

Llangwm in 1868

An announcement in "Potter's Electric News" (a newspaper published in Haverfordwest) revealed that Anne, eldest daughter of the Rector of Llangwm, had married William Burns Beatson, M.D., of H.M. Indian Army, Civil Surgeon of Nagpur, Central India, at Christ Church in Bankipur on 25th February 1868. It is not clear how Anne met her husband-to-be or came to be in India. Her father, Rev. Thomas Williams, was born in Nevern and served as Rector of Llangwm for almost 50 years, from 1833 to 1882, and her mother Caroline came from Carew. William Burns Beatson was born in London, qualified as a doctor at Guy's Hospital and served overseas for most of his working life. Anne had been born on 15th May 1840 and baptised at Llangwm church on 18th June. Sadly, Anne died on 20th September 1869 in India and her son - Harry, born on 21st June 1869 - had already died from "disorder of the bowels and failure of nutrition" at only 4 days old.



At the Summer Assizes in 1868, fisherman Samuel Evans was found not guilty of "burglariously breaking into the dwelling-house of Daniel Skyrme" at Llangwm with intent to steal a ham. However, there appeared to be no doubt that he was in the house and that he did make two cuts in the ham with a knife.



Two other cases at the Summer Assizes are worth a mention even though there was no connection with Llangwm. Thomas Noot was indicted for making a forged copy of an entry in the Slebech baptism register. There were two classes of shipwrights in H.M. Dockyard at Pembroke Dock - hired and established - where Thomas had worked. On 6th December 1867, Thomas Noot had been promoted to an established shipwright's post but he had to prove that he was no more than 35 years old by producing a birth certificate or certified copy of his baptism. As Thomas had been born in 1828, he decided to tamper with the details of his baptism, a copy of which had been obtained by his cousin William Noot of Boulston from the curate at Slebech church. Thomas pleaded that, "having a very large family, he was anxious to get bread for them". Although he was found guilty, there was a strong recommendation to mercy on account of his previous character so he was only sentenced to 2 months' imprisonment with hard labour. According to the later censuses, he was able to resume his career as a shipwright, living with his family at Cosheston and then at Golden Hill in Pembroke.



At the same Assizes, Martha Arnold was found not guilty of endeavouring to conceal the birth of her female child. The baby was found, wrapped in a rag, hidden under some straw in a barn at Vachelich, near St Davids. Martha denied that she had given birth to the child, but a witness claimed to have heard a baby crying and found a mess on the floor in an attic room. The doctor who examined Martha was satisfied that she had been delivered of child. The baby had been born alive, fully developed at about 8 or 9 months, bore no marks of violence but subsequently died. Martha had tried to bribe Police Sergeant John Wade with a sovereign if he would let the matter drop. Intriguingly, it was stated in court that "all the conversation with the prisoner was in English". It is not clear why she was found not guilty.



In a civil case at the Assizes, John Higgon (as executor of the late Mr G Lort Phillips) sued Francis Paul late of Ashdale Farm, then in Burton parish, for non-payment of 6 months' rent and shooting rights at Ashdale and recovered £60. It appears that Ashdale was then unoccupied for some time as John Eynon, waterman, of Lawrenny was acting as caretaker when William Brown and James Brown of Llangwm were accused of stealing a quantity of lead from the roof of the kennels.

Researched by Nikki Bosworth. Information from the 'Haverfordwest & Milford Haven Telegraph' and 'Pembrokeshire Herald' newspapers, police charge sheets, parish registers and censuses at Pembrokeshire Archives and Local Studies.