

Pembrokeshire Life

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Harbour Village history
Poaching tales



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Llangwm life

1832 On Wednesday night an officer and boat's crew of the *Cheerful* revenue cruiser on the Milford station captured a man and boy of the name of Llewellyn, belonging to Langum, and also a horse with six half ankers of Brandy and Geneva, near Clareston, on the turnpike-road from Pembroke to Haverfordwest. There was another in the company who effected his escape by cutting the slings of his kegs, throwing off his cloak, and leaping his horse over a high hedge.

He was fired at by one of the crew whilst in the act of cutting away his kegs, and the ball lodged in one of the casks where it now is.

1835 On Saturday last, as a dredge-boat belonging to Langum, in the port of Milford, was returning from Lawrenny to that place, deeply laden with oysters and otherwise lumbered, she was swamped and sunk, whereby three poor fellows named Robert Lewis, John Thomas, and Peter Macduff were drowned, each leaving wives and children. A lad named John Child was saved, who swam to shore. A subscription has been got up for the relief of the distressed families which we trust will meet with the kindly response of a generous public.

1840 On the 10th inst. the parish Church of Langum was re-opened for divine service. It has been almost entirely rebuilt, and it is now one of the most comfortable and commodious churches in the county of Pembroke, reflecting great credit on the Rector who proposed, and on those who managed its reconstruction.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. Sir, The parish church of Langum, I believe, is of considerable antiquity and Fenton, historian of South Wales, particularly mentions it.

A few years since it certainly was worthy of the notice of antiquarians but, to my astonishment, on viewing it a short period since, I found all the really splendid ancient decorations completely done away with, and the church bearing all the appearance of a meeting-house; and, on further inspection, I found very beautiful specimen of carved work embellishing the stile leading into the churchyard and various fragments strewed around.

I should not have intruded on your columns, but surely some method ought to be devised to save our sacred edifices from the tender mercies of such Goths.

I am, Sir, Your obliged servant; PHIDIAS.

1844 On Tuesday last two boys, aged respectively 4 and 5 years, sons of William Morgan and Rees Jenkins, of Langum, Pembrokeshire, were poisoned by eating hemlock root, which they found at Langum Point. One was discovered by his mother lying outside the door apparently lifeless, when the mother caught him up thinking he was in



Traditional black-tarred fishing boats at Llangwm.

a fit, and he breathed his last in her arms. The other, seeing his playfellow ill, had gone about a hundred yards from him by the parent's direction to get some assistance, when he also fell on his face and soon expired.

1844 FISHING EXTRAORDINARY Edward and Mary Morgan, both upwards of 80 years of age, residing in the neighbourhood of Langum in this county, and who have subsisted many years by fishing, were for one whole week toiling at their employment without any success.

As they were returning home one evening lamenting their bad fortune, just as their boat took ground, a salmon of upwards of 20 lb weight leaped in, and made amends for their previous failures.

1862 Robert Child, John Brian, William Barnes, Richard John, John Philpin, Thomas John, and John Jenkins were severally charged with assaulting Miss Elizabeth Thomas, schoolmistress at Langum. The assault consisted in pelting the complainant with snowballs on the 20th of January.

It was proved that the defendants were among a crowd of boys, numbering about 30, who were engaged in throwing snowballs at the complainant, and that the snowballing was carried far beyond any reasonable limits. In addition to this, it was stated that the defendants had annoyed the complainant on many occasions, and that it was with great reluctance that she felt compelled to bring their conduct before the notice of the magistrates in order to secure herself from any further annoyances. She had been confined to bed two days in consequence of the injuries she had received. Their Worships fined the defendants 2s. 6d. each, and costs (amounting to 6s. 8d.) and in default of payment to be sent to prison for a week. The defendants declined to pay anything, and were committed to prison.

1869 An accident, which might have been attended with fatal results, occurred at Langum Hill in the parish of Langum, on Saturday morning last. Two little girls, aged about seven and nine years respectively, were left alone in the house during the temporary absence of their father, Mr Wm. Evans, and obtained possession of a flask containing gunpowder from a cupboard in which it was kept, and were playing with it near the fire.

The powder exploded, and shattered the flask to pieces, causing very severe injuries to the hand of the eldest girl. A piece of the flask struck the other little girl under the right eye, causing a severe cut. Medical aid was obtained, and their injuries properly attended to. The most exaggerated rumours were circulated respecting the occurrence, to the effect that the injuries had been caused by a tramp who had called at the house, and had gouged out the children's eyes, and had nearly murdered them.



Llangwm village street.

1871 The oyster beds of Langum are nearly worn out; so that now the Langum boats take on an average only half a hundred a day, where they formerly took six hundred. The reason is that the London merchants are taking all sizes, some so small as sixpence (which were formerly returned to the beds); these are now exported from here to be laid on the south east coast. Consequently the Langum beds are cleaned up or, to use the Langum fishers' own words, 'they have killed the river'. The prices given this season have been from 4s. to 5s. per hundred but although the price is high, the take this winter has been so small that many of the fishermen have been compelled to seek other employment, in H.M. Dockyard and elsewhere.

1898 When the members of the Baptist Church in Langum met for morning worship on the 10th inst., they were startled to find that a portion of the ceiling and timber from the roof had fallen, and the place was covered with the debris. The services for the day had to be abandoned. Had this occurred on the previous Sunday, when the Sabbath School Anniversary was held, the consequences would probably have been serious. It has been felt for some time that the place has been scarcely safe, and during the past months the friends have been moving in the direction of providing funds for the erection of a new place of worship.



Llangwm cottages.

Llangwm Parish Council press report - 1908

LANGUM Parish Council at a meeting on Saturday night received a letter from Mr J. F. Lort Phillips, of Lawrenny Castle, stating that, anxious as he was to meet the requirements of the Small Holdings Act, he was determined not to interfere with present tenants more than he could help, so he had decided that if any farm was to be broken up it should be Guildford Farm. This farm he had handed over to the County Council.

It was pointed out that Guildford Farm was in the neighbouring parish of Burton, and with that the Langum Council had nothing to do. Several of the applicants for allotments were women who wanted land for grazing their donkeys.

The Chairman said the letter was as plain as a pikestaff. Mr John - 'He don't want us to have it in Langum for some reason'.

The Clerk asked if he should take counsel's opinion, but it was afterwards decided to write to the Board of Agriculture for advice.

The Clerk - 'Another letter ought to be written to Mr Phillips from this meeting - official'.

Mr Morgan - 'I wouldn't waste a penny stamp on't'.

Mr Stokes - 'It was like poor Mr Thomas said - he donna really love us'.

The Chairman - 'No they can see Socialism is coming. Whoever lives to see another 20 years will see a Socialist Government'.

Mr Stokes - 'Ay, we'll have 'em'.

Later on the Chairman said it was the County Council as was spending the money.

Mr Allen - 'The parson is there'.

The Chairman - 'But 'e's not on any committee. They kip him out for some reason. I don't know whether they're afeared of'n or not'.

At the close the Chairman said: 'The business is over. Thou can't smoke now, Brock'.