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Llangwm Ferry

Some history, some reminiscences

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A 2018 view of Llangwm Ferry, with Bayview on the bottom, and Manorowen and Ferryside on the right.

The hamlet of Llangwm Ferry consists of a group of 14 houses (or 16 if the bottom of Port Lion is included) situated on the south bank of the confluence of Guildford Pill and Beggars Reach of the River Cleddau. It takes its name from the horse ferry that previously ran across Llangwm Pool from the Ferry Bay, further along the shore, to Coedcanlas, on the opposite bank of the Cleddau. Confusingly, the landing point on the opposite (eastern) bank of the Cleddau is also called Llangwm Ferry, and former limestone quarries near to this site are the Llangwm Ferry quarries. These quarries were the source of building stone for many of the houses on our side of the river, as well as limestone for the various limekilns in the area (including one at the bottom of the garden of Glyndwr House (see below)). For the purpose of this essay, we shall refer to this settlement as Coedcanlas rather than Llangwm Ferry.

Until 1951, Llangwm Ferry and its immediate neighbours Guildford and Port Lion were part of the Burton parish, which itself had been largely in the ownership of the Orierton estate since medieval times. In the early part of the nineteenth century the entire area comprising Llangwm Ferry and part of Guildford, as well as extensive holdings in Burton, Rosemarket and Llangwm belonged to the estate of Anne Barlow, widow of Sir Hugh Barlow of Lawrenny Hall, who leased individual holdings to various tenants. Sir Hugh Barlow, who was MP for Pembroke Boroughs, had been born Hugh Owen, and had inherited the Llangwm and Burton estates from Wyrriot Owen of Great Nash. He had adopted his mother's name, Barlow, in order to come into the inheritance of the Lawrenny estate. When Lady Barlow died (in Bath) in 1844 her estates passed to Sir William Owen, and on his death in 1851 to the Lort Phillips family (at that time of Dumbledale (now Ashdale House) but subsequently of Lawrenny).

Francis Jones gives a different account^a. This version holds that Anne Barlow was the wife of Wyrriot Owen of Great Nash, and it was their son, Hugh Owen, who took the name Barlow in order to succeed to Lawrenny. The inheritance came about as Anne Barlow was the sister of an earlier Hugh Barlow (d. 1763), the last male descendant of the Barlows of Slebech and Cresswell, who had held Lawrenny since 1612. This second version^b fits with parliamentary records (and indeed may be based on them).

By the turn of the 20th century, political developments had made it less important or profitable for the gentry, increasingly burdened by debt, and overwhelmed by the problems of estate management, to own extensive tracts of land. Following his peers elsewhere, a member of this branch of the family, John Frederick Lort Phillips, offered the option, in 1911-12, for the tenants of his houses and cottages to purchase their homes (though he was careful enough to retain ownership of all mineral rights under them).

^a Francis Jones *Historic Houses of Pembrokeshire and their Families* (1996)

^b <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/barlow-hugh-1729-1809>

A Llangwm view of the Lawrenny gentry

A report of a meeting of Llangwm Parish Council on 22 Sept, 1908, records that Mr J Lort Phillips of Lawrenny castle, had written to the Parish Council regarding his commitments under the Small Holdings Act, which gave householders the right to land (allotments) for growing vegetables, etc. In Llangwm, the need was for land for the fisherwomen to graze their donkeys. Under this Act, the landlord was responsible for providing sufficient land, which for Lort Phillips meant taking land from one of his tenant farmers. In order to avoid disruption of the Llangwm farms, Lort Phillips proposed provision of allotments from Guildford Farm, to which end he had signed Guildford farm over to the County Council. The Parish Council were unhappy with this strategy, partly because at that time Guildford was not in Llangwm, and considered taking legal counsel, or consulting the Board of Agriculture, or at least writing Lort Phillips a letter, which raised the following conversation:

Mr Morgan: "I wouldn't waste a penny stamp on 'n"

Mr. Stokes: "It's like Mr Thomas said, he donna really love us"

The Chairman (Mr Joseph Warlow): "No; they can see Socialism is coming. Whoever lives another twenty years will see a Socialist Government"

Mr Stokes: "Aye, we will."

The Chairman: "Aye. Socialism is making great strides"

Mr Stokes: "Aye. We'll have'em".

Nevertheless, the Lort Phillips family retained a paternal interest in Llangwm; they supported two nurses at Bryn Hyfred in Butterhill and employed their housekeeper (our grandmother, Lizzie Jones); they provided land for a village Institute (now the Rugby and Cricket Club)^a, an extension of the Methodist chapel, the Baptist Chapel, and a school at the Gail^b. They supplied the Llangwm rugby kit in their own racing colours of Black and Amber. Today they continue to provide sponsorship of the Llangwm Literary Festival.



The Llangwm Village Institute. Originally conceived as a reading room, it quickly became a place for billiards and darts and an attraction for especially the young men of the village. Now, much updated, it functions as the Rugby and Cricket Clubhouse^a.

^a see W.G. Thomas, *Some Remarkable People of Llangwm and Hook*. Llangwm Local History Society, 2018

^b see D. Stephens and B. Childs, *A History of Schooling in Llangwm, Pembrokeshire*, 2022

The evolving name

The names of both Llangwm Ferry and Guildford have evolved over the centuries. Just as the name Llangwm was sometimes written Langum, so Llangwm Ferry has followed the fashion. The earliest reference we can find to the hamlet is of a map of Milford Haven from 1693 in which the name Langham Ferry is used. Equally, the current name “Guildford” was “Guilford” or even “Gilford” a century and a half ago. In the early nineteenth century, the part of the hamlet abutting Guildford Pill was called Langum Point, or Ferry Point, or Guildford (or Guilford) Point, while the name Langum Ferry seems to have applied to the houses along the road at the south side of the hamlet, around to the Ferry Bay, and may have even included Woodside Farm. In that case, what we now consider the houses at the bottom of Port Lion were also part of Llangwm Ferry. For the purpose of this essay, the current names Llangwm Ferry and Guildford will be used.



Excerpt from a map of the Haven from Great Britain's Coasting Pilot by Capt Greenville Collins (1693)

Present day Llangwm Ferry is linked to the main village of Llangwm by the road along Guildford Row and up the Ferry Hill. To the immediate south of the Llangwm Ferry hamlet, accessible by a footpath at the head of Llangwm Ferry Pill, a road leads up through Wright's Wood into Port Lion proper. To the left a public footpath leads along the shore to the Ferry Bay (sometimes mistakenly called Port Lion beach by recent residents), and up through Benton Wood towards Benton Castle.

^a Dai Stephens: Vado Gilberti: Early history of Guildford, https://www.llangwmlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/files/bygonedays/vado_gilberti.pdf



Excerpt from 1818-
1820 OS map 157,
1:50,000



Excerpt from 1919 OS
map



*Excerpt from OS 6-inch map
1869*

The hamlet falls within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, with frontage to the DauGleddau River over a rich saltmarsh, a designated site of special scientific interest (SSSI), down to a wide expanse of mud exposed at all but high tide. A bridle path along the top of the shore allows access along the beach at all but spring tides. The mud flats and estuary provide feeding grounds in the autumn and winter of innumerable birds. These include sandpipers, redshanks, greenshanks, dunlin, lapwing, both black-tailed and bar-tailed godwits, teal, mallard, and shelduck, with regular year-round appearances of curlew (recently in severe decline), whimbrel, grey herons, little egrets, oystercatchers, Canada geese, mute swans, cormorants and snipe, not to mention a variety of gull species, jackdaws, carrion crows and occasional rarities. Raptors include buzzards, sparrow hawks, the occasional red kite and peregrine falcon, ospreys in passage as well as the rare goshawk.

The present layout with a road leading from Guildford up the Ferry Hill, then straight down to the first house, Bayview, is relatively recent. Previously, a path crossed the field from Bayview



*A 2018 view of Llangwm Ferry, with Bayview on the left, and Manorowen on the right.
Coedcanlas is visible across the river.*

to the gates diagonally opposite, leading to a lane up to Honey Hook farm (formerly called “The Barn”) and Butterhill. The current road, allowing a direct access to Guildford and thence to Llangwm, was made by the men of Llangwm Ferry in the 1920s when Jack Scale, the farmer at The Barn farm gave permission. It was metalled only in the 1950s when the installation of a sewerage plant at the south end of Llangwm Ferry necessitated access by heavy vehicles. The new road bisected the field, leaving a smaller field on the Guildford Pill side, and a larger one abutting the Woodfield. In recent times, the smaller field has been allowed to revert to woodland (mostly self-seeded ash, now suffering badly from the Ash Dieback virus) under an EU set-aside scheme.

Although now part of Llangwm parish, this area and neighbouring Guildford were previously part of Burton parish but were transferred in 1951 under a local government review. Confusingly, the Census records first introduce the name Llangwm (or Langham, or Langwm, or Langum) Ferry in 1851, and it is sometimes difficult to deduce whether households listed prior to that date as being in Port Lion actually refer to present-day Llangwm Ferry. Certainly, a deed of sale between W.G. Dixon (the then-owner of Benton Wood) to William J Jones and his wife, Elizabeth, dated “20th Feby, 1924” refers to a house in Llangwm Ferry (value £200) which, the accompanying map makes clear, refers to present day Curlew Call, at the bottom of Port Lion.

The Ferry^a

As already mentioned, a map of the Haven from Great Britain’s Coasting Pilot by Capt Greenville Collins (ca 1695) shows the name Langham Ferry, indicating that a ferry already existed by that date. In 1750, a ferryman named Evan Davies obtained a lease from Sir Arthur Owen (of Lawrenny) for the rights for a ferry crossing between Coedcanlas and Llangwm Ferry, together with tenancy of the ferry house and two cottages on the shore at Coedcanlas. One of those cottages appears to have been an alehouse. In 1795, the licensee was Owen Davies. According to Keith Johnson^b, it is likely that its name was the *Square and Compass*, and its main customers were the ferry passengers and the stonemasons at the nearby quarries. From 1810, the *Square and Compass* was run by Daniel Lewis, until his death, aged 84, in 1835. The 1841 census lists Ann Lewis (presumably his daughter) as the licensee.

For many years in the 19th century, William Skyrme (1801-1892) ran the ferry. In later censuses, he is also listed as an innkeeper at Llangwm Ferry (i.e. Coedcanlas). According to Keith Johnson^b, this pub was called the *Ferryside*. Since no Skyrmes are listed in the Llangwm

^a see D. Stephens: *High Tides and Low Politics. Pembrokeshire: Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society* (2021).

^b Keith Johnson: *The Pubs of Narberth, Saundersfoot and South-East Pembrokeshire*, Logaston Press, Woonton Abbey, 2004.

Ferry census over the years, it seems unlikely that this is the same building as the current Ferryside cottage, and almost certainly refers to the Coedcanlas side. William Skyrme married Elizabeth Jones from Burton in September 1827. In later life, William Skyrme, aged 70 in 1871, was running the pub, while his son, John was operating the ferry. The licence continued until 1885, but the 1891 census makes no mention of an inn at the ferry house. After Elizabeth's death in 1876, William continued to live in the family home at least until 1891 when William was already aged 91, together with his daughter, Jane, then aged 49. Both died before the next census.

Originally, the ferry was based at Coedcanlas until the Rev Dr Phillipps, who owned the Williamston estate that extended to the shore on the Llangwm Ferry (Benton Wood) side, established a rival ferry in 1799. The first ferryman from this side was John Phillips, a servant of Rev Phillipps. By 1850, the ferryman was William Pickens, but since by this time he was already 70 years old, it is likely he had taken over the ferry from John Phillips some time earlier. William Pickens lived in the house, now barely identifiable as a ruin, at the Ferry Bay. A later ferryman was William Adulph. Captain William Adulph, known as "Old Dulph", was of Norwegian extraction, though born in Llangwm in 1835. According to Grenville Thomas^a, he had owned a schooner. He died in 1917, his obituary appearing in the *Haverfordwest and Milford Haven Telegraph* of October 31st. The obituary, written by his friend the Baptist minister, Rev. W. Davies, is disappointingly short on facts, but records his strong spiritual and even mystical commitments. Although Adulph's name does not appear in the census records for Llangwm Ferry, he does appear in the 1871 census as a "Mariner", living in Guildford with his wife Sarah, and five children.

By 1912, William Llewellyn, known as "Darkie", of Rosedale, Llangwm Ferry ran the ferry. "Darkie" was the last of the Llangwm Ferry ferrymen, operating the ferry until the 1930s. Darkie had previously been a shipwright in the Dockyard, and, presumably, his role as ferryman really dated from the Dockyard's closure in 1926. He had moved to Portsmouth Dockyard before 1937. The origin of the nickname "Darkie" is not clear, but it may not be a coincidence that the ferryman operating across nearby Westfield Pill (Barnlake) was also called "Darkie".

According to Elizabeth Morgan^b, writing in 1953, until the closing of the Dockyard a River Steamer used to come upriver from Pembroke Dock every Friday morning, taking on, passengers who wished to go shopping in Pembroke Dock. The steamer called at Landshipping, Llangwm (presumably Black Tar), Llangwm Ferry and Lawrenny, taking on passengers rowed out by the ferryboats. She notes that the fisher folk did not use the steamer! The same steamer may also have been used as an early Neyland to Hobbs Point ferry.

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^a Grenville Thomas; *"People of the Covenant"* (1988).

^b Elizabeth Morgan: *A Llangwm Scrapbook*; unpublished manuscript available at Pembrokeshire Record Office

Llangwm Ferry History

Pre-History

A discovery^a (2016) of seventeen hundred and fourteen flint tools, including arrowheads, awls, and a saw in the main field at Llangwm Ferry dates from the early Mesolithic era, perhaps 8000-6500 BC. The people who made these tools were hunter-gatherers, who probably camped briefly in Llangwm before moving on. More modern versions of flint tools dating from 6500 – 4000 BC suggest that the site was also visited on later occasions. The nearby Neolithic cromlech a mile or so away at Sardis suggest a more settled presence of Stone Age humans in the area.

Medieval Times

Little is known of the subsequent history of the area during early Celtic settlement, Roman conquest, and establishment of an Irish aristocracy in Pembrokeshire in the early post Roman centuries. Nevertheless, the discovery in 2018-9 of an iron and bronze Celtic chariot dating from 50-75 AD buried in Llanstadwell indicates iron age settlements nearby. Following the Norman Conquest, despite the settlement of Rhose by their Flemish mercenaries, Burton, including Guildford and the land to become Llangwm Ferry initially remained in the hands of the Bishop of St Davids. By 1247, Burton (presumably including Llangwm Ferry and Guildford) belonged to the Stackpole estate, following its purchase by Philip de Stackpole (d. 1257) from Peter de Leia (1176–1198), Bishop of St Davids. Geraldus Cambrensis, who had been a rival of de Leia for the bishopric, strongly criticised Peter for this sale: *“for squandering the property of the diocese, ... in order that before his decease nothing should remain unsold, even that bit of an estate which used to be reserved for the table of the bishops when they visit his church at Burton, he sold (to the Stackpoles) for Irish gold”*^b. The discovery of 12th century coinage in the main field suggests that Llangwm Ferry was not immune from these events^a.

The subsequent association of the area with the Stackpole estate extends down through ownership of the area by the lords at Orielson, and on to the ownership of much of the land by the Lawrenny estate outlined above.

