

PARTICIPANTS



MARGARET (PEG) BUTLER

Zion was so picturesque because it had this steeple, and this green roof, and this white church, and two rows of pine trees. And one day I drove down past the church and it was gone. [On table, Zion communion plate.]



LEILA WILLIAMS CARLO

They brought their farm name over from their place in Wales. And it was Derlwyn . . . There were two Jane Williamses, one was Jane County Line and my grandmother was known as Jane Derlwyn.



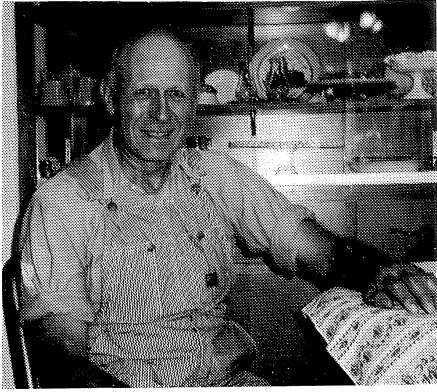
MARIAN PUGH CECIL

They made the break and I think they just didn't want to go back. You see all my father's relatives were back there [in Wales].



ROSELLA WILLIAMS CRAWFORD

My son has the old, big Welsh Bible. When I gave up my home that was the one thing he wanted.



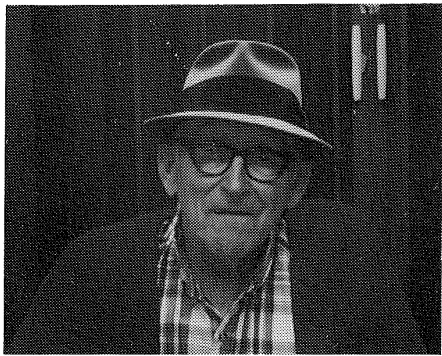
DONALD LEE DAVIS

*I always remember the Welsh song Mae gen i iâr
acheiliog that my father taught me.*



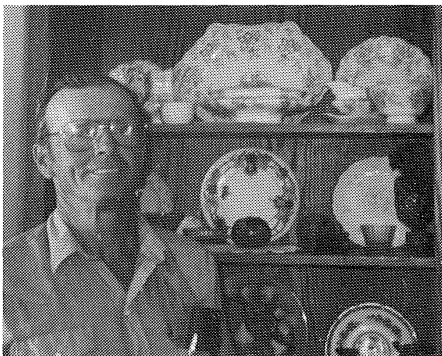
EVERETTE AND MARGARET DAVIS

*Some wanted the English, and some wanted the
Welsh. The minister preached half of his sermon in
Welsh and half in English to please everybody.*



LUTHER DAVIS

*Nothing finer in the world than to be able to speak
the good old Welsh.*



WILLIAM (BILL) EDWARDS

*My mother's mother lived over there [in Wales] and
she'd knit a pair of stockings every year for us.
Woolen stockings, would go clear to our knees, so
we'd keep warm to go to school.*



ELSIE FULLER

Pen Bryn was our farm . . . a mile south of Salem Church. When we were home we all talked Welsh.



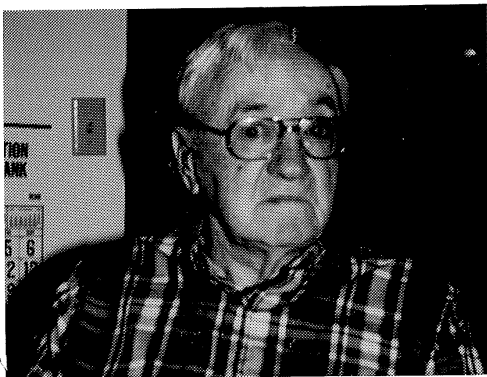
RUTH WILLIAMS GIPPLE

When my oldest sister went to school, she couldn't speak anything but Welsh.



MARIE GREENE

The kids said, 'You're packing your suitcase to go to Wales.' That was our thirty-fifth wedding anniversary. We've got pictures. I'm crying my eyes out.



EDWARD GRIFFITH

Oh we was different all right!



ROSINA WILLIAMS HAWKINS

I was reading Welsh last night, some hymns. I like to keep up.



TIFFANY HOGUE

Before my grandmother passed away, she spoke more Welsh than I have ever heard. She almost had relapses of her native tongue.



