

Becoming Burton / Dod yn Burton

Richard Burton CBE, world famous actor primarily on stage and in film earned several Oscar nominations and received numerous awards including two Golden Globes and a BAFTA during a career that spanned four decades.

At the height of his career he was one of the highest paid actors in Hollywood, commanding over \$1 million a film.

He was renowned for his powerful stage presence, baritone voice and turbulent private life having married five times to four wives. But what is often forgotten is that Richard Burton was also father, a sports enthusiast, avid reader and keen writer having a number of articles published in various magazines and newspapers as well as his semi-autobiographical tale of childhood, 'A Christmas Story', published in 1966.

The boy from the Afan Valley whose rugged good looks and voice of gold made him a star of stage and screen played cricket in Talbot Park, went to school in Taibach and followed his dreams from the stage at the YMCA to the Royal Shakespeare Company and bright lights of Hollywood.

This exhibition is accompanied by the voices and recollections of those who knew him from his home town.

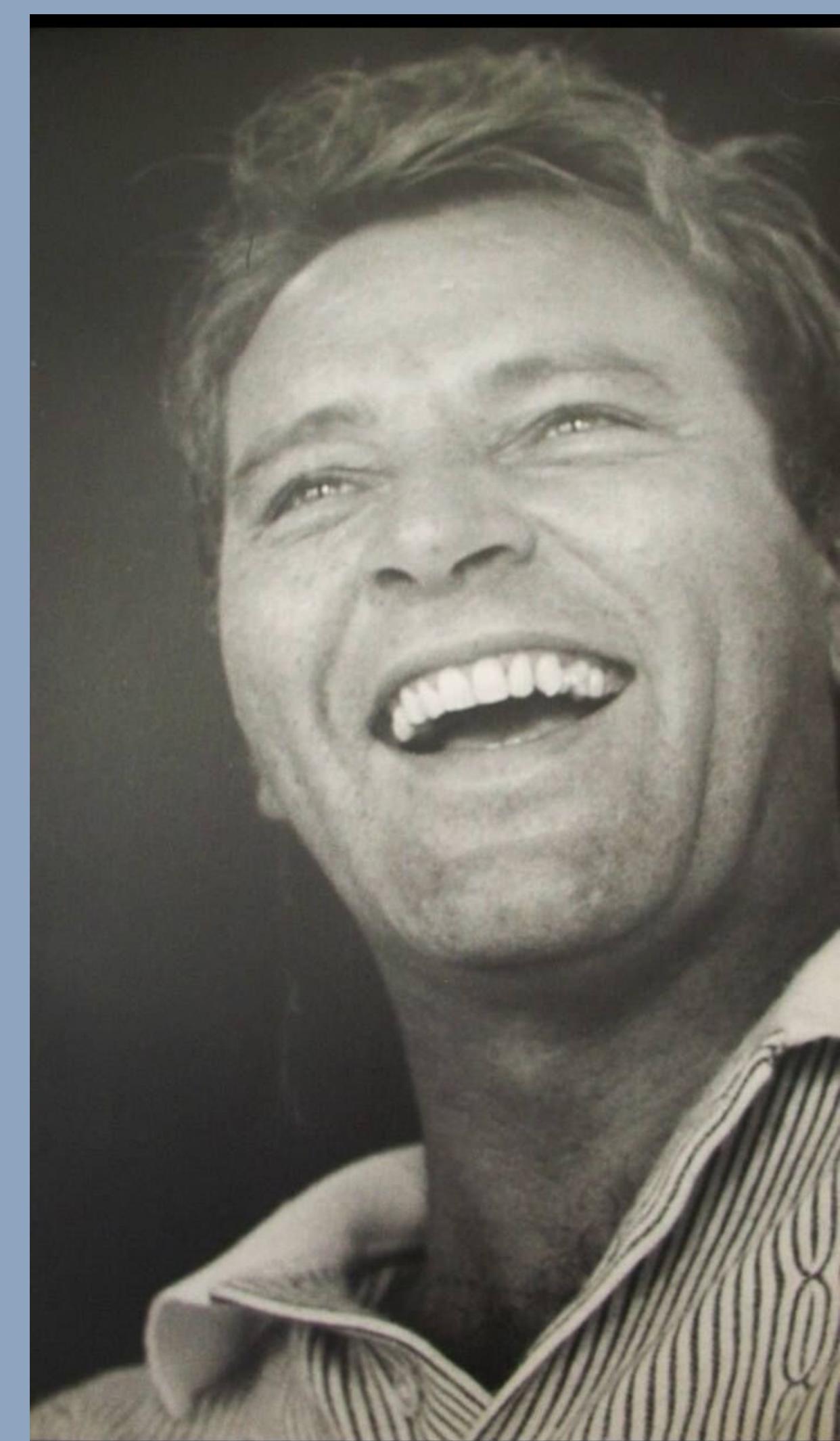
Cafodd Richard Burton CBE, actor byd-enwog ar llwyfan ac mewn ffilmiau'n bennaf, ei enwebu sawl gwaith ar gyfer gwobr Oscar, a derbyniodd wobrau niferus gan gynnwys dwy wobr Golden Globes a BAFTA yn ystod gyrfa a ymestynnodd dros bedwar degawd. Ymddangosodd mewn mwy na 40 o ffilmiau a thros 20 o gynyrchiadau llwyfan gan gynnwys perfformiadau gyda'r Old Vic a'r Royal Shakespeare Company, ac fe'i canmolwyd gan y beirniaid am ei berfformiad yn y cynhyrchiad o *Camelot* ar Broadway, y cafodd wobr Tony amdano ym 1961. Ar anterth ei yrfa, roedd yn un o'r actorion a gâi'r tâl mwyaf yn Hollywood, gan dderbyn dros \$1 filiwn y ffilm.