Nineteenth Century

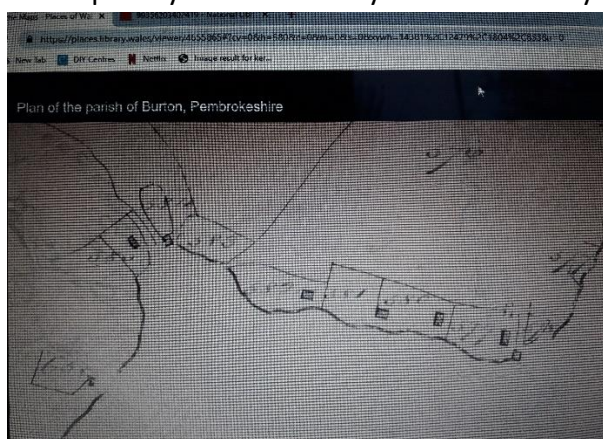
An early mention is that of the Welsh Methodist leader Howell Harris, who, describing his visit to Llangwm in 1750, includes how he, in passing Llangwm Ferry “had a view of the riches of the Lord, the majesty, glory, etc...” Whether this can be taken as evidence of a settlement in present-day Llangwm Ferry is uncertain, as Howell Harris is probably referring to the Coedcanlas hamlet which arose from the granting of a lease to Evan Davies in 1750 to run

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^a David, A, Pounder, T and Wensley P: Llangwm: A newly identified early Mesolithic site in Southwest Wales. *Archaeology in Wales* 54: 15-24 (2016).

^b Stephens, D: Medieval Llangwm in Context. *Pembrokeshire: J Pembs Historical Society*, 28: 22-39 (2019)

ferry to Llangwm from the opposite shore. In that case, an 1829 entry in the *Transactions of the Geological Society*, presumably in the context of a survey for potential coal bearing strata, mentions that no limestone (apparently a marker for the limit of the coal seam) exists between Llangwm Ferry and Johnston, the first documentary evidence of the Llangwm Ferry hamlet itself.

The first indisputable evidence for the existence of a community comes from the records of the census, which was first carried out in Wales in 1841. Only three dwellings are listed under Langum Ferry, while others are entered separately under “Wood” and Port Lion that probably refer to the same hamlet. A tithe map from 1850 shows 3 plots with buildings (579, 580 and 583) in Llangwm Ferry “proper”, with two further houses at the bottom of Port Lion, and a further building along the shore at the Ferry Bay. A previous tithe map (1840) documents that all Llangwm Ferry, as well as most of Guildford (apart from a strip of land corresponding to Williamston Terrace and the west side of Butterhill), and the adjacent farmland was in the possession of the Lawrenny estate but leased to tenants. All present day Llangwm Ferry was leased to two families, the Browns, whose wife, Elizabeth, was sister to Peter Jones, who leased the rest. Peter Jones farmed extensive land in the Guildford/Llangwm Ferry/Port Lion area, held from Anne Barlow. Grenville Thomas^a writes that “The greater part of Guildford, where the tenant was Peter Jones, belonged to the Owens of Oriulton”. The 1810 Land Tax Assessment shows the whole of Guildford (including Llangwm Ferry) was owned by Anne Barlow who was, of course, a member of this Owen family, so this almost certainly refers to ownership by the Lawrenny estate. Peter Jones paid a land tax of £1/2/5, compared to a tax value for the entire Llangwm parish in 1786 of £18/2/3, indicating he farmed about 15% of the local area, by far the largest farmer in the district. The 1810 document lists only one other house under Guilford, owned by Rev Dr John Philipps of Williamston, and leased to Michael Randall at a tax of 1 shilling and 5 pence. Might this be the house at the Ferry Bay, subsequently used by the ferryman?



Tithe map (1850) showing plots 579 – 586 in Llangwm Ferry and bottom of Port Lion in the parish of Burton. A plot 651 is shown along the shore at the Ferry Bay

<https://places.library.wales/viewer/4572956#?cv=4&h=578&xywh=1118%2C1249%2C4034%2C2500>

^a Grenville Thomas: “*Llangwm through the Ages*” (page 65),

Although the 1841 census entry for “Langum Ferry” lists three houses, curiously, none of them is occupied by either the Brown or the Jones families. Instead, they are the homes of Arthur Morris, a seaman, Thomas Davis, a fisherman, and William Davies, also a fisherman. Perhaps these are the houses at the bottom of Port Lion rather than the area we now call Llangwm Ferry, though it is possible that Peter Jones sublet them to their actual occupants. By 1851, the houses listed under Langum Ferry had increased to seven dwellings, and now Peter Brown is listed instead under Langum Point, suggesting that the name Llangwm Ferry was used to refer only to the southern end of the settlement. With one exception, all the occupants of these houses are listed as fishermen or fisherwomen, and this continues in the 1861 census, too. Indeed, the number of men and women listed over the years as involved in fishing is impressive, consistent with the fleets of thirty or forty fishing boats from Llangwm mentioned by Grenville Thomas^a. Nevertheless, one wonders how so many people were able to survive on fishing considering that this was the dominant occupation in the rest of Llangwm, too.



Guildford Pill showing a group of fishing boats in the foreground and a greater number beached further up the inlet

^a Grenville Thomas “*People of the Covenant*” (1988).

“Fishing” included harvesting of oysters (at that time a rich source in the Haven), as well as cockles, mussels and prawns. Young, undersize oysters were harvested down-river in Pennar Gut and laid down off Black Tar Point to mature. Like their neighbours in Llangwm, Llangwm Ferry women would have carried the catch to market in Haverfordwest, Stackpole, Narberth, Pembroke and Tenby, and even Carmarthen. Oysters were also sent to Bristol, London and even Holland, by ship, perhaps from Burton Ferry. HJ Dickman^b records that in the 1861 census, there were 31 fishermen in Burton parish (of which Llangwm Ferry was part). He was “told by an old man who was over 90 when he died in 1938, that as a young man he had seen 50 coastal vessels being beached at Guildford to collect barrels of oysters which had been fished by dredging”.



Boats in Guildford Pill for transport of oysters to coastal vessels down river (perhaps Burton Ferry). Alternatively, the boats shown may have been used for carrying limestone and coal (made into balls of culm for open domestic fires).

A sizeable population of villagers thus survived on shellfish and estuary fish (presumably herring, mullet, bass, mackerel and the occasional salmon or sewin). Equally surprising is the lack of mention in census returns of employment in agriculture, at a time when farming was highly labour intensive. Clearly, independence of employment from nearby landowners was of importance to these people.

The coming of the Naval Dockyard in 1814, first to Milford, then to Pembroke Dock, eventually had a major influence on Llangwm Ferry. In the census records after 1871, the dockyard workers begin to appear. Initially, they are unskilled labourers, but, as the years pass, more and more are listed as apprentices, or skilled craftsmen. By 1901, it appears that a majority of the Llangwm Ferry menfolk were employed in some capacity at the Dockyard. A few of the men are listed as mariners or seamen, though whether this refers to ships plying the Haven, or to more distant ports is not clear. The surnames of the residents also point to an influx of people, though, surprisingly, at this stage, few seem to have been incomers associated with the collieries in nearby Hook. The birthplaces of these incomers suggest they were most frequently men who had married a local woman and been absorbed into her family. Several

^b H J Dickman *Burton Parish Pembrokeshire*. Dyfed County Council undated

of the surnames will be familiar to modern day residents of the area, though others have disappeared locally. The occasional female incomer is more mysterious (e.g. Marian Elseford, originally from Penzance, in the 1881 census). And the existence of individuals “of independent means” also raises questions of how such means had been obtained, and why would someone of independent wealth choose to live in Llangwm Ferry in a strongly working-class community? The decline of some families to dependence on the parish, as “paupers” is easier to understand in those days prewelfare state. Another aspect of interest is the sheer overcrowding of dwellings. Families were large by today’s standards, and houses consisted of as few as two rooms; older boys, especially, might have lodged with neighbours who had space free. Since those neighbours were quite likely to have been relatives, one sometimes gets the feeling that at the turn of the 20th century, Llangwm Ferry was largely an extended family warren.

A further conundrum is provided by the existence of dwellings along the shoreline that may not be documented in the early tithe documents. These so-called “clom cottages” consisted of two-roomed dwellings built with a low foundation of stone, on which rough walls made of layers of mud, straw and bramble were erected. The walls were often up to five feet in thickness and of similar height, coated with limewash to improve their weather resistance, and with a roof made of thatch. Old photographs show at least some of them to have still been in existence in the early nineteen hundreds. One of these was at the bottom of the garden of Manorowen (see photo below) and another in the garden of Spring Tide. Both have disappeared and there is no current physical evidence of their existence). Whether these were independent households, or served as extensions to the main family homes on the same plot is unclear



Clom cottages on the shoreline at Llangwm Ferry

Cholera ^a

In 1886, Llangwm Ferry briefly entered the national records when “*The Report of the Cholera Epidemic*” reported to Parliament as a supplementary to the Annual Report of the Registrar for Births Deaths and Marriages of England (Vol 29, in paragraph 591): “Roose. Population 3,225. Cholera 4, Diarrhoea 4. Three of the deaths from cholera were those of a fisherman, his wife and son, who died at Langum Ferry, Burton, the son on 21st September, the wife the following day, and the father on the 24th; not one of these deaths was confirmed by a certified medical practitioner”. It is unclear who the victims were, but cholera was a recurrent problem in the district. Grenville Thomas^b records that William Pickens, the ferryman, died of the cholera in a previous outbreak in January 1867. These cholera deaths must have been unexpected, as reports of the cholera epidemic in Pembrokeshire described Langum as ‘in a perfect state of cleanliness... [and] a model of cleanliness’^c. This was in marked contrast to a previous outbreak in 1854 when 26 cases were reported at one time. The severity of that outbreak in Llangwm and neighbouring Burton (presumably Guildford and Llangwm Ferry) caused the Pembroke Union (with responsibility for Burton) to offer the Haverfordwest Union (responsibility for Llangwm) to pay half the cost of the additional medical officers they thought necessary to deal with the sick, but there was no response from Haverfordwest. On November 15, 1854, R. H. Byers (a Milford Physician) wrote to the Clerk to the Guardians at Haverfordwest reporting a further 17 cases of cholera at Llangwm. An additional three cases were reported on November 24th ^d. W. Grenville Thomas^b refers to the deaths of 62 people from Llangwm and Guildford from cholera in the 1854 outbreak, which he ascribes to drinking contaminated water from the “lake”, the stream that runs down from Ashdale Bottoms, past the old mill, and under Guildford Bridge, into Guildford Pill.

Access to essential services

As already mentioned, although now part of Llangwm parish, Llangwm Ferry, along with its near neighbour, Guildford, until 1951 belonged to the Burton parish. Nevertheless, the people of Llangwm Ferry were dependent on Llangwm for its school (opened 1870) ^e shops and social life. However, since most, if not all, were Baptists, they attended Galilee Baptist Church in Guildford, also administratively located in Burton parish. William Pickens the ferryman had

^a Dai Stephens, *Llangwm in the time of cholera*

https://www.llangwmlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/files/bygonedays/llangwm_cholera.pdf

^b Grenville Thomas: *The People of the Covenant*

^c *Carmarthen Journal*, August 31, 1866).

^d Ray Jones, *Pembrokeshire: J Pembs Historical Society*, 2011

^e D. Stephens and B Childs: *A History of Schooling in Llangwm, Pembrokeshire* (2022)

been a founder member of Galilee Baptist Chapel^a. This arrangement, leaving Guildford and Llangwm Ferry contiguous with, but administratively separate from Llangwm, and administratively integrated into, but physically isolated from the centre of Burton parish, undoubtedly had its consequences, typified by the affair of the water supply.

In 1918, 55 people living in Llangwm Ferry were without a water supply for 4 months of the year and had to fetch water from three quarters of a mile away, from a well at the bottom of Nonnie's Hill between Port Lion and Foxhall. During the remainder of the year, water was obtained from a "fountain" that was open to cattle and unfit for human consumption. Nevertheless, Burton Parish Council considered that the water supply was sufficient. It was stated "if these few houses were supplied with water, the whole of the parish would also want to be supplied"^b. According to Windsor Davies, at that time a resident of Llangwm Ferry, even at the time of the Second World War water was still only available through a standpipe located at the sharp turning opposite Glyndwr House, presumably the same source as mentioned in 1918. Indeed, Dickman^c writes that mains water was not available in Burton parish as a whole until 1950.

Llangwm Ferry eventually obtained mains water, but our father, Norman Stephens, often reminisced of having, as a boy in the early 1920s, to walk up to the well at the bottom of Nonnie's Hill in Port Lion with two galvanised zinc cans to fetch water. A well, located in Llangwm Ferry itself, in the field edge opposite the garden of the present day The Saltings, had a reputation for being salty, and unsuitable for drinking water.

An electricity supply was not connected until the 1950s, largely as the result of a campaign by our mother, Rona Stephens, who had grown up in the Rhondda Valley and had trained as a State Registered Nurse in London, and who, not unnaturally, assumed such an amenity to be essential. Until that time, lighting was achieved by oil lamps (we remember the coming of the "Aladdin" lamp, with its incandescent mantle, was a welcome technical advance in terms of light availability), heating by open fires, and cooking was by ovens heated by coal fires, or on a paraffin oil stove (Primus). Surprisingly few of our neighbours supported her, feeling electricity to be an unnecessary, expensive (and perhaps unromantic) luxury, especially as the Electricity Board demanded that the costs of extension of the supply from Guildford down to Llangwm Ferry should be paid by the Llangwm Ferry residents. Nevertheless, Rona's fight was eventually won, and electricity installed in the mid-fifties.

^a W G Thomas, *People of the Covenant* (1988)

^b <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/493579>

^c H J Dickman *Burton Parish Pembrokeshire*. Dyfed County Council. undated.

The fifties also brought mains sewerage, whereas previously families had depended on a cesspit dug in the garden, or even disposing of waste into the estuary on a falling tide!

Phones came even later, and we remember when our maternal grandfather in the Rhondda died in 1957, her sister (our Auntie Mabel) had to phone Johnny Palmer at the shop in Llangwm, who drove down to Llangwm Ferry to give the sad news of her father's death to our mother. The consequences of rural isolation continue even today, and while (in 2024) Llangwm village is supplied with optic fibre broadband, Llangwm Ferry still depends on copper wires for its communications with the internet.

Even in the 1950s, Llangwm Ferry was a fairly- isolated community. The primary school was a mile away^a and the village shop also a good walk if carrying the week's groceries. The situation was eased by daily deliveries from Graham John, the baker delivering fresh bread from the bakery in Llangwm's Main Street, and milk from Hubert Thomas from Llangwm Hill. The local grocer, Johnny Palmer, in his VW van, delivered weekly, as did Ronnie Thomas the butcher from Hook. Then there was the regular fortnightly coal delivery, and for us kids, the weekly highlights, the visit of the Corona lorry delivering fizzy drinks, and on Friday evenings, Rabaiotti's ice-cream van^b.

Benton Wood

A history of Llangwm Ferry would be incomplete without a mention of Benton Wood, which generations of Llangwm Ferry children used as a vast playground. Once part of the Williamston estate, the wood now belongs to Benton Castle but is leased to and managed by the Forestry Commission (now Natural Resources Wales). Originally mainly oak, the wood has been successively exploited for timber both during the 1914-18 war and since 1922 when William Dixon purchased Benton Wood and neighbouring land, including Benton Castle, as part of the Williamston Estate. It largely recovered in the succeeding years with regrowth from the native oak and ash, but in the 1950s was entirely felled and replanted with a mixture of American oak, beech, a few Scotch pine, some spruce, but extensively with larch. The larch were harvested a few years ago for the paper industry and a new forest road constructed from Port Lion to Benton Castle to allow machinery access. Following some deliberation, Natural Resources Wales then decided to allow the felled area to regenerate spontaneously rather than replant with native species, so we may hope that future generations may experience a more natural native woodland. While a public right of way allows walkers access to the wood from the Ferry Bay shore, the forestry road accessed from Port Lion, is used equally frequently, albeit without permission, by dog-walkers.