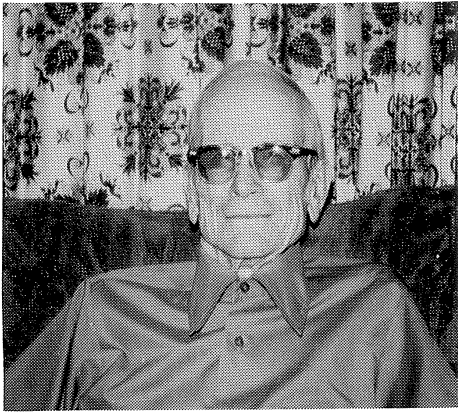
HARRIET JONES

It seemed like talking after church was longer than the sermon. They'd stand out there speaking Welsh and catching up on all the neighborhood news.



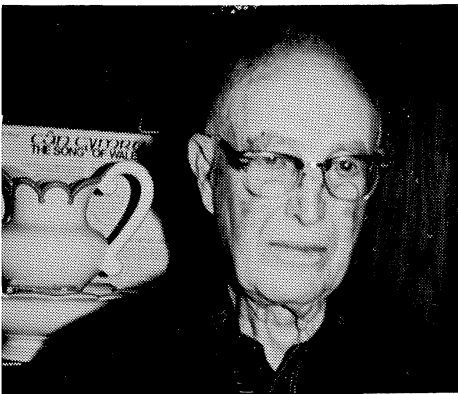
IRENE THOMAS MORROW

I could speak conversation Welsh until I was in college, because my Grandmother Thomas was still living and she lived with us.



GOMER OWEN

My dad had money saved to go back to Wales, and the Depression came along, so he never did go back. Sometimes we feel bad that he didn't go back, but people there said Wales had changed, and that he would find such a difference that maybe it was a good thing that he never had the chance.



LEROY OWENS

When I first came around here about 1918, there was a lot of Welsh spoken in Cotter.



DOROTHY DAVIS PLETT

What I liked best of all was coming home to this te bach. Oh boy! We did like the bara menyn. It had to be sliced very, very thin. Paper thin. Wafer thin.



EVELYN ARTHUR QUIGLEY

Young men would come over from Wales. One or two would come and then they'd get jobs, then they'd write back home and others would come.



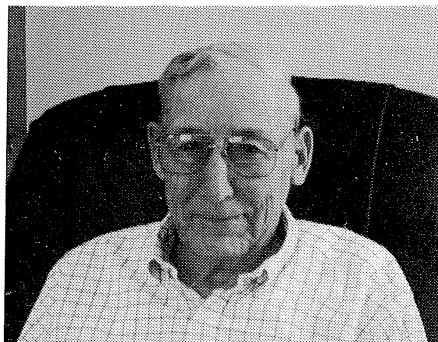
MARGARET WILLIAMS QUIGLEY

It hasn't been too many years ago that you'd hear Welsh people speaking Welsh. Eleanor Davis, one of my classmates, always said that when she started school she didn't know a word of English. She just knew Welsh.



GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

All sides, Welsh a hundred percent.



ELMER THOMAS

Nain Jones, she talked Welsh to us, and we talked English to her.



NORMA WHITHAM

I was born in 1924 and for the first ten years of my life the sermons were all in Welsh . . . My father's name was Rowland G. Davis. Rowland is still a common name in this area, and they're all Welsh. It was Davies in Wales, but when they came over here they omitted the "e" and called it Davis.

THE WELSH IN LOUISA COUNTY A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The subject of this brief introduction has been discussed in newspapers and pamphlets, written in both Welsh and English, and in sections of books—also in both languages. Unfortunately, with such a considerable body of material, there are discrepancies in dates and other important information.

Nevertheless, the main facts are evident. The first is that the start of the settlement—known variously as Long Creek, Columbus Junction, or Cotter—began with the first religious services held by the Rev. David Knowles in September 1845. This was possibly the first Welsh sermon preached west of the Mississippi River. Eighteen people established a church, Zion, the following year. Knowles was a Congregationalist, and the group met in private homes until they remodeled a house as a chapel in 1848. Subsequent chapels were erected adjacent to the Cambrian Cemetery, the last in 1887. In 1968 the final structure which housed Zion was demolished.

Welsh was the language of worship at Zion until 1914 but by 1923, English was the only language to be used in the services. Eisteddfodau were sponsored by this church in 1923, 1924, and 1925.

There is a memorial stone for Zion chapel, and a recently placed one for David Knowles, in the Cambrian Cemetery, the final resting place of most of the Welsh settlers in the area from the start until the present.

The next church, Salem, was begun in 1859 when the Calvinistic Methodist members left Zion and worshiped in a log cabin located near the cemetery for a year. A regular chapel was built there in the next year, 1860. Then in 1875, when a larger building was needed, the third and still existing chapel was built about two miles south-west of the cemetery.

