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Pembrokeshire Palmers and Palmours

WHEN a Muslim has made his pilgrimage to Mecca (the Haj) he proudly colours his beard red and calls himself 'Haji'.

Similarly, a Christian pilgrim to the Holy Land proudly called himself 'palmer' – and we seem to have some very prolific Palmer families in Pembrokeshire.

It is probable that the name entered our county from Llansadwrnen, near Laugharne, where Rice Palmer paid tax for two hearths in 1670.

His grandson, John Palmour, buried in Carew on January 7, 1752, founded a branch that lived in Angle and Dale.

One of these descendants, John Palmour (b 1775) married Margaret, daughter of Walter Dawkins of Bosherton and his wife Barbara (Winch). He was captain of H M Preventative Service cutter *Bat*.

Another, Thomas Palmour (b 1765, Dale) of St Anne's Head, married Margaret Lloyd (Bartlett) of Stackpole Elidor in 1792.

Two of their sons were lighthouse keepers – Rees at Caldey Island and Nash Point and Hugh at North Foreland and Helston. Some of Rees Palmour/ Palmer's descendants became coal hewers at Ynysir and Pontypridd.

Another grandson of Rice Palmer of Llansadwrnen was Rice Palmer of Treberth who fathered Francis Palmer of Llandigwynett (Sageston) who, with his wife Mary (Allen) founded a famous farming family in Carew parish.

Allen Palmer, born in 1727, married Hannah, daughter of William Parcell of Coachyland.

One of their grandsons, Michael (born in 1814) moved to Bradford-upon-Avon in Wiltshire where he was proprietor of a cloth factory and married Mary Ann Bates from Halifax.

Their son, Brigadier George Llewellyn Palmer, became MP for Westbury and his son, Colonel W M Llewellyn Palmer married Alexandra Augusta Wynn-Carrington, daughter of the Marquis of Lincolnshire.

Allen Palmer's brother, Henry Palmer (born in 1704) was the tenant of Pincheston (Carew).

His grand-daughter Elizabeth married Owen Thomas, a draper and wine merchant in Main Street, Pembroke.

Her sister Martha married Robert Davies White in 1812 and they farmed at Upper Nash and Hill (St Florence).

They were the grandparents of John White, brewer of Cosheston and later licensee of The Kimberley in Milford Haven, and the great-grandparents of John's eighth child Octavius (when you run out of names you can always call your eighth child 'Octavia' or 'Octavius'). Octavius 'Ocky' White was to become famous locally for the Haverfordwest department store that he founded.

The Thorn (Yerbeston) Palmers were founded by another of Allen Palmer's grandsons, James Palmer (born in 1809) who married Frances (Fanny) Hood of

Knowles, Lawrenny, in November 1867. She was a governess and much younger than her husband.

IHAVE been unable to link the huge Palmer family of Llangwm and Burton parishes with those mentioned so far.

That family of fisherfolk seems associated primarily with Fox Hall, Guilford and Port Lion. The famous Dolly Palmer, 'Dolly the Bridge', was the daughter of George Llewellyn and his wife Dorothy (Davies).

She married a dockyard labourer from Guilford, William Palmer, and died at the age of 90 in February 1932.

A COUPLE of other Palmers who made their mark on Pembrokeshire were Thomas Palmer, an innkeeper and property developer who built the Sir Charles Whetham pub and part of Pill, Milford Haven, and the Haverfordwest brewery owner George Palmer.

FINALLY I make special mention of a son of Captain John Palmour, captain of the

Bat. The Rev John Dawkins Palmour, vicar of Jeffreston, married Mary Selby Davies of Llandinog (Llandeloy) at St Martin's, Haverfordwest, in 1830.

Three of their sons were clerics: John Palmour, vicar of Fulwood (Lancs); James Palmour, vicar of St Florence and rector of Llangwm; and Walter Thomas Palmour who was chaplain of Wiltingham Asylum, Lancashire.

I am grateful to the late Peter Dawkins-Palmour (aka Edwards), a truly remarkable Pembrokeshire genealogist, for his research into the Palmours. Also Jane Smallfield – 'Descended from Dolly the Bridge', Pems Life, Dec 2012; Ashley Palmer of Thorn (Yerbeston); Arthur Skone of Merriion; Sheila Lewis of Bridgend and Val Herbert of Glen Parva.



Dolly the Bridge was a Palmer by marriage.