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^a see Dai Stephens and Barry Childs, *A History of Schooling in Llangwm, Pembrokeshire*, (2021)

^b Graham Stephens, *Memories of Llangwm's Village Shops and Other Retailers in the 1950s and '60s*.
https://www.llangwmlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/files/bygonedays/memories_of_llangwm_shops.pdf

The Houses of Llangwm Ferry



Bayview (81, Llangwm Ferry), a typical 1930s bungalow, was built by our grandfather, Thomas George Stephens and grandmother Lizzie (nee Jones) in 1936. Married in 1913, previously they had lived in Heron Cottage (see below), where their son, Norman (our father) was born in 1915. Where they lived thereafter (and their daughter Rita was born in 1919) until they built Bayview is unclear (possibly Williamston Terrace in Guildford), but the 1921 census records them still living in Llangwm Ferry, presumably still in Heron Cottage.



Although Thomas George and Lizzie had acquired land for building in Butterhill, they subsequently sold it to the Baptist chapel for the building of the manse. Perhaps, with Lizzie's increasingly severe arthritis and loss of movement, they felt the need to have a single storey house – hence the bungalow.

Thomas George (as he was always known in the family, Tommy outside), like his two brothers, Willie and Clifford, and so many other Llangwm men, had been a shipwright in the Naval Dockyard at Pembroke Dock (though his apprenticeship was in Milford and he also spent time building bridges for the Great Western Railway's Engineering Department (1908-9). According to the 1911 census he had also worked as a shipwright in Devonport. Lizzie had been a domestic servant, initially with the Lort-Phillips family in Lawrenny, then housekeeper to two District Nurses who lived in Butterhill. While the Stephens brothers' reserved occupations saved them from the horrors of the trenches in the First World War, the run-down and eventual closure of the shipyard in 1926 was a disaster for local people. Many of the young men, especially the unmarried ones, including Thomas George's brothers, Willie and Clifford, were forced to move away in search of work, Willie to the Royal Naval Dockyard in Devonport (Plymouth), Clifford to its sister establishments, initially in Portsmouth, and then Rosyth on the Forth. Others from Llangwm moved to the Clyde and Birkenhead, so that many a Llangwm



*Lizzie Stephens (nee Jones) ca. 1900
when she was housekeeper to the
Llangwm nurses*



*Thomas George and Lizzie Stephens
outside Bayview, with, probably,
Graham Stephens (their grandson),
which suggests a date of about 1951.*

family has cousins in those places. Most kept their connection to Pembrokeshire, and many returned in later life, or on retirement. But Thomas George had a young family, and Lizzie was increasingly crippled by the rheumatoid arthritis that eventually saw her totally chair-bound. Thomas George was forced to seek work within striking distance of home, often cycling to Milford Haven looking for a day's work ("on the lump"), but also frequently away during the week, working "up the line" on the railway. As a consequence, Rita increasingly took responsibility for caring for Lizzie, to the extent that she was withdrawn from school from the age of 13 to care for her mother, even though official School leaving age was 14 at that time.

The 1939 National Register (carried out as preparation for war, and largely following plans for the intended 1941 census) has Thomas (Shipwright) and Lizzie (invalid) and Rita (unpaid domestic) living in Bayview. Rita's brother (our father), Norman, after a period as a scholarship boy at Haverfordwest Grammar School, had left home, first to work at a solicitor's office in Tenby, then in London as a draughtsman for the Ordnance Survey until his section was drafted into the Royal Engineers as map makers for the army.

In London, he met our mother, Rona Mary Jones, from Treorchy, in the Rhondda Valley, who was training to become a State Registered Nurse and working in Lambeth. They married in in Treorchy in 1941, with Rita as bridesmaid, only days before Norman shipped out with the Royal Engineers from Liverpool, via South Africa, first to Palestine, then west to join the Eighth Army in North Africa, and the subsequent invasion of Italy. He did not return home until the war ended in 1945, when he was able as a recently demobbed service man to take up a place in Cardiff to train as a teacher and play his beloved cricket. In the meantime, Rona after having

been bombed out of her hospital in Lambeth, returned to Wales at the behest of her father in Treorchy (“Better a live dog than a dead lion. Come home!” as he wrote to her in a telegram). She spent her time, briefly as a district nurse in Treorchy, and then in Llangwm Ferry living in Bayview, and working in the old County Hospital in Haverfordwest, often caring for the survivors of torpedoed Atlantic convoys. On Norman’s demob, she briefly returned to Treorchy as a district nurse where she and Norman lived with her brother Bill’s family during Norman’s time in Cardiff, which meant that when David (Dai) was born, in 1946, it was not in Llangwm Ferry, but in the Rhondda.

By now, Lizzie was fully incapacitated and depended on her family to carry her each morning from her bed into a chair in the living room. There she was entirely reliant on Rita and Thomas George for food and drink and the most basic of functions, until she was put back to bed in the evening. Norman and Rona (and their infant son) returned to Llangwm (initially Edwards Pill) when Norman obtained a post at Rosemarket School, moving to Llangwm Ferry in 1950. Graham was born later in the same year.



*The authors
inspecting the
newly reconstructed
family boat, ca.
1954*

We thus grew up only a hundred yards away from Bayview, and spent almost as much time there as in our own house. Behind the house, Bayview’s garden was divided into an upper part next to the house where Thomas George (by now retired) would grow flowers that Rita would sell for a little extra cash. Later, a strip of “lawn” was introduced between the house and the flowerbeds. Then came the vegetable garden, at the bottom of which was the inevitable outside lavatory, and beyond that the orchard with soft fruit and apples. The garden backed down on to the foreshore of Guildford Pill, with an earth ramp leading down, and one enduring memory of childhood is “helping” our grandfather and his brother Clifford, both shipwrights by trade, in rebuilding from stem to stern their 13-foot Llangwm-style carvel-

built boat. We boys were allowed to do some token caulking, but the application of pitch was a job for grown-ups only. Nevertheless, the smell of oakum and pitch is the most enduring of my life, and I can still conjure it up as I write. Unusually for a Llangwm boat, the family boat was used exclusively for outings (and prawning under Benton Castle, and Lawrenny Wood), and, unusually for a Llangwm boat, was painted rather than tarred. Propulsion was by oars alone until a small Seagull outboard was purchased in the late 1950s. Eventually, the boat became Dai's, before it was sold to Graham John, the Llangwm baker, in the 1960s. We often wonder what became of it.

When first Thomas George passed away (1966), then eventually Lizzie (1972), Rita continued living in Bayview, herself now suffering from a milder, but still severe form of the arthritis that her mother had endured. She died in 1994.

Bayview was eventually inherited by David (Dai) and Graham Stephens (the authors of this essay), and for a few years rented out as a holiday cottage run by Graham and his wife Joan, but was eventually sold to Gerry and Lynne Watts. Gerry died a couple of years ago, and, although Lynne continues to live there, the house is currently (August 2024) For Sale.

The house became famous, at least among birdwatchers, in 2016 when a rare (for the UK) squacco heron visited a pond in the garden for a few days, occasioning visits from birders from around the country.

Stephens Cottage (83, Llangwm Ferry), was built as half of a pair by our great grandfather, William Stephens (1863-1945) in 1898, his brother, James (Jimmy), building the other half, next door (now Summer Hill). Family records suggest William was 27, and his brother 24, though this information conflicts with the census records. Previously (1891), William and his wife Elizabeth (Bessie; 1864-1941) were living in Heron Cottage (see below). They had six children, our grandfather, Thomas George (1886-1967), Willie (1887-1971; father of Dilys Ash), Isabella (1890-1906), Clifford (1893-1973), Jim (1898-1927) and Lizzie Ann (1900-1994).



Stephens Cottage and Summer Hill in about 1910

The 1901 census records William (37) working as a labourer in the shipyard (i.e. Pembroke Dockyard), his wife Elizabeth (34), and children Thomas (15, listed as a “scholar”), William (13), Isabella (10), Clifford, (8), Wilfrid (3) and Elizabeth (Lizzie Ann; 11 months). Curiously, the name Wilfrid does not occur in the family bible, but the dates fit with an entry for Jim, a name absent from the census. The family bible lists Bella as having died in 1906. By 1911, William (Driller in Govt Dockyard) and Elizabeth (both aged 47) still have Clifford (aged 18, an apprentice shipwright in the Dockyard), Wilfrid (13) and Elizabeth Ann (10) living at home, in five rooms.

By 1921, William (57) is still working as a driller at the Dockyard and living with his wife Elizabeth (57). Son Clifford (28), now a qualified shipwright, is still living with them, as is Elizabeth A (21).

The National Register of 1939 has William (b. 1863) now listed as a driller (retired), together with Elizabeth (b. 1864) living on their own. William and Bessie continued living in the house on their own until their deaths in the 1940s. Jim had died of tuberculosis in 1927, and Willie and Clifford had moved respectively to Devonport and Portsmouth shipyards prior to Pembroke Dockyard closing in 1926. Clifford returned in the 1950s and worked for the Forestry Commission in clearing and re-planting Benton Wood. He was later joined by his sister Lizzie Ann (Auntie Nan) in the sixties, following the death of her second husband, Tom

Jones. Willie had married and settled in Plymouth with his wife Ivy, and daughter Dilys (see below), returning most summers to the old family home.



William Stephens



Bessie Stephens

With the death of first Clifford, then Lizzie Ann, the house came into the possession of Willie's daughter, Dilys (married to David Ash, and returned permanently to Llangwm Ferry; see Manorowen, below), and, following renovation, was let by them as a holiday cottage. Dilys and David eventually passed the house on to their daughter, Lucy, in 2017.



Outside Stephens Cottage: Guests at wedding of Elizabeth (Lizzie) Anne Stephens to William Morgan, 1936

Key to people in photo

Back Row (L to R):

Sylvie Hitchings (white hat), No Name, No Name, Beatie Llewellyn (Rosedale), Thomas George Stephens (brother of bride), Wife of Rev. T.M.Jones, James Stephens, Olwen Richards (nee Phillips), Bertie Stephens, Norman Stephens, Alec Stephens, Sal Stephens (with ribbon in hair), William Henry Davies, Willie Palmer (Dubs), Annie Palmer, Raymond Palmer (in mother's arms), Affie Stephens.

Middle Row (L to R):

Rev. Price (Top Hat - Galilee Chapel Minister before Rev. T.M. Jones), Cassie Saies, Aunty ?, No Name (behind bridesmaid Mary Morris), Florrie Morgan (nee Stephens), Sarah Jane Davies (nee Stephens) behind Florrie and holding son Edgar), Olive Stephens (Affie's wife), Dilys Stephens (nee Philpin – bridesmaid - behind Gwyneth Ann Palmer), Lottie Jones (behind Dilys Llewellyn, bridesmaid and Rev. T.M.Jones – top hat), Edith Llewellyn (front right wearing fur stole and with white feather in hat), Bella ? (next to Edith Llewellyn), Rev. Rockford Williams (Rector Llangwm Church – in top hat).

Front Row / Bridal party (L to R):

Rita Stephens (bridesmaid and niece of bride), Mary Morris (friend of bride), William Morgan (bridegroom), Lizzie Ann Morgan (nee Stephens - Bride), William Stephens (father of bride), Gwyneth Ann Palmer (bridesmaid - later married Eric Stephens), Dilys Llewellyn bridesmaid and neighbour of bride), Beryl Jones (neighbour of bridegroom).

Summer Hill (85, Llangwm Ferry)

Built by James Stephens (Jimmy) in 1898 at the same time as his brother was building the house now known as Stephens Cottage. The 1901 census lists James (32), a labourer in the shipyard, his wife Martha (28), born in Martletwy, and daughter Martha Ann (1). By 1911, the family consists of James (42), now specified as a “driller” in the dockyard, Martha (38), Martha-Ann (11), Frederick J (8), and Alexander G (1), living in a four-room house. A further son, Idris, was born after the 1911 census, the Llangwm School’s entry records indicating 3.5.1914 as his birthday. Alec and Idris were childhood friends of our father, Norman, born 1913. Curiously, despite the difference in ages, Alec and Idris were both admitted to Llangwm School on 15th September 1919.

By 1921, James (52), still a “driller” and Martha (49; now curiously revealed to have been born in Letterston, not Martletwy) have their children Martha Ann (21), Frederick G (19), Alex G (12) and Idris M (7) still living with them, as well as Mary Miller (presumably Martha’s mother), aged 81 and single.

Martha died in 1927, but James is still in residence. By now, Letitia Stephens is also present, presumably the same Letitia, daughter of a James and Mary Stephens, listed in the 1881 census as being 8 years old, and still, in 1911, aged 38 and single, living with her father James (65), and brother Howard (20) (possibly in Rose Cottage, see below). Following Martha’s death, did the unmarried Letitia swap her father, James Stephens, for a husband, the recently widowed James Stephens? We can find no record of a marriage, and it seems more likely that, as a first cousin to James, Letitia simply moved into Summerhill to help James with the children. The 1939 National Register has entries for James Stephens (b. 1869), retired labourer, and Idris (b. 1914), a labourer in public works, still living in the house, but Idris must have moved out soon afterwards, possibly after his father’s death.

During our early childhood in the 1950s, Summer Hill lay empty, and it is difficult to account for the intervening years. We remember Martha Ann and Idris visiting from Porthcawl with Martha Ann’s daughter, Moira. Alec, as an adult, married Dilys Philpin and lived in the Mill in Llangwm with their daughters, Jill and Ann.

In the late 1950s, Summer Hill was bought by Eddie and Glenys James from Tylorstown in the Rhondda Valley. They had two sons, Huw and Owain. Eddie was a CDT (Craft, Design and Technology) lecturer at Neyland Technical College. When they moved to Neyland, the house was bought by Major Charles Moysey and his wife who retired to the area from Dartford in Kent. The Moyseys became well known as leading lights in ‘Old Time Dancing’ circles in the county. Both Major and Mrs Moysey died in 1990, and the house was bought by David and Dilys Ash and was then lived in by their daughter Kate with husband Chris Thomas (who had grown up at Woodside) and four children, Connor, Nathan, Daniel and Jake. In 2016, Kate and

Chris moved to Hook, and the house was bought by Keith and Rachel McDonnell who have retired to Llangwm Ferry from Surrey.

Herons Reef (87, Llangwm Ferry)



This plot was originally the garden of what is now Heron Cottage (see below). In the 1950s, Clifford Stephens sold the cottage and garden (possibly as a family-owned property) to a Mr and Mrs Culpin for the absurdly low sum of £150! (The Culpins had apparently pleaded that they had nowhere to live and were homeless). The cottage was in disrepair at the time, but they quickly renovated it to a basic standard and then let it out as a holiday home.

The extensive garden was then sold off to Messrs. Eldred and Harrison who jointly owned the Silverdale Motel in Johnston. Although they lived near Cardiff, both had boats which they wished to keep on moorings off Llangwm Ferry (Ted Harrison owned a Seadog ketch and Mr Eldred owned a motor-sailor – Black Rose). They built a large, two storey pair of flats on the site (one wonders how planning permission was granted for such an out-of-character structure within the National Park). Mr Eldred died in the 1970s and the building was sold to Phyllis Baker and her Dutch husband. They began a small nursing home in the building, but subsequently sold the business to a Mr and Mrs Basset who lived in Rectory Close, Llangwm. Mr Basset died, and his wife eventually sold the business to a Mrs Ann Jones who also owned a nursing home in Tenby. The 10-bedroom home lost its licence as a nursing home in 2016 and remained empty for some years. There were numerous attempts to rent or sell the property since that time including two failed auctions, but purchasers, Martin and Alison Zyskowski, were eventually found in mid-2019. Martin and Alison have undertaken a remodelling of the building, with newly installed stone cladding providing a more sympathetic fascia to the house. The house is currently (August 2024) For Sale.

Glyndwr House (89, Llangwm Ferry; recently restored to its original name after a few years as Will's Cottage).

This house was built by our great-great uncle, George Stephens, in about 1890. The 1891 census (entry 150) lists George Stephens (24), a labourer in the shipyard, as the head of a household, with his wife Sarah (22), son, John George (3) and daughter Mary Ann (11mo). Previously, a limekiln had stood on the shoreline of the land.