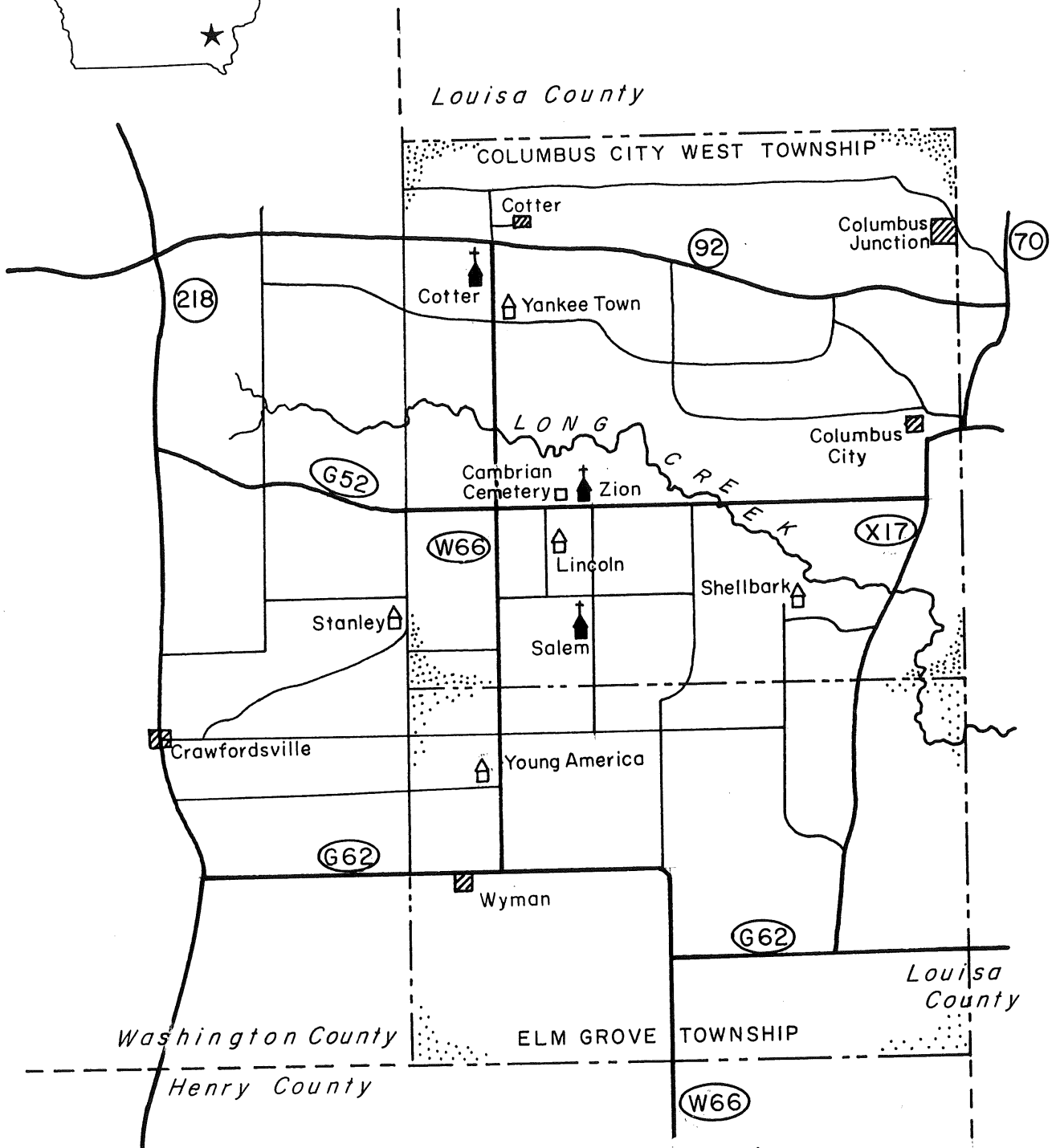
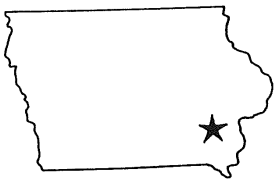
The most famous minister at Salem was the Rev. Richard Hughes who served from 1874 to 1885. Hughes, whose memorial stone is the largest in Cambrian Cemetery, was known in the Welsh-American community as *Esgob y Gorllewin* [the Bishop of the West] because of the large number of churches he established in the Midwest. He is also the subject of one of the two Welsh-language books published in Iowa. The use of Welsh in sermons at Salem apparently came to an end in 1942. These were perhaps the last Welsh-language sermons to be heard in the state of Iowa.

Two important events at Salem included the appearance of the Imperial Singers, a male choir from Wales in 1931 and the recording of congregational hymn singing by Dr. Marcus Bach, university musicologist from Iowa City, in 1943.