Roedd yn enwog am ei bresenoldeb pwerus ar y llwyfan, ei lais bariton a'i fywyd preifat cythryblus, ar ôl iddo fod yn briod bum gwaith i bedair gwraig.

Roedd yn frwd dros chwaraeon, yn ddarllen yd ac yn ysgrifennwr brwd, a chyhoeddwyd nifer o'i erthyglau mewn cylchgronau a phapurau newydd amrywiol yn ogystal â'i hanes lled-fywgraffiadol am blentyndod sef 'A Christmas Story', a gyhoeddwyd ym 1966.

Roedd y crwt o Gwm Afan, yr oedd ei bryd a'i wedd garw a'i lais euraidd wedi'i wneud yn seren y llwyfan a'r sgrîn, yn chwarae criced ym Mharc Talbot, wedi mynd i'r ysgol yn Nhais-bach ac wedi dilyn ei freuddwydion o'r llwyfan yn y YMCA ar Heol Talbot i estyll y Royal Shakespeare Company a goleuadau disglair Hollywood.

Mae'r arddangosfa hon yn cynnwys lleisiau ac atgofion y rhai o'i bentref genedigol a oedd yn ei adnabod.



Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol



Royal Evening Standard Drama Award
With kind permission of The Richard Burton Archives
Gwobr Ddrama'r Royal Evening Standard
Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe

Early Years

Blynnyddoedd cynnar

Richard Walter Jenkins was the twelfth of thirteen children born to Richard Walter Jenkins Sr. and Edith Maude Jenkins at their home in Pontrhydyfen on 10th November 1925.

He lived there until the age of 2 when following the death of his mother he moved to Taibach to live with his older sister Cecilia (Cis), and her husband Elfed James.

Richard lived with Cis, Elfed and their two daughters, Marion and Rhiannon, in their three bedoomed terrace home on 73 Caradoc Street, Taibach. Although he had moved from the village of his birth he would visit his family weekly with the sister, keeping the family bond close throughout his life.



Richard's parents Rhieni Richard

With kind permission of Sally Burton

Source: Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Sally Burton.

Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe



An infant Richard Walter Jenkins

Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Richard Walter Jenkins y mab

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol

Port Talbot



Cis and Elfed James (front) on their wedding day in 1924

With kind permission of Rhianon Trowell



Richard's Birthplace in Pontrhydyfen

Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Man geni Richard ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol

Port Talbot

Richard Walter Jenkins oedd y deuddegfed o dr ar ddeg o blant a aned i Richard Walter Jenkins yr Hynaf ac Edith Maude Jenkins yn eu cartref ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen ar 10 Tachwedd 1925. Bu'n byw yno tan yn 2 flwydd oed pan symudodd i Dai-bach i fyw gyda'i chwaer hŷn Cecilia (Cis), a'i gŵr Elfed James, ar ôl marwolaeth ei fam.

Bu Richard yn byw gyda Cis, Elfed a'u dwy ferch, Marion a Rhiannon, yn eu tŷ teras tair ystafell wely ar 73 Stryd Caradoc, Tai-bach. Er ei fod wedi symud o bentref ei enedigaeth, byddai'n ymweld â'i deulu bob wythnos gyda'i chwaer, gan gadw'r cysylltiad teuluol agos hwnnw drwy gydol ei fywyd.

The Diaries Y Dyddiaduron

Richard wrote in diaries and journals throughout his life taking his typewriter and book bag everywhere he travelled. His earliest diary began in 1939, just a few months into the Second World War, in it he records the people, places and daily events of a 14 year old boy living in a South Wales steel and coal mining town.

The diaries have been published by Swansea University and are reproduced here in part with kind permission of Sally Burton.



The notebooks and diaries held at the Richard Burton Archives in Swansea University.

Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe

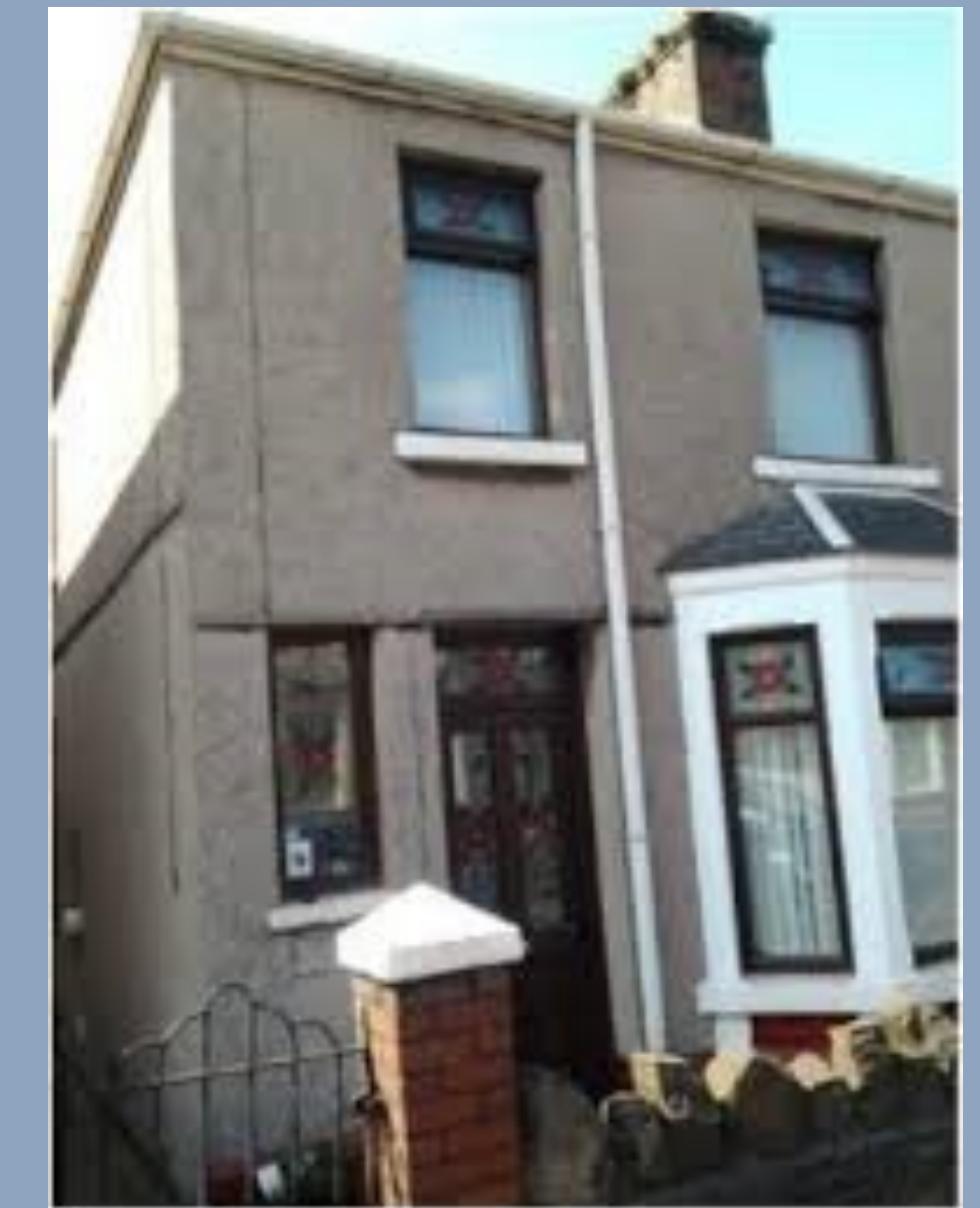


Richard at School from a class photograph
Courtesy of The West Glamorgan Archive Service



Richard's book bag and some of his books held at the Richard Burton Archives in Swansea University.

Bag llyfrau a llyfr barddoniaeth Richard, a gedwir yn Archifau Richard Burton ym Mhrifysgol Abertawe.