Glyndwr House 2020 following major reconstruction



Great, great grandfather George Stephens Snr and grandchildren outside Glyndwr House (ca 1918). L to R: Lizzie-Anne Stephens (later Morgan, then Jones); Sarah Jane Stephens (later Davies); Owen Edgar "Gary" Stephens; George Stephens; Martha Anne Stephens.

By 1901, George (34), a "skilled dockyard labourer" is living with his wife Sarah (32), children John George (13), Mary Ann (10), Bertie William (8), Owen Edgar (6), Alfred J (2) and Sarah Jane (5mo). In the 1911 census, George (Jnr), now aged 44, and a hand driller in the Dockyard,

lives in Glyndwr House with his children John George (23), Mary Ann (20), Ewin (presumably Owen) Edgar (16), Alfred Jenkin (12) and Sarah Jane (10). For some reason, Owen Edgar was always known within the family as Gary*. By 1911, the 15-year-old Bertie was living a few houses further along the road at the then Montrose, with his maiden Auntie (his grandfather's sister-in-law), Martha Palmer (76).

From 1910, George kept a daily diary, recording both everyday matters such as the weather or the potato crop, but also a record of local sports and world events relating to the village, and, from 1914, including the deaths of local boys serving in France or in the Navy.¹ Some examples:

December 2nd, 1910: "Finished Winter digging the garden today. Mr Lort Phillips is speaking in Llangwm tonight on the election"

August 28th, 1911: "We was down at Lawrenny Village and had a look in the stable. We had a look at Llangwm, the Derby racer, he is a beautiful horse."

June 12th, 1912: "Launch of the Fearless at Pem Dock today by Mrs Guest, the Borough member's wife"

December 11th, 1912: "Martha's pig got hurted, had to kill it at 6.30 in heavy rain"

June 6th, 1915: "Sunday School anniversary, good attendance. Collections for the day £5 16s 1d; last year £6 10s; on the tea £4 14s 5d. Total £10 10s 6d."

January 5th, 1916: "Garry came home today over Sunday. We heard today Jack Hutchings is missing in France".

January 1st, 1917: "The river was frozen across from Black Tar to the Ferry Bay"

13th September, 1917: "Mr George of Nash son was buried today, the one that was in France, a very large funeral".

22nd April, 1918: "John Owens carpenter from Hook was coming home from the Dockyard. He was going down Llangwm Hill on his bike and a couple of boys from Haverfordwest (were) coming down Furzy Hill and collided on Hook Bridge. John Owens was knocked down and died the next morning at 10.0 a.m. Buried Saturday. Tommy Childs' son of Pembroke Ferry died".

16th October, 1918: "Digging out potatoes at Coedcanlas. A fair crop".

November 11th, 1918: "Armistice signed between the Allies and Germans on the 11th of November at 11.0 a.m."

¹<https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/493618#?xywh=-440%2C14%2C1705%2C1169>
<https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1683866#?xywh=-1334%2C-1%2C4870%2C3339>

The 1921 census shows George Stephens (56), a driller, by now a widower. His son, John George (Johnnie) (33) is unmarried and working as a labourer at Hook colliery. The census specifies, however, that on the night of the census he was On Strike! Daughters Mary Anne (31) and Sarah Jane (20) are both single and said to have "Home Duties". The 1939 National Register shows George Stephens, b. 1866, Driller, HM Dockyard (retired), with Mary Ann Stephens (b. 1890), Bertie Stephens (b. 1892), odd job labourer, and George Stephens, (b. 1924), at school. It is not clear who young George may be – perhaps George's grandson (Alfred (Affie) Stephens' son), staying overnight. A further entry is labelled "This record is officially closed" indicating the individual was still alive in 1991 when the record was made public.

By the 1930s, "Gary" had moved to Tenby*, and Sarah Jane to the nearby cottage now named Mollies Cottage, when she married William Henry Davies, leaving Mary-Ann with Bertie. Bertie was mentally handicapped, perhaps explaining Mary-Ann's need to provide care for him. Affie, as another Stephens shipwright, was possibly living at another shipyard town before his return to live along the road at Montrose (see below), where his Palmer great, great grandparents had lived. By the fifties, Mary-Ann Stephens was living alone in Glyndwr House. When Mary Ann died in 1970, her sister, Sarah Jane, and husband William Henry Davies moved from their smaller cottage opposite, into Glyndwr House. When, later, Sarah Jane died, their son Edgar and wife Dorothy moved, initially into a caravan in the garden, then into the house with father William Henry. William Henry died in 2008 and his surviving daughter Sal, sold the house to Chris and Susan Davies who at that time lived in 'The Point', the house adjacent to Glyndwr House. They moved to Stratford upon Avon in 2012 and the house was then sold to the current occupants, John and Sian Rowles. They have a single son, Dylan. Since purchasing the house, they have undertaken major expansion and renovation works.

Glyndwr House has a decent size garden, in which Mary Anne used to grow lily-of-the-valley, which in spring she would harvest, tie into bunches, and sell in Haverfordwest. But the garden was also used by her sister, Sarah Janes' family both for vegetables, and to hold a pig. One of the author's (DS) earliest memories is the occasion of the slaughter of the pig. Ronnie Thomas, the butcher, came across from Hook to do the job. My (DS) memory fails me in detail, but was the pig hauled up over an apple branch and killed? Or, more likely, killed and hung over the apple branch to bleed out? In any event, it was an impressive experience for a six-year old.

*family memory holds he lived later in Tenby and, indeed, he is included in the 1939 National Record for Tenby. He married Charlotte A Campbell (b. 1887) in 1923 and died in 1969.

The Point



Photo Jenny Ambler, February 2024

This house was built by Tecwyn Thomas and wife Ceridwen in the garden of Rose Cottage in 1973. Named “The Point”, it is not to be confused with the group of three or four houses listed on the older census forms as Langum or Guilford Point, or the house shown on older O.S. maps as Point House, but which is now called Rosedale. Tec and Crid had one daughter, Ann Maria who now lives in Mollie’s Cottage (see below). They moved to Johnston in the 1980s and the house was bought by Mr and Mrs Hickman. The Hickmans sold the house, in turn, to Chris and Susan Davies, who had spent their earlier lives in Zimbabwe, returning to the UK when Robert Mugabe’s government passed new laws on European settlers owning property in that country. Chris and Sue’s daughter Ruth and son-in-law Michael then ‘owned’ Glyndwr House (not sure whose name was on the deeds) which they used as a holiday home for the extended Davies family.

The Davies’s sold Point House in 2012 when Chris became infirm and required access to more extensive services than are available locally. It was bought as a holiday home by Chris and Jo Marsen who have undertaken major alterations since owning the house.

Langum Point

As already mentioned, the block of 3-4 houses sharing common walls and situated on the lane leading down to the beach are listed on old OS maps as Langum Point, and in pre-1861 census returns as Langum Point or Ferry Point. Since the order of entries in the census documents may not reflect the physical order of the dwellings, it is often difficult to follow the successive residents of the individual houses. We have assumed that families have continued to live in the same house over successive censuses, even if the name given to the dwelling varies. However, where new occupants appear between censuses, the order is something of a guess. Since we have independent evidence that Peter Brown lived in Rosedale, and that he is listed in the 1851 census as living in Langum Point, and in the 1861 census as living in 1, Ferry Point, we assume that these entries all reflect the current Rosedale. This deduction is supported by the Tithe map for Burton for 1850 that shows Rosedale as occupied by Peter Brown. The 1850 Tithe map also shows a plot (#579) next to Rosedale and corresponding to the plot of the present day "The Cottage". This plot is listed as a cottage and garden, owned by Anne Barlow, and occupied by William Brown. A building that corresponds to the location of the present-day house is shown, but, additionally, a second building that might correspond to the current Molly's Cottage appears.

As to the other houses, we assume (not entirely reasonably) that the order reflects the physical relationship, unless other evidence suggests otherwise.

Assuming that all these dwellings were part of the Anne Barlow estate, they must all have passed into the ownership of the Lort Phillips family, originally of Dumpdale, but subsequently of Lawrenny. When their respective tenants then purchased them is only sometimes documented.

2 Ferry Point (perhaps “The Cottage”, 95 Llangwm Ferry)

The 1851 census lists Elizabeth? Wichell? Widlett? (Illegible), (40) a “Butler’s Wife” as head of the household, with children Elizabeth (17), a ?dressmaker? (Illegible), Arthur (12), John (10), William (7), Mary (6), Charles (4), Fanny (2) and James (6 days). Elizabeth had been born in Cardiganshire, and Arthur, John, William, Mary and Fanny born in Haverfordwest, with only baby James born in Burton parish, so these are very recent arrivals, who disappear from the Llangwm Ferry records before the next census. Since the only nearby house substantial enough to have had a butler would have been Dumbledale (now Ashdale), we can speculate that Elizabeth’s husband was employed there. Might we also deduce that the dwelling was a “tied cottage” provided by the Lort Phillips family for their butler?



Since this family is not recorded in the Llangwm Ferry 1861 census, we have placed a new entry for 1861 in this house, called, in the census, “3, Ferry Point”. The census records William Lewis (33), a seaman (illegible), his wife Martha, 33, and children John, 7, Richard, 5, William, 4, Elizabeth, 1, James (5 days) and a visitor, Mary Miller (20), listed as a servant. Since Martha’s maiden name was Miller, perhaps we can guess that Mary was her unmarried sister.

The 1871 census has William Lewis (41), Martha (nee Miller from birth certificate of Henry) (42), Elizabeth (12), James (10), George (8), Robert (3), Mary (11 months) living there. The house is now listed simply as “Cottage”, Langum Ferry. If these entries refers to Rose Cottage (two rooms) or Herons Cottage (at that time three rooms, or Mollies Cottage (maybe 4 or 5 rooms), the size of these two families of 1851 (10 + absent husband) and 1861 (8) would suggest severe overcrowding, supporting the notion that this is the present day “The Cottage”.

The 1881 census has William Lewis (fisherman), Martha Lewis, their son Henry (10), as well as Marian Elseford (35), a boarder, born in Penzance and her daughter Lillian (12), born in Ealing, and son Herbert (9) born in Salisbury in the cottage. By 1891, William (63) and Martha

(62) have their daughter, Lizzie (31), a fisherwoman, son Henry (20), a dockyard labourer, living with them. Also with them is Ann Miller (83), Martha's widowed mother.

By 1901, the household consists of William (73), still fishing, Martha (72), Mary Miller (64), now listed as sister-in-law, Joyce Lewis (10) and Martha Lewis (8), both described as granddaughters, born in Aberavon. A document from 1908 indicates that the owner was the Lort Phillips estate, the property having a rateable value of £3.00. 1911 has the Lewis family living in 4 rooms. William (84) is still alive as is Martha (83). William is now listed as a retired Able Seaman, and Martha as a "Naval Pensioner". Mary Miller, Martha's sister, is still with them, as is George Lewis (49), a collier, presumably the same George as listed in 1871, but who is absent from subsequent Llangwm Ferry census listings.

Mary Miller reappears in the 1921 census, aged 81 living in Summer Hill with James Stephens and family. James is married to "Martha", born in Letterston. Could this Martha be Martha Lewis (age 8, of the 1881 census and 11 months in 1871), granddaughter of William Lewis?

The Cottage (95, Llangwm Ferry)



In 1918, the house was sold by John Frederick Lort Phillips to Mr James Henry Phillips for £50. In keeping, the 1921 census shows James Henry Phillips (40), working as a "slinger" in the engineering department of the Admiralty Dockyard in Pembroke Dock. His wife was Martha. Other members of the household are Margaret Eleanor Phillips, Richard Eric Phillips, May Phillips and Olwen Anne Phillips as well as a fisherman, John Gwilliam. The Llangwm School records indicate that Olwen Phillips (registered 8.3.1920; b. 1.3.1915) was living in Llangwm Ferry, with father James Phillips. The incomplete National Record from 1939 indicates that James Henry Phillips was employed as a haulage driver at Hook colliery, and living with his wife, Martha (unpaid domestic duties) and daughter Olwen (Domestic Service). Since, by the late 1940s / very early 1950s, this house continued to be owned by Martha Phillips (mother

of Olwen and presumed widow of James), we conjecture that Martha Phillips is the 8-year old Martha Lewis of the 1901 census who has now inherited the house from her grandparents.

When Olwen married and started a family of her own, she moved to Hook. Her mother, Martha, now moved to 'Tin Town', Guildford, Llangwm and in 1950 sold the cottage for £160 to Joe and Florence Pepperell who had retired to Llangwm Ferry from Cardiff but hailed originally from Wiltshire. Joe died in 1961 but his wife, Flo, continued to live there into the early 1970s, along with her young grandson Mark. Her son Norman (Mark's father) also moved to a caravan in the garden where he lived with his wife Gillian before they eventually moved to Haverfordwest. Joe Pepperell owned an old wooden converted lifeboat /cabin cruiser that was tied up just below the house. We remember the Peperells kept bees, and turned the apple crop into cider. They were also collectors of antiques and attended auctions in Cardiff.

When Flo died, a Professor Brian McKibbins and his wife Pamela M McKibben bought the cottage in 1976 for £12,000 as a holiday home. They then, in 1986, sold the cottage for £45,000 to Bill and Fay Keppel-Compton, Bill a retired RAF Group Captain (earned, he told us by flying a desk). Bill died in 2023. The Keppel-Comptons were keen boat people and had a number of boats including a Dutch-style sailing vessel Charanga, which Bill designed and had built in ferro cement. When not on its mooring it was laid up (for a time during a major overhaul) in a mud berth excavated beneath the Cottage by Bill.

4, Ferry Point (Possibly Rose Cottage)

Rose Cottage



Across the lane from today's "The Point" lies a 2-room cottage, now integrated into the neighbouring house "The Cottage", which prior to 1871 was presumably one of the previous three entries. Simply from its shape and size, we wonder whether this house was originally one of the clom cottages described above.

The 1901 census lists a house occupied by Thomas Hitchings (29), his wife Mary (24), son James (6) and daughter Annie Jane (4). Thomas Hitchings is listed as a "Navy (Quarry)". The 1908 rates assessment indicates that the Hitchings family rented the house from William Stephens. While it is unclear from the documents to which house this refers, Thomas Hitchings' name is listed in the 1964 conveyance documents dating from the time that Rose Cottage was integrated into the neighbouring house, the Cottage (see above). A document dated 25th March, 1964 states that the Lort Phillips estate had sold the cottage in 21st October, 1911 to a Thomas Hitchings. The property is identified as field No. 84 in the Ordnance Survey 2nd Ed of 1908). Curiously, the house is named "Ivy Cottage", and both names, Rose Cottage and Ivy Cottage are included in subsequent Conveyance documents. However, another document dated 1st July, 1963, shows the cottage being sold again by Patrick Herbert Lort Phillips to Archie Smith and his wife Honor Smith. Equally curious, given the date of the purchase of "Ivy Cottage" by Thomas Hitchings is October 1911, at the time of the 1911 census, the Hitchings family have left Llangwm Ferry.

The occupants of Rose Cottage prior to 1901 are even more difficult to identify with any certainty. The 1841 census for Llangwm Ferry lists Thomas Davis, 28, fisherman, his wife Ann (30), and children Mary (8) and William (7). Thomas Davis/Davies is missing from the 1851

census, but reappears in 1861 as Thomas Davies (50), fisherman, wife Anne (48), and grandson George (7), a scholar. We tentatively place this family in Rose Cottage.

However, the 1851 census has no entry corresponding to this family, but instead lists George Davies (26), a labourer, his wife, Mary (23), and children William (7), John (5), David (3) and George (? 3 months). George is too old to be grandson George from the previous entry, but we have placed this family in 3 Ferry Point as it does not appear elsewhere in Llangwm Ferry, either in this census or subsequently

By the 1871 census, and consistent with 1841, Thomas Davies (60), a fisherman, his wife Ann (66), and grandson George (17), also a fisherman, are still living in the same house. By 1881, George Davies jnr (27), employed as a dockyard labourer, is listed as head of the family with wife Sarah (27), children Mary (5), Jane (4), Richard (2). Thomas Davies, listed as grandfather (72), a widower, and fisherman is living with them.