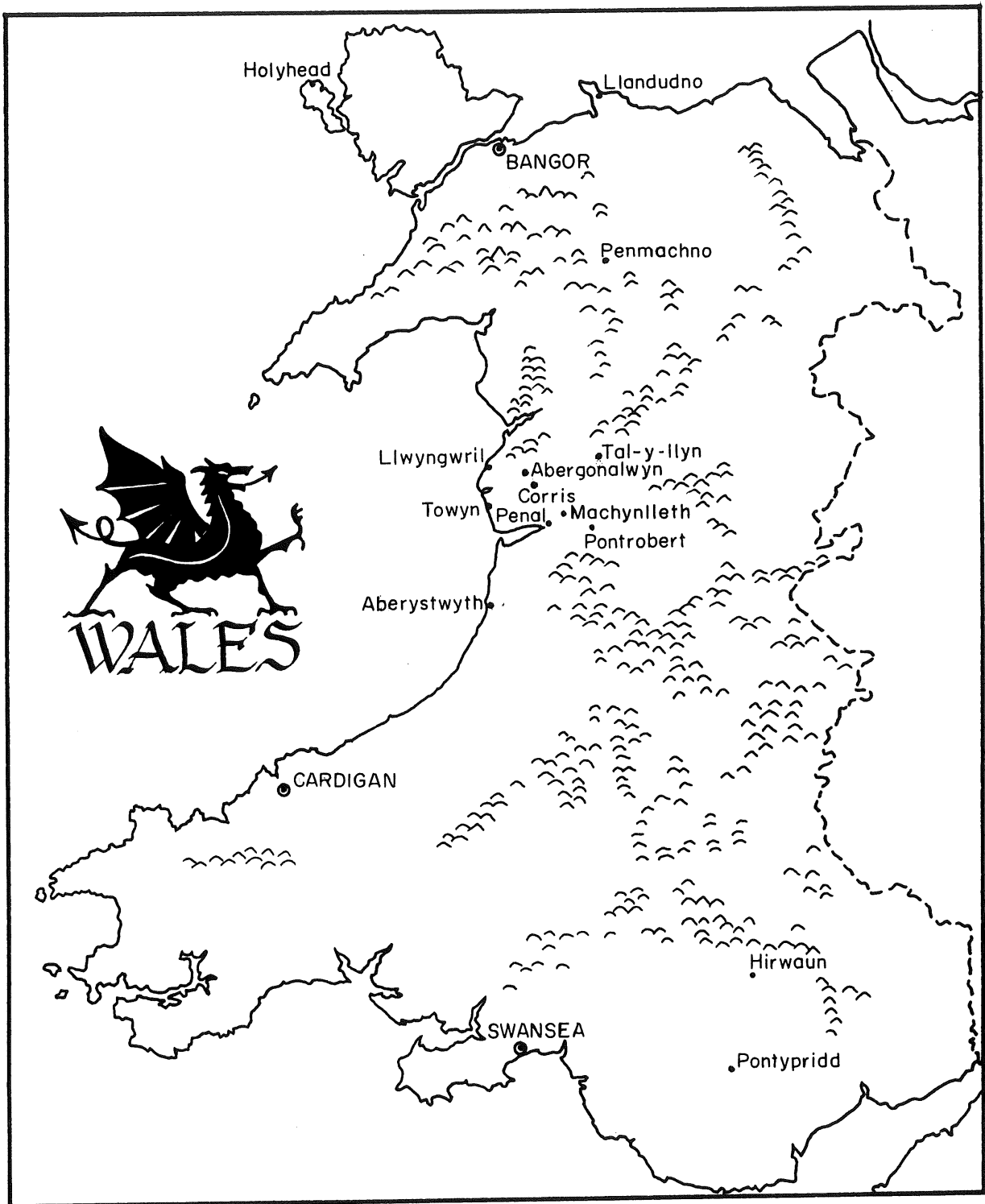
The other Welsh chapel in the area also belonged to the Calvinistic Methodist denomination. Bethel was established in 1877 when a Welsh-speaking minister from Rewey, Wisconsin, the Rev. Owen Owens, preached a sermon in Yankeetown schoolhouse. After meeting in the schoolhouse and holding Sunday School classes in private homes, Bethel was organized in 1879 as a branch of Salem by the Rev. Richard Hughes. In 1884, they withdrew from Salem and a chapel was built in the same year one mile south of Cotter.

Bethel chapel was struck by lightning and burned in 1906, and a new building was dedicated the following year. Bethel, known as Cotter Presbyterian Church since 1922, and Salem are still active congregations, both with the same minister.

PHILLIPS G. DAVIES
Historian, Iowa Welsh Society



The Long Creek Community



Places with ties to the Long Creek Community in Iowa