

Alexander and William Thomas – family 1763-1892

Alexander Thomas, a foundling, was baptised Cowbridge parish church on 17th April 1763

He married Margaret, daughter of..... on 29th June 1782 at Cowbridge parish church

Son William was baptised in Cowbridge parish church on 11th October 1785

William Thomas farmed at Newton – Llanblethian tithe shows him there in 1786, 1788;

Aberthin deeds show him there in 1793, 1797 and 1803.

Aberthin deeds of 1813 record **William Thomas senior** of Maindy, late of Newton, and **William Thomas junior**, his son, at Newton.

Aubrey deeds of 1814 record **William Thomas junior** at Newton.

Aberthin deeds of 1817 record the surrender of 2 parcels of land near Newton by **William Thomas the elder**, late of Maindy, now of Llantwit Major, and **William Thomas the younger**, late of Newton, now of Penlline, with consent of wife Mary....

Town Mill, Cowbridge research shows **William Thomas** taking on a 21 year lease there in 1850.

In 1851 census, **William Thomas** was there aged 34 with wife Jane (34) and sister Jane (17).

In 1861, **William Thomas** (aged 46) was operating the mill with wife Jane (41), sons William (8), Edward (6) and Morgan (2 weeks), and daughters Jane (4) and Mary (2); also William's sister Jane Jones (now married and a dressmaker aged 28).

NB Holy Cross, Cowbridge marriage records for 1854 show a Jane Thomas (a minor), sister of William Thomas, publican, marrying Thomas Jones of Marshfield, carpenter

1864 ‘...I, with some of the local boys..., became day pupils at the Grammar School. At that time a **Mr William Thomas** lived at the Town Mill, where he conducted an extensive flour milling and malting business. He had two boys who were familiarly known as Willie and Eddie, rather younger than myself and schoolmates. Not being subject to the then rigid regulations of the School Boarders, we day boys, when released from school discipline, made the Town Mill our centre, where swings and other attractions were provided for our entertainment. Amongst other games, we practised Scouting, through reading books of adventure, and Llanblethian Hill was adopted as the field of operations. I have always had the fact in my mind that it was on one of these Scouting excursions that the hill was first named “Mount Ida” by one of my companions, and I have the strong impression that it was Eddie Thomas of the mill who first suggested the name. Our little company afterwards spoke of it as “Ida” to our schoolmates - the Boarders – and it became the adopted name by the school. This must have been about 1865 and the name has really been reserved down to this day by the successive generations of the Grammar School pupils.’

E W Miles, solicitor, Cowbridge, in a letter to the Revd. L J Hopkin James, of Llanblethian vicarage, 27th June 1923

Ca 1866 ‘The town flour mill was a great centre for business when the late venerable Mr **William Thomas** controlled it and Mr James Eddolls acted as head miller. Carts and horses were constantly discharging corn and taking meal away. The town mill and premises were the playground of the Grammar School day boys, who were few in number, when the boarders were bound at their studies, for Mr William Thomas, the genial and good-natured proprietor, encouraged his boys’ playmates to join them there in the various games of the time. In wet and cold weather, we would settle down by the malthouse fire at the rear of the mill, and learn the art of malting, and discuss the topics of the time and books of adventure. We had many a scouting hunt over Llanblethian Hill, after a couple of boys who had been told off, and whose practice was to drop pieces of paper as a trail, and as one of the Thomases was called Eddie, we, in some unaccountable way, called him “Ida”, and in one of the proposals for a trail hunt over Llanblethian Hill (which was never previously referred to by any other name), one of the company suggested we call it “Mount Ida”, and from that time we adopted the name.’

*Reminiscences of Cowbridge and District,
E W Miles, Glamorgan Gazette,
April 18th 1930*

1866 **William Thomas**, miller and maltster, agent to the Artificial Manure Company,
Town Mill *Harrods directory*

1866 **William Thomas** will send three horses to the Birmingham Horse Show
‘Glamorgan Gazette’ 6/7/66

1869/70 **William Thomas**, rent of £50+ *Electoral register*

Hill House, Llanblethian research (*from ‘Llanblethian Buildings & People’, 2001*) :

From 1870 to 1892 **William Thomas and his wife Jane, from Merthyr**, and 3 children lived here, having moved from *Cowbridge Town Mill*. William Thomas was a maltster and manure dealer, and his sons were in business with him. He owned the malthouse in Factory Road until it was taken over by Hancocks Brewery. Frank Wyatt, a faithful servant, used to drive the high-wheeled cart for hauling the barley to the malthouse. **William Thomas** died in 1892; his son, **William Richard Thomas**, who married Elizabeth Rogers (daughter of the Cowbridge ironmonger who had shot himself in 1882) took over the property.

On her husband’s death in 1900, Elizabeth continued to live in *Hill House*, even after her remarriage, when she became Mrs Moon; she sold the house to Thomas Thomas of Red Farm Penllyn, who was building up his holdings in Llanblethian, in 1908. The tenants were George Morris and his wife, who had previously lived in *St Quintins*.