An 1891 entry for Llangwm Ferry has George Davies (37), dockyard labourer, wife Sarah (37), children Mary (15), Jane (14), Richard (12), Elizabeth (9), Thomas George (7), Joshua (5), Sarah Ann (3), and father Thomas Davies (82), a widower. Young Thomas George Davies was admitted to Llangwm School on 7.9.1891, his parent being named as Geo Davies.

By the 1901 census, the Davies family has disappeared, and no obvious residents appear. Possibly, this is about the time that the Hitchings family mentioned above take up residence. However, we are unable to identify the occupants between 1911 and 1944. It is possible that in 1921 this house was the home of Samuel England (26), a collier in Hook Colliery, and his wife Gladys (27) and newly born son Idwal, as they are listed in the Llangwm Ferry census, and all other properties are already covered. Raymond Palmer, son of Willie and Annie Palmer (see Montrose, below) in a handwritten autobiography, mentions this family had moved into a cottage in Llangwm Ferry (rent 3 shillings a week) in about 1935, when Willie was employed as a pumpman at Hook colliery. Rose Cottage was also occupied briefly (2 years) by the Thomas family (children were William and Diane, who was born in the cottage), returning from Devonport. The Thomas family subsequently moved to Apple Tree Cottage in Port Lion.

In the 1950s/early 1960s, Rose Cottage was the home of John Henry Elwyn Evans, Ida Evans, and their son John. Elwyn worked at the Mine Depot in Milford. Ida was the sister of William Henry Davies, next door. John was only a couple of years older than us and a frequent playmate. Across the lane from the cottage (where "The Point" now stands) was their garden and chicken run. Prominent in the garden was a "Princess Elizabeth" apple tree that bore Llangwm Ferry's earliest eating apples of the year.

When Elwyn and Ida moved to Rectory Road, the house was sold in 1961 for £200 to Archie Smith who was a local RSPCA inspector. He used the cottage as a holiday rental and later built the house on the Ferry Hill known as Beggars Reach. In 1973, the garden of Rose Cottage was sold to Tecwyn Thomas (see The Point, above). Rose Cottage was then rented to various people for short periods before being bought in 1977 by the owners of neighbouring "The

Cottage”, Brian and Pamela McKibbin who sold it on to Bill and Fay Keppel Compton as an annexe to ‘The Cottage’ next door.

Amongst those in residence before the Keppel-Comptons integrated the building into The Cottage, was Annette Foulder and her 4-year old daughter Lynda (now Lynda Hughes), and 3-year old son Shane (1972). Other tenants before the Keppel-Comptons included Hugh Turnbull (journalist) and Paul Davies (Teacher at Haverfordwest County Secondary School).

Heron Cottage, 89 Llangwm Ferry is now a small rented holiday cottage, described as sleeping two.



Heron Cottage and pine end of Mollies' Cottage

Family memory has it that the house was originally built by the Stephens family, using stone ferried across from the quarries on the Coedcanlas side of the river (though stone from the quarry in Wright's Wood, Port Lion seems more likely). The house is not shown in the 1850 Tithe map, but is plausibly that entered as entry 98 under Langum Ferry in the 1871 census, when it is occupied by great-great-great grandfather, James Stephens¹ (57), a Mariner, together with his wife, Ann (56), daughter Ann (21), a fisherwoman, son William (14), a fisherman, and daughter Martha Jane (12), attending school. An entry in the Pembroke register (Vol 26, page 219) tells that (James and Ann (nee Morgans) had married in March 1838. Our family tree indicates that James and Ann also had a son, George, b 1842, who had married Ann Palmer from along the road in September, 1863, giving birth to a son, William (1863-1945), our great grandfather. Since the house is not shown on the 1851 tithe map, it seems it has been built in the intervening years, though since ownership was in the hands of the Lort Phillips estate, it is not clear whether this refers to only the land and James and Ann have built the house, or whether the house itself was built by the estate and rented out to James and family.

By the 1891 census, the house was occupied by their grandson, our great grandfather William Stephens (27), perhaps (since the ages nearly match) the same William entered in the 1871 census, a "shipyard labourer" and his wife Elizabeth (nee Palmer) (27), and their children Thomas (age 5; our grandfather), William (3) and Isabella (10 mo.), who reappear in Stephens

.....

¹ James Stephens may have come originally from Camelford, but there is no record of anyone of this name born in that or a neighbouring parish between 1810 and 1818. Moreover, a James Stephens was born in Burton, a more likely location, in 1812.

Cottage (above) thereafter. William bought the property from the Lort Phillips estate on 14th October, 1918. An entry in first week of the Register of Pupils of newly-opened Llangwm School lists our grandfather, Thomas George Stephens (b. -8.1886) as being admitted on 4th May 1891, his father, William, living in Llangwm Ferry. James Stephens (b. 8.11.1879) and John Stephens (b.11.4.1883) were also admitted on 18.5.1891 to the school, again listing William Stephens as parent or guardian. By 1898 William Stephens and family had moved to the house, now called Stephens Cottage, which he had built.

Our father, Norman, was born there in 1915, suggesting that Thomas George and Lizzie, our grandparents, lived there at that time, after marrying in 1913. Thomas George doesn't appear to be living in Llangwm Ferry in 1911, nor does he appear in any Pembrokeshire census. However, a Thomas George Stephens, single, born in Llangwm, Pembrokeshire, does appear on the 1911 census in Devonport, where he is in lodgings while working as a "shipwright iron". This would be consistent with Pembroke Dockyard workers being transferred from time to time, perhaps to complete their training, to a larger admiralty dockyard. In keeping with Thomas George and Lizzie moving into Heron Cottage when they married, the 1921 census has an entry for the family living in Llangwm Ferry, most probably in this house. Perhaps they continued to live there before building Bayview in the thirties.

Following his return from Devonport, Thomas George worked in the Pembroke Dockyard until he was made redundant on 3rd November 1921, foreshadowing the locally catastrophic closure of the Dockyard in 1926.

461. Stephens. T.G.

D.—487. (Revised—August, 1916.) D.
Sta. 35/09
Sta. 256/15.
Sta. 263/16,

Notice of Discharge.

P E M B R O K E Yard, 20th October, 1921

You are hereby informed that your services will not be required
after bellringing on the 3rd November, 1921 in consequence of
reduction of hands.

M. Milton
CHIEF CONSTABLE
Head of Department.

RH128 6000/5/19—[2022] 14378/D498 10m (3) 7/10v 3299 G & S 110

The Bishop

D-236. (Revised—July, 1918.)

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE UNDER THE ADMIRALTY.

Pembroke Dockyard (or other Establishment).

Constructive Department.

3rd October '21 Date.

Name of Employee (in full) Stephens Thomas George

Trade or Class Shipwright
(giving description where necessary)

Hired or Established Hired

*Period of Service in present occupation 12 1/2 Years

Conduct Very Good

Quality of Service rendered Very Good

Cause of Discharge Reduction of hands

Particulars of Service, if any, additional to that stated at *

Sta. 207/18.
Sta. 203/19.

J. D. Minton
Signature
(Head of Department)

HB (204) 18217/D615 8000
Very Good U.S.S. 110
CONSTRUCTOR

Redundancy notice issued to Thomas George Stephens from Pembroke Dockyard, 1921 in anticipation of its closure in 1926, and certificate of his service as a shipwright.

In the years between the first and second world wars, the house was still owned by Thomas George's father, William Stephens but after Thomas George, Lizzie and family moved up to Bayview, the house was eventually rented to Billy and Lizzie Davies (Lizzie the Ark, so-called because she grew up (in Hook) in a cottage named "The Ark"). The Davies family, Billy and Lizzie and their children, Windsor, Gillian, Geraldine, Paul, Audrey, Wesley and Eirof continued living there until the 1950s, now renting the house from William's son, Clifford Stephens. A further daughter, Alison was born after they moved out. The cottage was then sold in the 1961 to Neville Howard Culpin (see Herons' Reef section) and became a holiday home. The property, at the time named Ferry View, was transferred to Bentlass Property Co Ltd, based in London, but was bought from them by TV producer John Mead and his TV presenter wife Mollie (Maureen) Staffer (aka Molly Mead) as a holiday home in 1969, for £1969. They seem to have renamed the house Cleddau Cottage. John had a succession of sailing craft that he kept on a mooring off Llangwm Ferry. The couple then bought Sarah Jane and William Henry Davies' house (today's Molly's Cottage) next door when the Davies's moved across to Glyndwr House. A memorable event was the landing of a helicopter on our lawn at Rosedale in the 1960s, to ferry John off to an urgent appointment in Cardiff. Following John and Molly's divorce, the cottage was sold to the Basset family (living in Heron's Reef) who used it as a rental property and renamed it Heron Cottage. Gunter Hupp (a German national) rented the house from the Bassetts until his death in the late 1990s. The cottage then changed hands again, being bought by Gwyn and Debbie Cole, who lived there until around 2008. It was then

sold as a holiday home but due to family circumstances, was rarely used and sold again to the current owners, Charlotte (Lottie) and Andrew Nicholas who let it out as a holiday rental.



Ploughing, 1936, with Herons Cottage in the background (taken on a 'Box Brownie camera given to Rita Stephens on her 16th birthday).

3, Ferry Point (possibly Molly's Cottage?)

There is a household (155) listed in the 1901 census with James Stephens*, aged 56, a "pontoon labourer" living with his daughters, Letitia (28), Lily (18) and son Howard, (10). We speculated above that Letitia may have moved in with yet another James Stephens (of Summer Hill) at some time after 1911. However, in 1911, James (father, 65), Letitia (38 and single) and Howard (20) are still living in Llangwm Ferry in a 2-room cottage that may have been Molly's Cottage.

In 1908 the house still belonged to the Lort Phillips estate and had a rateable value of £2.00.



James Stephens, brother of great-great grandfather George, and his daughter Letitia – perhaps outside Molly's Cottage

*There seem to have been 2 James Stephens living in Llangwm Ferry in 1871:

1. Aged 25 and married to Elizabeth (26). This James disappears over the next census but possibly reappears in 1921 (aged 75) and living with Nellie Stephens (46)
2. Married to Mary, but away in night of 1871 census. This second James reappears over the next censuses. By deduction, he, too, was 25 at the time of the 1871 census. This James seems to be the brother of our great great-grandfather George, and son of James and Ann living next door in Heron Cottage..

This James may be the same as entered in the 1851 census, entry 88, under the family of Ann Stephens (36), living in Port Lion with daughter Martha (11), James (5) and Ann (2 months). Ann is listed as ?Mariner's? (hardly legible) wife. In keeping with that reading, Church records have James, born in Port Lion in October, 1845, to mother Ann and father James, a sailor. Following that reasoning, son, James, is thus the brother of our great-great-grandfather, George.

Following this line of argument, it seems that the house listed above as 4, Ferry Point in the 1871 census may be Molly's Cottage.

Going backwards, the 1851 census lists Thomas Bryant (38), a fisherman, his wife Letitia (27), daughters Mary (4) and Elizabeth (1), and a servant, (illegible) Hughes (13). Thomas Bryant (of Guildford Point) also appears in the "Confession of Faith" (1833), establishing Galilee Baptist Church, along with Richard Hughes (also Guildford Point) and William Pickens (Llangwm Ferry).

The last house listed in the 1861 census, before the entries turn to Guildford, is occupied by Thomas Brian (48), a fisherman, his wife Lettice (38), and children Mary (14), Elizabeth (11), William (6), Eleanor (4) and Thomas (2). Despite the variations in spelling, this family is probably the same as the 1851 entry. (Presumably the variations in spelling of Bryant / Brian can be accounted for as the person concerned was illiterate and conveyed his name to the census enumerator orally).

Mary seems to reappear in the 1871 and 1881 entries (the ages match) as wife of James Stephens, and mother of Letitia, presumably named after her grandmother. If this Mary is the daughter of Thomas and Letitia/Lettice Bryant/Brian, it seems possible that she has inherited the lease of the house from her parents, who no longer appear in the 1871 census (The owner at the time was the Lort Phillips estate). Thus, in 1871, the 24-year-old Mary Stephens is listed with her two sons, Thomas (1 year old) and James (1 month). Since the census notes she was the wife of a fisherman, we can assume her husband was away that night. Ten years later, the census records James Stephens (age 36) as head of the household, together with his wife Mary (34), son Thomas (now aged 11), three daughters, Letitia (8), Betsy (6) and Anne (4), and another son, John, aged 2. Presumably, baby James had died in the meantime.

By 1891, James (45), now a wharf labourer, and Mary (44) are still living with daughter Letitia (18), Alfred (10), Lydia (8) and Howard (5 months), but, by 1901, Mary has died, as James (56) is listed as a widower, still working as a "pontoon labourer". Letitia (28) and Lily (18; presumably the Lydia of the previous census) and Howard (10).

1911 lists James (65) as a retired dockyard labourer, living in a 2-roomed house with unmarried daughter Letitia (38), and son Howard (20), also unmarried and a farm labourer.

By 1921, James is still living in the same house with daughter Nellie L. Stephens. It seems the name Letitia is now denoted only by the initial, "L". A note added to the original form reveals

that James was retired but had previously worked as a “Permanent Way Repairer” for the GWR.

Molly’s Cottage (93, Llangwm Ferry)



An Abstract of the Title Deeds dated 24th June, 1920 shows that the house was sold by the Lort Phillips estate to George Stephens for £60. This is presumably the same George Stephens living in Glyndwr House, and in keeping, the same document states that the house was actually in occupation by Pattie Palmer. The same document goes on to document the gift of this property by George Stephens to his son Bertie William Stephens, on the same date. Clearly, George is providing for the future of his mentally handicapped son. An additional paragraph, dated 7th Feb, 1950 records that Bertie died intestate, and that administration of the property was granted to Sarah Jane Davies (George’s daughter).

The 1939 National Record has an entry for a house that subsequently certainly became Molly’s Cottage. That 1939 entry lists William Henry Davies, a colliery worker, his wife Sarah Jane Davies, son William Edgar Davies (b. 1930), daughter Sarah M Davies (b.1934) (both at school), as well as William J Davies, Elizabeth Mary Davies, and William Davies. While we know that Sarah Jane Davies is the married name of Sarah Jane Stephens from neighbouring Glyndwr House in earlier census documents, whether the Davies’s are related to the family of the same name in the 1891 record is unknown.

In keeping with the 1939 record, by the nineteen-fifties, this two-up, two down cottage was owned by Sarah Jane Davies (nee Stephens), and her husband, William Henry, who lived there with their son Edgar, and daughter Sal (Sarah). Although William Henry had been a collier at Hook colliery, we remember him as the forester who looked after Benton Wood for the Forestry Commission. William Henry and Sarah Jane were the first people in Llangwm Ferry to own a TV set, and we remember the special treats when John Evans and we were allowed on Saturday early evenings to watch the Lone Ranger on their by-today’s-standards tiny black and white screen. William Henry and Sarah Jane had their own garden directly adjacent to that of Glyndwr House in which they had their outdoor lavatory and where they, too, grew vegetables and raised chickens. Willie-Henry and Sarah Jane also possessed a greenhouse in which they

grew tomatoes. We were frequently sent across in late summer to buy a couple of pounds of tomatoes for tea, and their taste was for many years the standard by which all other tomatoes were judged. A second greenhouse in the garden of Glyndwr House was used by Willie-Henry to grow prize-winning Chrysanthemums.

When Sarah Jane's unmarried sister, Mary Ann Stephens died in the 1970s, William Henry and Sarah Jane moved to the old family dwelling "Glyndwr House", and their old house was then bought by John and Molly Mead (nee Staffer) who named it Molly's Cottage, the name by which it is still known.

