morgan acquired Mynyddislwyn, Wentsland and Bryngwyn in 1561, was William Herbert, K.G. who was created Earl of Pembroke on 12 October 1551. He was the son of Sir Richard Herbert, Knight, of Ewyas and Grove Radnor in Herefordshire, and grandson of William Herbert, who was created Earl of Pembroke on 08 September 1468. The earldom passed to his son William Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke, who resigned the title at the request of King Edward IV, so that the king could bestow Pembroke upon his son Prince Edward. In exchange, Sir William Herbert was created the Earl of Huntingdon on 04 July 1479. Subsequently, in 1551, the Earldom of Pembroke returned to the Herbert family in the form of Sir William's nephew William, son of his half-brother Richard Herbert. William Herbert, who exchanged the earldom of Pembroke for that of Huntingdon, was the father of Elizabeth Herbert who married Charles Somerset, 1st Earl of Worcester,<sup>xiii</sup> from whom descended Frances Somerset who married William

Morgan, grandson of William Morgan and Elizabeth Mansel.

Since Sir George Herbert who founded the Herbert family of St. Julians (Gillians) also was a son of Sir William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke, he was an uncle of Elizabeth Herbert Somerset who was a great-great-grandmother of Frances Somerset Morgan. This suggests that Sir William Herbert of St. Julians, who married Florence Morgan was a great-great-grandson of Sir George.

**NOTES**

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- i. *A History of Monmouthshire From the Coming of the Normans into Wales Down to the Present Time*, Joseph Alfred Bradney, C.B., M.A., F.S.A., Volume III, Part 2, comprising 16 parishes and hamlets in the Hundred of Usk, including Llanfihangel Llantarnam, Mitchell, Hughes and Clarke, London, 1923.
  - ii. *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England, Ireland and Scotland*, John Burke, Esq., and John Bernard Burke, Esq., London, 1841, reprinted Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1977.
  - iii. *A Genealogical History of the Dormant, Abeyant, Forfeited, and Extinct Peerages of the British Empire*, Sir Bernard Burke, C.B., LL.D., London, 1883, reprinted Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1978.
  - iv. Supra note 1.
  - v. Supra note 3.
  - vi. *ibid.*
  - vii. Supra note 1.
  - viii. *ibid.*
  - ix. *ibid.*
  - x. Royal Auto Club maps.
  - xi. Supra note 2.
  - xii. Photocopy, *Llantarnam Abbey Through the Ages*, pages 8-17, monograph, unidentified author, Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy, Llantarnam Abbey, c1978.
  - xiii. Supra note 3.