

## **A Few More Memories of Cowbridge – by Miss Freda Evans**

(for the church magazine 1970s)

Perhaps I may add a few memories of Cowbridge to those of Mr Selwyn Davies and Mr Ralph Bird, although many of mine were handed down to me by my Father, who was born in the Borough, and Mr and Mrs William Williams, who lived at Myrtle Cottage – where Mrs Howard now lives. Mr Williams was also born in Cowbridge and lived here the whole of his long life while Mrs Williams was a native of Norfolk. Both were great Church people and Sunday School teachers. I listened with avidity to all that I was told me but only wish I had kept a jotting book!

Thinking about the ‘Pubs’, I start at the **Westgate Inn**, now renovated and called Westgate House. Mrs Russell’s father held the licence – I only saw him a few times and although I can see him plainly in my mind’s eye, I cannot remember his name. He was a tall, military looking man, always immaculate. Mr and Mrs Russell lived at Rock House and on his death she, with her two little girls, Daisy and Maud, went over to live with her father and took over the licence after his death. Mr Russell was the first ‘Pro’ at the Athletic Club and I think must have been engaged by the late Mr Ebsworth of Llandough Castle, who started the ground. He was a fur dealer and used to go to Russia to buy, but of course when the 1914-18 war broke out, he was unable to do so. His portrait hangs in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall (or did so). I only once saw him in the flesh.

The first ‘pro’ I remember was a man named Pell when he returned from War Service, having enlisted with the bulk of the cricket members.

But back to the ‘Pubs’ :

The **Pelican Inn**. Various people lived there, but the only clear memory I have is of the late Mrs Louisa Morgan and her daughter, Mabel, who now lives in a bungalow on Broadway.

**The Bear** was kept in my parents’ time (and before they were married) by Mr and Mrs Thomas Thomas – ‘Tom the Bear’, who was a great-uncle of Sir Ivor Thomas of Dinas Powys. They retired to live at Ty-Hen (now the Southgate Café) where they died. Then came a family named Davies, who had 3 or 4 sons who went to the Grammar School, and 2 daughters. The younger, Mabel, was a great friend of my sister-in-law, Olive Yorwerth. When I came to live at Cowbridge, a Mr and Mrs Grey kept the Bear and their niece, Dora, was one of our crowd. They left for Weston, and I suppose it was then the Greek shipowner bought it and put in a manageress, a Miss Nanci Jones, and maybe after him came Mr Fred Williams. Then came Mr Geoffrey Evans from the ‘Barley Mow’, Penllyn, and since then it has changed hands several times, and much alteration has been done to the building.

**The Vale of Glamorgan Brewery** was owned by Mr (Alderman) Lewis Jenkins, who lived at Graig House (now flats and a shoe shop), whose son, Mr W L Jenkins, living at

Cambrian House (now 'Headquarters' hairdressers and 'Eleganza') managed the Brewery and making of 'pop'. The off-licence was managed by Mr Joe Staien, the house being a private one, until lately being changed to the **Vale of Glamorgan hotel**. I can remember Miss Mary Tutton living in the house, and after her Mr Tom David, who came of a renowned thatching family, and his widowed sister Mrs Jenkins. He it was who thatched the little cottage given to our dear Queen when a little girl and her sister Princess Margaret by the people of Wales. The thatch caught fire, either on the way or when the cottage arrived in London, and Tom went up to re-thatch it. He was proud to tell me that the Princesses went to see him at work every morning, and when he left presented him with a photograph each.

**The White Lion**, now offices and Lois dress shop, was kept by Mr and Mrs Edwin Villis. Mrs Villis was an aunt of Mrs Bert Rustell, who opened a high class fruit shop there before letting it to Lovell's bakery.

**The Three Boars Head**, now Peter Alan house agents, was kept by a Mr and Mrs Upshall and he did some pig farming also. After they died, and the licence 'taken off', a J Ryan opened a saddler's shop there.

**The Horse and Groom**, which had been called the Horse and Jockey, was kept by a Mr Watkins, then Mr and Mrs Sam Hayter, then Bert Griffiths and his wife, and now the McNeils.

**The Brewery** was run, in years past, by a Mr Lewis and taken over by the Morgan family of the 'Dunraven', Bridgend. The house where I live (Bridge House) was a ladies' school kept by Mrs Llewellyn and her three daughters, whose brother was Alderman John Llewellyn, a chemist, whose shop was where Mr Davies's stationer's shop now is. Mr Llewellyn was a Freeman of the Borough. My mother and her three sisters were weekly boarders here before going on to further schools, my mother to Weston, her sisters to north Wales. At one time a Captain James Ballard lived here when the Verlands was being altered for him, and my deeds show that his sister, Miss Jane Ballard, kept a chandler's shop at the very end of the yard, with right of way to it. This building, with roof, was standing when we came here to live about 1940, but in time the roof fell in and eventually the whole building was taken down and the stones used. On going through 'Lynthurst' garden door (then occupied by my uncle W T Gwyn), we came upon a well-defined cinder path which led to a stile and then to a plank bridge over the river, and through a high iron gate into the Brewery yard. Owing to some oversight (or such) these rights were not marked on an ordnance map and have been over-ruled. Through the yard was also the old road to Mount Pleasant.

**The Ancient Druid**, formerly R D C offices, was kept by Mrs Ann Thomas, whose daughter Mrs Foster lived the other side of the street – I think in the house next door to 'Vogue' hairdressers. She kept a horse and brake which she hired out and drove herself. Another daughter was Miss Fanny Thomas, who was headmistress of Ffaldau School, and she used to come home at weekends to see to her Mother's wellbeing. A son, Bertie, kept a hotel in Pontyclun, but returned to Cowbridge where he died.

**The Edmond's Arms** was kept by Mr and Mrs Hawkins. Who came next I do not know, but remember that a Mr and Mrs Meyrick and then Mr and Mrs Warfield took it over. Their daughter Rona married Bob Tucker, who carried on as 'mine host' until his recent death.

Coming down the other side of the street was :

**The Rose and Crown**, now a private house, where Mr and Mrs Sam Hayter spent their retirement. I believe it had been kept by a John Davies and afterwards by a spinster lady.

**The Railway Inn** was kept by a family named Denbury (whom I did not know), then I do not know who came until a Mrs Simpson took over. She became Mrs Cherry, and during her time Mr Coles, our Curate, had rooms on the first floor.

The **Eastgate Inn**, formerly the **Commercial**, was many years back kept by Mrs Morgan, who was an aunt of Mrs Thomas Thomas, Stallcourt. It changed hands several times until kept by a Mr and Mrs Powell, who were followed by a Mr Pugh, who was a water diviner – I tried many times to make the twig turn as he did!. Then came a Mr Davies followed by several others.