Following the break-up of their marriage, John sold the house (now named Riverside Cottage) to Charles and Beverly Malone in 1989. The Malones renovated and extended the cottage to include an extra wing that replaced an earlier single level extension. In 1992, they moved to Manorowen, Llangwm Ferry (see below) which they rented for a short period from the then owners, Mr and Mrs Eggar, before moving back to Molly's Cottage. Molly's Cottage was later sold to Dorothy, widow of Edgar Davies (son of William Henry and Sarah Jane), who, in turn, sold it to Ann Maria Thomas (daughter of Tec and Crud Thomas who had built 'The Point'). Ann Maria still lives in the house.

Rosedale (99, Llangwm Ferry) is probably the oldest surviving house in Llangwm Ferry, dating from the mid/late-1700s.



Rosedale in 1960s

Rosedale appears on the old OS maps as Point House. The 1850 Tithe Apportionment map for Burton parish shows two buildings on plot #580 that corresponds with the location of Rosedale. One of these is clearly the current house, while the other may correspond to a clom cottage referred to below, under Springtide. For that reason, it may be that there are two separate census entries corresponding to Rosedale for the years around 1850.

In 1840, the Tithe Apportionment lists Plot 580 measuring 1 rood and 22 perches (about 1500 square metres) owned by Mrs Anne Barlow, and occupied by Elizabeth Brown. This is probably the same Elizabeth (nee Jones) who, in Burton church, on June 23rd, 1799 had married mariner Stephen Brown (d 1838, buried Llangwm church). In keeping, the annual Land Tax Assessment Records over the years 1812-1831 document Stephen Brown as occupying land in Guildford owned by Anne Barlow (though the precise location is not possible to identify from those records). Stephen Brown is not listed under Guildford for the 1810 or 1811 Land Tax Assessment (though a William Brown and Peter Jones are both listed. Note: by 1851, William Brown lived in "The Cottage", next door to present-day Rosedale).

In keeping, in the 1841 census, a house, now by the name "Rosedale", was occupied by 75-year-old Elizabeth Brown and her son, Peter Brown (aged 35), listed as being of independent wealth. The entry also includes a servant, Sophia Brown (aged 20). Peter Jones, aged 75, also of independent means, and presumably Elizabeth's brother, is also named as part of the "Rosedale" household. However, it is not entirely clear whether this census record refers to Rosedale, Llangwm Ferry as the entry appears in the census list between houses named "Dirty Corner" and "Pillend" and associated with other entries such as "Nash Mountain" (also occupied by a family of Browns), "Port Vale" and "Little Lake", and separate from other homes

in Llangwm Ferry. Were the Browns resident elsewhere in 1841, moved to Llangwm Ferry before 1851, and gave the Llangwm Ferry House the same name?

Peter Jones was an important tenant farmer in the early nineteenth century, and perhaps he held land in Llangwm Ferry. (Note, ages in the 1841 census were rounded down to the nearest 5 years, so he may have been as much as 79 years old on the census date). An entry in *Pembrokeshire Baptism* records the baptism, on 12 Jan 1797, of Peter Jones, in Llangwm church. This Peter is clearly too young to be the Peter in Rosedale in 1841, but the baptism also records his parents, Peter and Elizabeth Jones that might fit with Rosedale's Peter Jones.

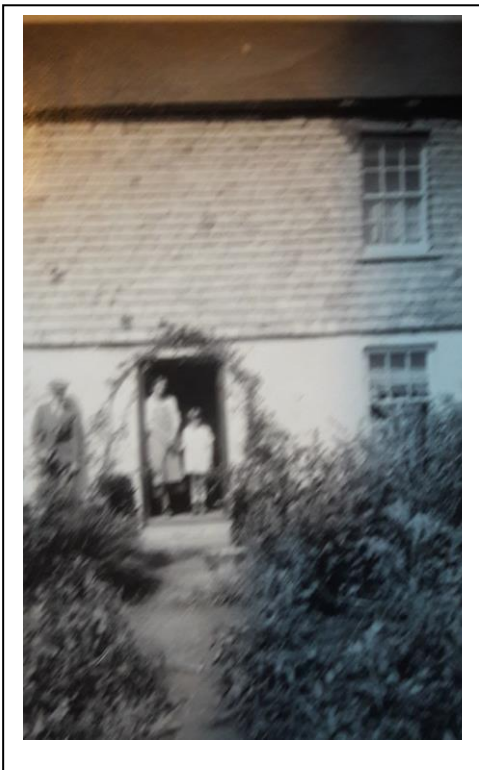
In 1851, Elizabeth's son Peter Brown was certainly living in current Rosedale (with a 29-year-old servant, Martha Rees), though he was now listed as aged 42. He is still in Rosedale in 1861 (now on his own, and aged 54). Peter Brown died in 1870. A Great Western Railway document dated 1870, recording movement of ownership of shares, indicates that Peter Brown, "late of The Point, Burton", had held shares in that company, the executor of his estate being James Brown, through a firm of solicitors located in London.

Over the next twenty years the residents are uncertain. One candidate for Rosedale in 1871 is Benjamin Lewis and family. Benjamin (55) is a labourer, his wife Mary (55), son George, 14, apprentice, and John Phillips (75) agricultural labourer, described as "lunatic". Curiously, a note on the internet reads "**Benjamin Lewis:** *Benjamin Lewis who lived at Llangwm Ferry Cottage, Pembrokeshire at the time of 1871 Census. His wife was Mary but I think he was previously married to Sophia. His son George was my great grandad who was born in Port Lion, Burton*"^a. We have not been able to identify the person who posted this entry in 2006, nor follow it further, but the note that Benjamin Lewis had previously been married to Sophia suggests Sophia Brown, aged 20 in the 1841 census, However, we have not been able to find a record of a marriage between Benjamin Lewis and Sophia Brown.

Candidates for 1881 are the Rees family, or Richard and Ann Hughes. But the Hughes's are resident in Llangwm Ferry from 1861 which doesn't fit, as we know the occupant of Rosedale in 1861. So a better bet for 1881 are William Rees (31, an Engine Fitter born in Whitland, his wife Maria (31) born in Langum, and their children William George (6), Annie Maria (both born in Pembroke Dock), and Louisa Jane (1) born in Burton parish. However, as noted above, it may be that Rosedale had two entries in the census in some years.

^a <https://www.curiousfox.com/uk/mbprof2.lasso?eid=75981>.

By the time of the next census in 1891, Rosedale had become the residence of the Baptist minister, the Rev William Davies (aged 52) and his family, including his third wife Margaret (41), and sons Edgar Reynolds Davies (12) and Albert Laverick Davies (5). The Rev Davies had taken up the ministry at Galilee in 1883. The Davies family were still resident in Rosedale in 1901, though in the interim, Margaret had died, and The Rev Davies (known locally as Davies the Point) had remarried, to Elizabeth Ann, and had one son with her. Rev Davies was still in occupation in 1912, when the house was valued by the Valuation Office Survey (1908 Rateable Value £4.00). Rev Davies had partly retired in 1909 and officiated at Galilee Baptist Chapel only once a month until his final retirement in 1911.



Rosedale sometime in the early part of the twentieth century. Note the slate cladding which was removed long before we moved into the house in the early fifties, and the small pane windows

During this time, the house still belonged to the Lawrenny estate, possibly leased to the Baptist Chapel. By 1914, the Provisional Valuation under the 1910 Finance Act, although listing the owner as J F Lort-Phillips, lists the occupier as Thomas Llewellyn. In 1918, the owner of the estate, John Frederick Lort Phillips, sold "All that messuage or dwelling house and garden known as "Rose Dale", Llangwm Ferry, parish of Burton..." to Thomas Llewellyn for the sum of £120. Llangwm School records indicate that Thomas Llewellyn's daughters, Blodwen and Aline, registered on 23.9.1919, with Thomas listed as parent/guardian, were still living in Llangwm Ferry at that time. The house was transferred to William Llewellyn (known for some reason as "Darkie") in 1920 (for £200).

By 1921, Rosedale is occupied by William Llewellyn (32), a shipwright, and his wife Beatrice (formerly Beatrice (Beatie) Stephens) (29), their son Ewart (2) and baby daughter Dilys (0). Ewart died when still a boy, while the grown-up Dilys married Bernard Rawlings from Portsmouth. Their children, 4 girls, Beryl, Sheila, Pam and Barbara, were all born in Rosedale. The local Rate Book for 1928 still has William Llewellyn as paying the tax, but whether as owner or resident is not given.

It seems that sometime in the next twenty years, the Llewellyns had moved out (to Portsmouth where William (Darkie) worked in the Dockyard, readying itself for the looming war and the house was rented out. The first tenants, in 1937, were Willie and Annie Palmer and their son Raymond before they moved into Manorowen along the road. The 1939 National Register specifically identifies the house as “Rosedale” and lists the occupants as Edwin Barnes (b. 1891), a labourer at the armament depot in Trecwn. With him are his wife Annie Barnes and daughters, Lucie Healing Barnes and Flossie Barnes (b. 1931), both of whom are in school. A further two entries are labelled “This record is officially closed”, indicating that the unidentified individuals were still alive in 1991. Perhaps they were further children, but it is curious that William and Beatrice Llewellyn are registered at the address in the Electoral List for 1945.

The house remained in the hands of the Llewellyn family until it was initially rented, then sold by William’s widow, Beatrice, to our father, Norman Stephens, in 1954, for the sum of £770, considered locally as an outrageous price for a house. “Darkie” was the last of the Llangwm Ferry ferrymen, operating the ferry until about 1930s or forties.



Aerial photo of Rosedale ca. 1998, showing extension at rear.

By then, Norman was a primary school teacher at Barn Street upper school in Haverfordwest, while our mother Rona Mary Stephens worked from time to time, initially as a staff nurse at the County Hospital in Haverfordwest and much later as District Nurse over many areas of Pembrokeshire. When we moved into the house in 1950 (only a few months before Graham’s birth) it was essentially a 2 up (but additional tiny bedroom on the landing), 2 down house

with a single storey kitchen extension on the pine end. Running water (cold) was the only modern aspect! Although our father, Norman, bought the house in 1954, we Stephens had rented Rosedale from Beatrice Llewellyn for a year or two before that purchase, when we moved across from Edwards Pill, and we have early memories of living there. There was no electricity or sewerage, and we remember the house being both cold and damp. But Rona was a great “moderniser”. She had an anthracite-fuelled Rayburn stove installed in the kitchen, which improved the temperature, then persuaded the electricity board to extend the electricity supply down from Guildford, providing light and cooking and heating. Our house was wired by our cousin, Leslie Jones (Grannie’s nephew), who lived with his wife Jean at the time in Guildford (Tin Town) at the bottom of the Ferry Hill.

Our mother, Rona, also resented, not unreasonably, having to walk to the bottom of the garden to visit the lavatory (next to the former pigsty), and, in the absence of mains sewage, insisted on having a cesspit dug in the garden, allowing us the luxury of an indoor flushable toilet, another first for Llangwm Ferry. The cesspit also allowed the installation of a bath with a hot water supply (another feature that our mother deemed essential!). Despite the installation of a sewage-processing plant at the end of the road in the 1950s, mains sewage was not installed until the 1960s. The existence of lavatories down the bottom of the garden, and the emptying of the consequences of their use into the river remain among the distant and unpleasant memories of childhood.

By the early sixties, our mother had brought the house up to the standards she had grown up with in a collier’s house in the Rhondda in the 1920s. After David had left home in 1965, an extension at the back of the house allowed an extra bedroom for visitors. The intention was to have a garage underneath the bedroom, but, sensibly, planning permission was not granted because of the danger of exhaust fumes infiltrating the bedroom above. The solution was simple; the garage-to-be was renamed a boathouse, and planning permission was allowed.

As with the other houses in Llangwm Ferry, the garden was entirely given over to growing vegetables and soft fruit. Barrow-loads of seaweed from the shore provided fertiliser for the rows of potatoes, kidney (i.e., runner) beans, peas, broad beans, cabbages, onions, carrots, parsnips, accessed by a path down the middle flanked by Michaelmas Daisies, and Dad’s pride, enormous dahlias. A row of gooseberry and black currant bushes marked off the orchard at the far end of the garden. As well as the familiar Bramleys, the orchard had trees of Charles Ross, Red Toms (with red flesh), Beauty of Bath, Red Bramleys, “Peggy Arbut”, Cox’s Orange,

Norman died in 1996, and Rona moved into a residential home shortly after, until her death in 2005. The house was inherited by David (Dai) Stephens, one of the authors of this essay. Dai and his wife, Theodora (Dora) Duka Stephens (originally from Greece), carried out further improvements including incorporating the so-called boathouse into the house. Nevertheless, the name has stuck, and a pleasant sitting room with a view over the river is still called by that name. They and daughters’ (Sian and Jenny) families use it as second homes. Both Dai and Dora are academics, now retired from the University of Sussex.

Spring Tide (103 Llangwm Ferry) is one of the newer houses in Llangwm Ferry, built in the garden of Rosedale. Completed in 1992, it is owned by Graham (one of the authors) and Joan Stephens, who, with their children Gareth and Helen moved back to Llangwm Ferry from Neyland. Graham is a retired Geography teacher (teaching largely at Bush School in Pembroke) while Joan was a hospital administrator at Withybush in Haverfordwest.

Part of its garden originally belonged to the next door garden of Montrose and it is believed that this rectangular plot was the site of a former “clom” fisherman’s cottage.



The Saltings (formerly 'Montrose') (105, Llangwm Ferry).



The 1840 Tithe Apportionment map shows Peter Jones as occupying a cottage and garden in plot 581 (also owned by Anne Barlow), the site of current The Saltings. He also has plot 582 (modern day Manorowen, below), plot 583 (modern Ferryside, below), and 581 (which appears to be Yr Penty in Port Lion), as well as the main field, all leased from Anne Barlow. We have previously come across Peter Jones as a major farmer in the area, occupying extensive land in the Guildford/Port Lion/ Llangwm area as early as 1786, when he must have been in only his early twenties. According to the 1841 census he was living with Elizabeth Brown in Rosedale and it is not clear who was living in Montrose at the time of either the 1841 or the 1851 census.

By the 1861 census, the house was occupied by George Palmer, 52, a fisherman, his daughter, Martha (27), son William (22, fisherman), daughter Anne (20), and son James (17) (fisherman). In 1871, the household still consists of George Palmer (64), his daughter Martha (35), son William (30, now a labourer), and James, 25, also a labourer. Ann is by now married to great-great grandfather George Stephens and living with him and their children in Guildford. The 1881 census lists George Palmer, a widower, aged 78, as head of a household, living with his unmarried daughter Martha (46), a "Fish Saleswoman", and son William (40), a fisherman. George Palmer's daughter Ann (38) is also present, listed as married to great-great grandfather George Stephens* (39), making Ann our great-great grandmother.

*George, born June 5th, 1842, was the son of James Stephens (mariner) b.1810 and Ann Morgans, b 1815, who lived in Port Lion. James and Anne had married in 1838 in Burton parish. A second son, James (George's brother) was born in Port Lion in October 1845, and seems to have been the James Stephens documented above for Molly's Cottage. Mariner James was himself son of another George Stephens (1771-1852) and Elizabeth Evans (1776-1856). In turn, George was son of George Stephens (about 1750-1810) and Mary (surname unknown). By 1871, James and Ann Stephens were living in (and had probably built) Heron Cottage.

Living with them are their four sons, great grandfather William (17), Thomas (15), George (14) and James (12), making a household of no fewer than nine people! George and Ann Stephens, with sons William, Thomas, George, James and John had previously been listed in the 1871 census as living in Guildford.

By 1891, George Palmer appears to have died, as the head of household is now listed as William Palmer, a fisherman (aged 51). His sister, Martha (55), and brother, James, aged 44, are also still living at home. James was employed in the shipyard (unclear whether this is Pembroke Dockyard or another shipyard on the estuary). The house was shared with sister, Ann (48), and her husband George Stephens (48), a labourer, and their son, James, aged 22, also in the shipyard. The other Stephens boys, William, Thomas and George, have moved out, and William and George have their own families living nearby in Llangwm Ferry (see entries for Heron Cottage and Glyndwr House).

By 1901, William Palmer, now aged 62, a fisherman, is still sharing the house with his sister, Martha, aged 67, and three "boarders", George Stephens (58), his brother-in-law (presumably Ann has died) and Thomas Stephens (35), who is also listed as widowed, and Florie Stephens, aged 9, a schoolchild, presumably Thomas' daughter.

An entry for 1911 shows James Palmer (67), a widower, a retired dockyard labourer, Martha Palmer (76), single and Bertie W Stephens (15). Bertie is George Stephens' son (see Glyndwr House), apparently staying with his uncle and maiden aunt. By 1921 Martha Palmer, aged 87, is living with Bertie William Stephens, her nephew, aged 29 and described as "feeble minded" and "attending on Martha Palmer".

However, in an alternative entry, the 1911 census lists Tommy Stephens (aged 46) as a widower, working as a labourer in a "limestone quarry" – presumably the quarry on the opposite side of the river at Coedcanlas. Living with him are his daughter, Florrie (19) and father, George (68) listed a "GWR pensioner". This family seems unusually well provided for, as their house consists of 5 rooms, excluding kitchen. Presumably, Tommy is the son of great-great grandparents George and Ann.

Tommy subsequently re-married (see 1921 census, below, with wife Elizabeth). His daughter Florrie Stephens married Sydney Morgan, whose parents lived next door at Manorowen. One story is that Sydney lived with Tommy in Montrose as his own family was very large and could not accommodate him.

Thus, two families descended from George Palmer, both of whom had previously been associated with Montrose, by 1911 have separate entries in the census. Is it possible that in previous census entries, Montrose and a clom cottage that existed in its plot (mentioned under Springtide) were listed together, and only in 1911 as separate dwellings? Such an arrangement might account for the apparent overcrowding of this dwelling mentioned in the 1881 census. Surprisingly, given the number of people in residence, the rateable value for the

property (owned by Lort Phillips) in 1908 was only £1.10. Again, might this be the amount for the clom cottage associated with this site?

No entry of the 1921 census is clearly identifiable with Montrose. However, an entry of Thomas Stephens (55), Elizabeth Stephens (52), presumably Thomas' wife, and George Stephens (79) exists and that would fit, though only partially, with the 1911 entry. Thomas is presumably the son of George, giving a birthdate for George of 1842, which would identify this as George Stephens, our great-great grandfather, and Thomas as our great uncle. Since the 1911 census has Thomas as a widower, he seems to have married Elizabeth between 1911 and 1921?

The entry #35 in the 1939 National Record lists James Henry Phillips (b. 1880) and his wife, Martha (b. 1883), as well as Olwen Annie Phillips (b. 1915) for this residence, but it seems that this may be an error as this family is otherwise associated with The Cottage.

At some stage, presumably late 1920s or 30s, the house then changed hands to another member of the Stephens family – Affie (Alfred, son of George Jnr. of Glyndwr House and brother to Sarah Jane, Mary Ann et al, and thus grandson to George Stephens and Ann Palmer). Affie was married to Olive Dixon (of the Williamston family) and had two sons, George and Derek. Another shipwright, it is likely that Affie was forced to move away following the closure of Pembroke dockyard, and we have no evidence of when he returned to Llangwm Ferry, though he and his family were certainly there in the 1950s.



Affie Stephens (photo taken mid 1960s)

The name of the house is intriguing, and a story recollected by William Henry Davies was that it got its name 'Montrose' from the ship on which Dr Crippen was caught as he fled the UK after murdering his wife. That being the case, this would date the name of the house to 1910 although it seems likely that the house existed before that date under another name (or

alternatively, William Henry Davies was spinning a yarn. That was, however, indeed the name of the ship on which Dr Crippen tried to escape to America).

When Affie died in the late 1960s, the house was bought by a family from Cardiff named Greif. They made some modifications and added a large flat-roofed two floor extension. The Greif family then sold to Bruce and Alison Evens who carried out major alterations and gave the house its current format (they originally intended to construct a very large building complete with indoor swimming pool, but this was refused planning permission). They subsequently sold the house in 1994 and moved to Broad Haven. The next occupiers were John and Liz Poland who continued to improve the property, constructing a sea wall and slipway. They moved to Totnes in Devon, and "The Saltings", as it was now called, was bought by John and Marnie de Carle as a holiday home. They sold it around 2012 to the current occupiers, Mike and Heather Matthews.

Manorowen (107, Llangwm Ferry)

The occupants of Manorowen over the years are difficult to identify securely. As well as a cottage on the site of the current house, two clom cottages were built at the bottom of the present-day garden, on the shoreline, so that, in effect two or even three families may well have lived on the same plot.



A clom cottage on the shoreline at the bottom of the garden of Manorowen, showing A) cottage with pine end of Ferryside behind. The little girl is thought to be Annie Morgan, later Annie Palmer; B. location on Ordnance Survey map, 1913; C. Demolition in 1930s

However, the 1851 census has a house, likely to be Manorowen, which was occupied by Richard Morgan (44), his wife, Elizabeth (33), daughter of the ferryman and Waterloo veteran, William Pickens, and their children Elizabeth (10), Richard (8) and Hannah (3).

By 1861, Richard Morgan (53) and his wife Elizabeth (43) have Martha (16), Anne (13), Thomas (11), Edward (7) and George (3), as well as Elizabeth's father, William Pickens (77), previously the ferry man, living with them. While the children's names differ from the previous census, it is not unlikely that Elizabeth (by now 20) and Richard (18) have moved out. Anne is presumably the family name for Hannah.

By 1871, Richard and Elizabeth Morgan still have Martha and George living with them, as well as a previously unmentioned Jane. As mentioned previously, William Pickens had died of cholera in 1869. By 1881, Elizabeth seems to have died, and Richard (74) and daughter Martha (36) are living alone. They continue this way in the 1891 Census.

By 1901, Martha is living with her niece Mary (12), but in a separate entry, a different Morgan family appears in the 1901 census that lists Edward Morgan (54), a “dredger” (captain of a GWR dredgeboat) and his wife Mary (56). Also in the household are Edward and Mary’s children Mary Elizabeth (23), Willie (18), Herbert (10) and Annie Morgan aged 2. Annie may be the little girl in the photo of the thatched clom cottages in the upper photo above. Edward Morgan is the son of Richard Morgan and Elizabeth Pickens (see entry for Ferryside, below). Might it be that the clom cottage is now listed as a separate dwelling? Annie also appears in the 1911 census as the 12-year old daughter of Edward Morgan.



Family grouping outside Manorowen.

Edward and Mary Morgan, and their sons Willie and Herbert, in about 1905.



Annie Morgan (left) and her cousin Lizzie Ann Stephens (from Stephens Cottage; our great- Aunt), in 1918 in the "walking out" uniforms of the Women's Land Army of the 1914-18 war. In the Land Army they had worked in Benton Wood.

The 1921 census lists an extensive family. Head of the household is Edward Morgan, aged 67, working as a "Railway Bridge Ganger" for the GWR in Neyland. His wife, Mary Morgan (aged 66), is listed as having "Household Duties", as is their daughter Annie (22). Visiting for the night of the census are Herbert Palmer, aged 26, a locomotive fireman working out of Carmarthen for the GWR, and his wife, Sarah Ellen (21).

A record from the incomplete 1939 National Record lists Mary Morgan, old age pensioner, born 1850 as the householder. Also present are her daughter, Annie (b. 1898), who has married William H Palmer from Llangwm, born 1900, a colliery pump man. Their son, Raymond (b. 1925) is at Haverfordwest Grammar School. Additionally, living with them are Edward Morgan (b. 1884, invalid) and Edith Morgan (b. 1890). Presumably, Edith is Edward's wife, while Edward is the son of the householder, Mary. In October 1939, Willie Palmer moved from his job as a colliery pumpman, to the Royal Naval Mine Depot in Milford Haven. His son, Raymond, left the Grammar School, and after a brief period in the office at Greens Motors in Haverfordwest, started an apprenticeship as an electrician at Milford Docks.

In the 1950s and 60s the house corresponding to the present building had been inherited by Annie (nee Morgan) and Willie Palmer (known locally as Willie Dubbs). Interestingly, though not unusual at that time, although Annie had inherited the house, Willie was the census "householder". Willie and Annie had lived in Manorowen, where Annie had grown up, since 1928, though they had also lived for a few years around 1935 in Sycamore House, Main Street, Llangwm. Willie, who had served his apprenticeship as a marine fitter at Milford Haven, was another of those Llangwm boys who had been forced to move away after the Pembroke Dockyard closed, in his case, to the Clyde, but had then returned. The 1939 National record lists him as a colliery pumpman, but after the closing of the Hook colliery he found employment locally at the Royal Navy Armament Depot in Milford, manufacturing and storing

sea mines. Like many of the Palmers, Willie was a talented sportsman (his nephew, Morris was an Oxford rugby Blue, and Wales schoolboy international at scrumhalf, while Morris's elder brother, Dickie, was a respected sports administrator, best known as Chef de Mission of the British Olympic team, and for carrying the British flag at the Moscow Olympics). Among Dubbs' memories was having won a prize for the hundred-yard dash in a race in Glasgow (£10? making him, in those days, a "professional" sportsman, and thus barring him from amateur sports). He was also something of a character: on seeing our grandfather, Thomas George, planting a privet hedge at Bayview, Dubbs advised him against it: "Remember, as thou gets older and weaker, that b****r is getting stronger and stronger". In discussion with the engineer who was responsible for installing the sewerage works along from Manorowen, Willie expressed concern regarding the effluent that was piped down on to the beach. The engineer assured him that it was only water, and so pure a human could drink it. "Wait thee there, a moment" said Dubbs, "and I'll fetch thee a glass!"



Willie and Annie Palmer in the garden of Manorowen

After Annie died in 1975 and Willie in 1983, the house was left to their son, Raymond, and his wife, Dorothy (who, incidentally, as assistant Registrar, married the author, Dai Stephens and his wife Dora, in the Registry Office building, in Haverfordwest, the same building as that in which Dai, many years previously, had studied Chemistry for 'A'-level at the old Grammar School). The old house was of poor quality, 2 up, 2 down, clad in corrugated iron, with a corrugated asbestos roof. In 1988 it was rebuilt by their daughter, Meryl and her family. Meryl (married name Whitticombe) undertook major renovations to the point where only one wall of the original house remained (a stipulation of the Council grant). The house was completely reconfigured, with the living rooms upstairs, making the most of the view down river, bedrooms downstairs, and the main entrance now facing the metalled road. Interestingly,

Manorowen, unlike the adjacent houses along the road, had always faced the river whereas the others faced south to make the most of natural light.

Meryl then sold the house to Bruce and Alison Evens but the 'upside down' format did not suit them as a family, and they bought The Saltings (formerly Montrose), the property next door. The house was then bought by a Mr and Mrs Eggar who used it as a holiday home. Graham and Joan Stephens briefly rented the house in 1991 / 1992 as a winter-let whilst their own house, Spring Tide was being built. Similarly, after them, Charles and Beverly Malone rented it whilst the renovations to Molly's Cottage were completed. In 1995, the Eggars then sold the house to David and Dilys Ash, the current occupiers. Dilys's maiden name was Stephens, her father being Willie Stephens, son of William and Elizabeth (Lizzie) and brother of Thomas George, Clifford and Elizabeth Ann Stephens. This seems to reinforce the tendency for the Stephens family to continue their association with their Llangwm Ferry heritage.



Manorowen 2020

Consistent with that notion, David and Dilys' daughter, Lucy, and her family live in the first house leaving Llangwm Ferry, on the Ferry Hill, and own the holiday cottage Stephens Cottage described above.

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Note: A perhaps different Palmer family is also listed in the 1881 Llangwm Ferry census, which has Thomas Palmer (21, labourer, his wife Jane, 24, and children Mary (1 3/4), and John (1). Where this family lived, and their relationship (if any) to great, great, great-grandfather George Palmer isn't clear.

Ferryside

The inhabitants of Ferryside are difficult to identify with any certainty until 1911. However, reasoning from the census data after 1841, the Morris family exists in Llangwm Ferry, but cannot easily be placed in any of the other dwellings. We thus tentatively list them under this location.

In 1841, Arthur Morris (50), a seaman, William Morris (12), Arthur Morris (12) [presumably twins], Sarah Morris (20), and Hillary Morris (15) are listed. No wife is recorded but the Pembrokeshire marriage records list a marriage in Llangwm in 1817 of Arthur Morris to Anne Phillips. Presumably she has died sometime after the birth of the twins.

By 1851, Arthur Morris (60) fisherman is living with Sarah his fisherwoman daughter (33), Mary (28), also a fisherwoman, William (24), a fisherman, Arthur (20), fisherman and James (8), grandson. From the ages, and the practice of rounding down ages in the census, Mary and Hillary may be the same person.

By 1861, Arthur Morris (72), fisherman, still has Mary (36), his daughter at home with her children, Anne (9) and Mary (6) Arthur's granddaughters.

By 1881, Arthur seems to have died, and the house is occupied by Mary Morris (55) fisherwoman, her daughter Mary Morris (25), and grandson Arthur (3). Also present are Ann Adams (nee Morris) (27) and her husband, James Adams (22), a farm labourer, listed as a "lodger", and Sarah Adams (6) their daughter.

The 1891 census is confusing: On the one hand, an entry lists Mary Morris (36) general servant, and her son Arthur (13 (labourer)). This conflicts with separate entry for 1891: James Adams (31), dockyard labourer, Ann (38), his wife, children Henry (8), James (4) (born 7.10.1882, Lydia (9), Ann (5) and Ellen (11 months); Since both James Adams and Mary Morris appear in the same residence in 1881, it looks as though there are two residences included in the 1881 entry. Have Ann and her family moved to another house in Llangwm Ferry? Or might this be another clom cottage, previously included in the census as part of the main house?

By 1901, Mary Morris (45) a charwoman, and Arthur Morris (23) her son, a general labourer are listed. Apparently, the Adams family are no longer living in Llangwm Ferry.

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- **Note:**
<https://records.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/calmview/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=DSO%2F110%2F22110> - Independent Order of Odd Fellows (Manchester Unity): Llangwm Lodge [also known as the Loyal Star Lodge] Includes the names Edward Morgan (1854), John Henry Adams (1882) and Arthur Morris (1877) living in Llangwm Ferry



1930



Aug 1956, plans for extension of Ferryside



2010



2020

By 1911, the property has changed hands and is now the residence of the Barrah family. The 1911 census lists George Barrah (40), a riveter in HM Dockyard, born in Johnston, his wife, Elizabeth (?43), from Llangwm, and children Rose (13), Thomas (12), Florence May (10) and Lottie (7)*. On June 25th, 1915, George was summonsed for allowing his donkey to stray on to the highway, and fined 1s^a. A newspaper report from January 5th, 1916, from the Haverfordwest and Milford Haven Telegraph of the Christmas Eve concert at Galilee Baptist Chapel, lists George as secretary of the chapel, and living in Paradise Point, Llangwm Bay.

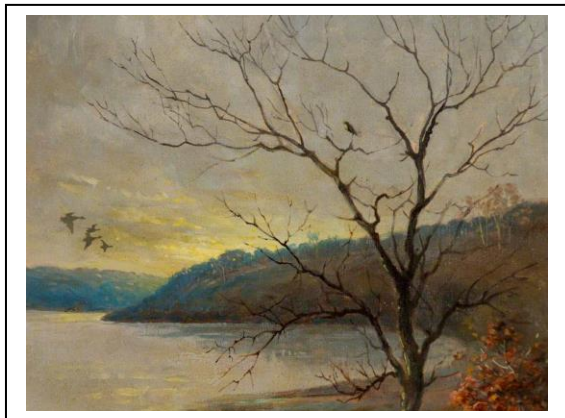
By the 1921 census, George Barrah (50) is now a driller at the Dockyard, living with his wife Elizabeth (54). Daughter Rose (24) is unmarried and working as a dressmaker in Haverfordwest at Commerce House. Daughter Florence (20) lives at home performing "Household Duties", while the youngest daughter, Lottie (17) is a dressmaker in Llangwm.

* On a family note, Lottie married our grandmother, Lizzie Stephens', nee Jones', brother

^a. *Peoples Collection, Wales*; [Casgliadywerin.cymru/collections/493704](https://casgliadywerin.cymru/collections/493704).

The 1939 National Record has George Barrah, pneumatic driller (retired) living with Rowena Kate Jones (b. 1903) who is listed as “unpaid domestic duties”, perhaps suggesting she is a relative of George Barrah. According to Grenville Thomas’ *“The People of the Covenant”*, George was still living in Llangwm Ferry at the time of his death in December 1950, having been a widower for over 30 years.

Our earliest memories of this house (from the 1950s) are as the home of an artist, Gordon Brown and his wife. Mr Brown (never, to my knowledge, called Gordon by the locals) had a studio in the garden. We don’t remember ever having seen his art at that time, though it can be found on the web.



<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/cleddau-benton-woods-winter-sunrise-181537>

Gordon Brown, 1957. Scolton Manor Museum

Mr Brown clearly didn’t live from his art (who does?) and depended on an income as a designer of wallpaper (an occupation not held in particularly high esteem by the neighbours). Mrs Brown, the daughter of a Dr Gange of Milford Haven, also dabbled in painting, and Graham had the excruciating experience of having to sit for a portrait, for which our mother had agreed. Sitting still for several sessions each of an hour’s length, brought the eventual reward of a copy of Huckleberry Finn. It was a poor deal and the painting was rubbish! (according to 11-year old Graham).

Mr Brown, himself, was most often to be seen (practically daily) pottering around in his tiny dinghy fishing for bass (though we never saw him catch one). Clearly, they were, and wished to remain, outsiders. However, he was friendly with Archie Lowe, the artist and art master in Haverfordwest Grammar School who once commented he knew the Llangwm Ferry location when observing a sketch Graham had done in his early years at the school. Nevertheless, the Browns were, and clearly wished to remain, outsiders.

The house was then bought by Sydney John, who, in turn then sold it in 1981 to Patrick and Jacqui Wordsworth. Hailing from Yorkshire, they were as equally foreign to the Llangwm Ferry natives as the previous owners, but, in contrast, settled well into the community, with their two children Sam and Sophie. In 2012, they built a new house in the garden of Ferryside designed to meet Patrick’s needs and sold their old house to a Robert and Cindy Rees who are the current occupiers.

Lion house (built 2010)

This is the end house in Llangwm Ferry, completed in 2012, by Patrick and Jacqui Wordsworth and is of a modern timber frame construction. The house name derives from the fact that it is the last house in Llangwm Ferry before the path to Port Lion. Patrick died in 2021.

Curlew Call



Whether this house should be considered as part of Llangwm Ferry might be a matter of dispute as it is situated at the bottom of Port Lion. But since it lies between the last house in present-day Llangwm Ferry and Ferry Bay Cottage (see below) we have included it here. As already mentioned, a deed of sale between W.G.Dixon (who had taken over part of the Williamston estate, and become the owner of Benton Wood) to William J Jones and his wife, Elizabeth, dated “20th Feby, 1924” refers to a house in Llangwm Ferry (value £200). The accompanying map makes it clear that the sale refers to present day Curlew Call, at the bottom of Port Lion.

The occupants of the house previously are difficult to identify. The Welsh Tithe maps (dated 1898) identify a plot 585, house and garden, corresponding to Curlew Call, and occupied by William Davies. The 1841 census has Thomas Davis (sic), 28, fisherman, his wife Ann (30), children Mary (8) and William (7) living in Llangwm Ferry. It is plausible that the son William in this entry is the same William as that occupying plot 585 in 1898.

The Llangwm Ferry 1841 census also has an entry for another William Davis, age 40, a fisherman, and his wife Sarah (40), but it seems implausible that this William is the person listed in the 1898 Tithe documents, given that by 1898 he would have been approaching his hundredth birthday. Further confusion is brought by the 1851 census. Listed as the first entry for Langum Ferry, after Port Lion, is a dwelling occupied by William Davies (54) fisherman and his wife Sarah (58). Note, however, that although the names fit, the ages are again implausible both with regard to the Tithe maps and the previous census, even allowing for the 1841 census practice of rounding down the ages to the nearest 5 years.

This unsatisfactory account still leaves the cottage without identifiable occupants for the 1861, 1871, and 1891 census. However, the 1861 census for Langum Ferry lists a Richard Hughes (38), fisherman, with Anne (41), James (15), fisherman, John (12) and his niece, Anne (7). Since it is difficult to locate this family elsewhere, it seems possible they were the occupants. Richard (49) also lived in Llangwm Ferry at the time of the 1871 census, with his wife Ann (52),

and daughter Ann (17), a “scholar”. Richard also appears in the 1891 census, aged 67, and described as a “pauper”, living with wife Ann (74), also described as “pauper”

The 1906 OS map (OS XXXIV.nw (2nd Ed)) shows a cottage at the head of Llangwm Ferry Pill, with the name “Woodside Cottage”, clearly distinct from Woodside Farm on the same map. The 1881 edition shows the same cottage, though unnamed.

The 1921 census shows William Jones (38), a riveter at the Dockyard, and his wife Elizabeth (40). These names are the same as those mentioned above as the purchasers in 1924 of the house from the Williamston estate.

The 1939 incomplete National Record has a house between Woodside and Ferryside, that may be this house. It has John William Jones, b.1883, a “skilled labourer, and his wife Elizabeth Jones (b. 1880), which is consistent with the 1921 census. An additional entry labelled “This record is officially closed” indicates an individual younger than 100 who was still alive or, perhaps, had died after 1991 when the record was released. We have dim memories of an old lady who lived here during our childhood in the 1950s, when the cottage was referred to as “Lizzie Jones’ house”.

Currently in the ownership of Richard and Jane Tovey, the house was bought in May 1968 by Richard’s father. Apparently, he overheard a conversation in the local pub in which the then owner (surname Hayward) complained about being woken up too early each morning by the bird calls. He was immediately interested in such a prize, and in honour of the overheard conversation named the house Curlew Call. In 2018, Richard and Jane approached Burton Community Council for permission to create a parking space above the high tide line, so that they could access their house at any state of the tide. To their surprise, although they paid their Council Tax to Burton, the application was considered by Llangwm Community Council. The confusion was settled when both Curlew Call and neighbouring Yr Penty were officially incorporated into Llangwm in 2018.

Yr Penty



Circa 1950s



2020

Just 50 yards up the lane lies another cottage, set into the steep slope of the wood (Wright's Wood). This was the residence of the Hughes family in the 1950s/1960s and was known to us as Willie-John Hughes' house. Willie-John lived there with his wife, Beatie, and daughter Valerie.

From the 1850 Tithe lists we know that this cottage was owned by Anne Barlow, and nominally occupied by Peter Jones. However, as with other Llangwm Ferry cottages, it seems likely that Peter Jones, the major farmer in the area, sublet cottages to others. Like its neighbour, Curlew Call, Yr Penty appears on both the 1861 and 1906 versions of OS map XXXIV.NW.

Potential candidates for its occupants are the Cale or Cole family. The 1851 census lists a house in Llangwm Ferry with William Cole 34, fisherman, wife Sarah (31) and children James (5) and Mary (7 months) and a "house servant", Martha Cole, aged 11 (presumably a more distant family member). By 1861, the house is occupied by William Cale (45, a fisherman, wife Sarah (46), son James (14) fisherman, and Mary (10).

1871 has William Cale (55), fisherman, his wife Sarah (51), fisherwoman, their daughter Mary (21), fisherwoman, and son William (14), scholar. From their ages, it looks as though the earlier James has somehow become William. A house with the Cole (or Cale) family is also listed in 1881 (William (66), fisherman, Sarah (60) wife, fisherwoman; Mary (25) fisherwoman, William (22), fisherman.

By 1891, William Snr seems to have died, and the house is occupied by William Jnr (34), fisherman and Mary his wife (39).

By 1901 Mary Cale (50), is living alone in Langum Ferry.

It may be of significance that a family named Cole lived in Woodside farm in the fifties and sixties. The son, Richard, was a year or two younger than the author (DS). I seem to remember

Richard's father had been a vicar who had come to live in the family home at Woodside when he retired.

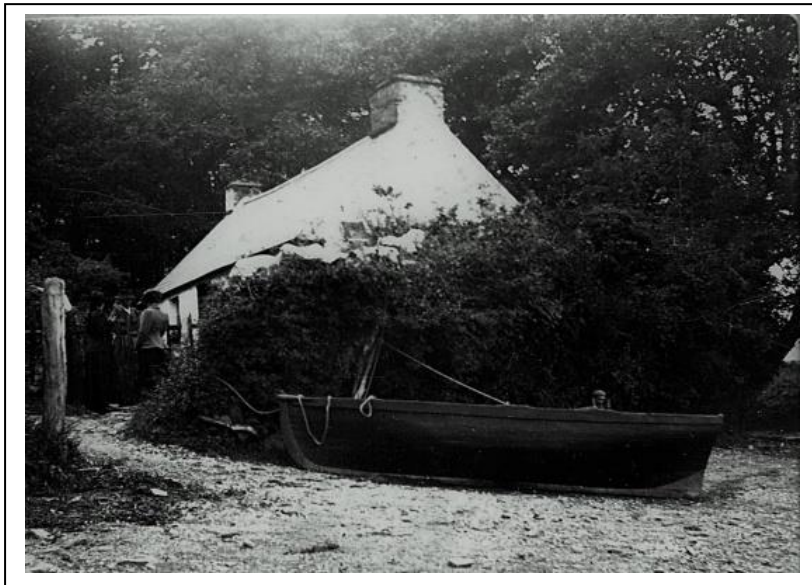
Opposite Yr Penty is the site of a previous well, known as the Guinea Well, reputedly so-called because a worker was paid a guinea (£1.10) (equivalent to about £150 in 2024) to dig it.

The 1921 census lists a house in Llangwm Ferry in the entry adjacent to that of the Jones of present-day Curlew Call. The residents of this house are Richard Edwards (49), a general labourer at the Dockyard, and his wife Ann (52).

The 1939 National Record lists John Stanley Jones, b. 1904, a Fireman/engine driver, his wife Gwendoline Jones (b. 1900) and Hedley Charles Jones (b. 1928 (at school)). Again, a further entry is labelled "This record is officially closed".

As already mentioned, in the 1950s the house was occupied by Willie-John Hughes and his wife, Beatie and their daughter Valerie. The current owner is Lewis Tyler (known as 'Bog').

Ferry Bay Cottage or Llangwm Bay Cottage.



Ferry Bay Cottage with the ferry boat (a larger version of the typical Llangwm boat) pulled up outside

Although now only barely detectable as a ruin at the edge of Benton Wood, this cottage was occupied until the beginning of the twentieth century and is plausibly the dwelling listed in the 1810 Land Tax assessment as owned in 1810 by the Reverend Doctor John Philipps of Williamston and occupied by Michael Randall.

The 1841 census lists William Pickens (60), an Army pensioner living in a cottage in the Wood, with wife Margaret (60), daughter Elizabeth Morgan (24) married to Richard Morgan (24), and daughter Elizabeth Morgan (4 months). William Pickens was born ca. 1781 in Stilton, Huntingdon, and had married Margaret James of Hubberston in 1804, who he had met while serving at Hubberston Fort. William had been pensioned after losing a leg at the Battle of Waterloo (1815).

The 1851 census lists the occupants as William Pickens, aged 68, a pensioner from the Army, and native of Huntington, and his wife Margaret, aged 72 (now, ostensibly, from Burton). We have already come across William Pickens as the ferryman in 1850.

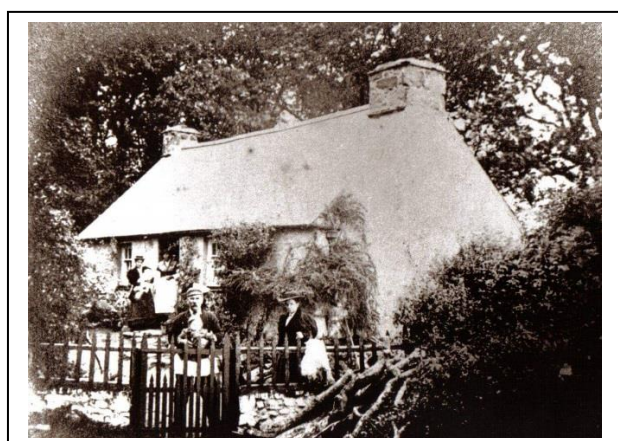
By the next census, in 1861, William Pickens is listed as a labourer, aged 77. In the interim, his wife must have died, and William was now living with his daughter, Elizabeth (43) and her husband, Richard Morgan (53), a fisherman, and their children Martha (16), Anne (13), Thomas (11), Jane (9), Edward (7) and George (3). However, it is not clear whether this is in Ferry Bay Cottage, or perhaps Manorowen, or the no longer existent clom cottage on the beach under Manorowen. Elizabeth and Richard's children, listed in the previous census, no longer appear. While Elizabeth (who would now be 20; may have married William Harris and Richard (now 18) may have moved out, the appearance of Martha and Anne in the 1861 census, and absence of Hannah is curious.

As noted previously, William Pickens died in January 1867 from cholera.

By 1871, Richard and Elizabeth still have Martha, Jane and George living at home. It is of interest that now Elizabeth, Martha and Jane are documented as Fisherwomen. By 1881 Richard (74) is still living with daughter Martha (36), listed as unmarried and a fisherwoman. The 1891 census lists Richard Morgan, now aged 84, as a “Parish Pauper”, still living with his daughter, Martha (46), a fisherwoman. The 1901 entry lists Martha Morgan, aged 56, living from needlework, and her niece Mary, aged 12. By 1911, Martha (66), still listed as a fisherwoman, is living alone, as she is in the 1921 census, now aged 76.

Grenville Thomas^a records that in 1920 a jetty extended from the Benton Wood timber yard (owned by the Dixon family of Williamston), near Ferry Bay Cottage, out into the Ferry Bay. Grenville Thomas records that in the autumn of 1919, 9-year-old Reggie Palmer from Guildford fell from this jetty. Following a failed attempt at rescue from an unidentified passing boatman, the boy was rescued by another boy, Dennis Lewis, who dived into the river and held Reggie afloat for 15 minutes until a fully clothed passer-by, provisionally identified by Grenville Thomas as Mr G. Havard of Guildford, was able to pull them out. For his bravery, Dennis Lewis was awarded the Royal Humane Society certificate.

According to Windsor Davies, Ferry Bay Cottage was occupied in the 1930s by his uncle, Warren Davies, and in the twentieth century was known as “Warren’s”. Warren is not recorded in the 1939 National Record, though a single familiar entry “This record is officially closed” exists which may refer to Ferry Bay Cottage. According to Windsor Davies, Warren Davies moved out (to Bowling’s Corner) by the Second World War (he records seeing the sky lit up by the fire following the air raid on Pembroke Dock), and the cottage has been in decline to its present ruinous state since then. Nevertheless, as children in the 1950s we were able to find gooseberries still growing in what had been the garden.



The house at the Ferry Bay. Original photos with the kind permission of Gareth Jones.

Patty Morgan, a Llangwm fisherwoman outside the house

^a Grenville Thomas *Some remarkable people of Llangwm and Hook*, 2018, page 26



Ferry Bay Cottage, A pencil sketch by Graham Brace

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The following have all played a part. We have done our best to mention where their particular input has been. Needless to say, any remaining errors are ours alone!

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