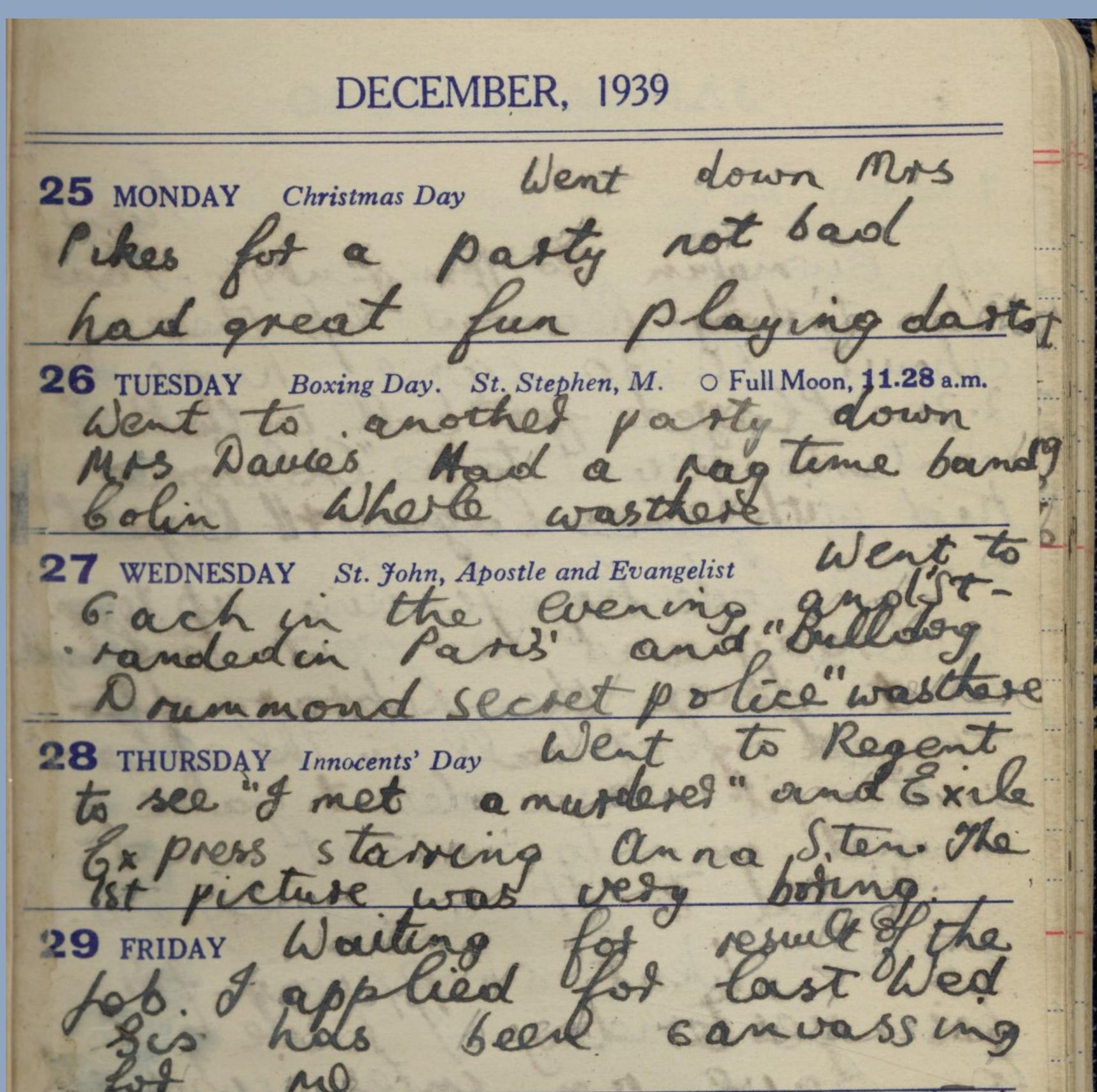


The house on Caradoc Street where he began his first diary.

Courtesy of Port Talbot Historical Society

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin
Morgannwg



The first diary entries in December 1939.

With kind permission of Sally Burton Source: Richard Burton Archives,
Swansea University

Ysgrifennodd Richard mewn dyddiaduron a dyddlyfrau drwy gydol ei fywyd, gan fynd â'i deipiadur a'i fag llyfrau i bob man y teithiai iddo. Dechreuodd ei ddyddiadur cynharaf ym 1939, ychydig fisodd yn unig ar ôl dechrau'r Ail Ryfel Byd. Ynddy mae'n cofnodi pobl a lleoedd a digwyddiadau dyddiol crwt 14 oed a oedd yn byw mewn pentref glofaol yn ne Cymru.

Cyhoeddwyd y dyddiaduron gan Brifysgol Abertawe ac maent wedi'u hatgynhyrchu yma'n rhannol gyda chaniatâd caredig Sally Burton.

Y cofnodion cyntaf yn y dyddiadur, mis Rhagfyr 1939.

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Sally Burton. Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton,
Prifysgol Abertawe

The Library / Y Llyfrgell

Wednesday 23rd October 1940:

I am reading on average 3 books in two days. Went down library to change my books and Elfed was shouting because he wanted to read one of them. Not so many air raids lately.

Dydd Mercher, 23 Hydref 1940:

Rwy'n darllen ar gyfartaledd 3 llyfr mewn deuddydd. Es i lawr i'r llyfrgell i newid fy llyfrau ac roedd Elfed yn gweiddi oherwydd ei fod am ddarllen un ohony nhw. Dim cymaint o gyrchoedd awyr yn ddiweddar.



Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol
Port Talbot

Carnegie Free Library, Commercial Road, Taibach where Richard spent many hours within the sanctuary of books. It was here he would hide when he should have been at work across the road at the Co-Op store! The librarian at the time was also an air raid warden and they would spend hours discussing literature and poetry while on duty together.

Llyfrgell Rydd Carnegie, Heol Commercial, Tai-bach lle treuliai Richard oriau yn lloches y llyfrau. Yma y byddai'n cuddio pan ddylai fod wedi bod yn gweithio yn siop y Co-op ar draws y ffordd! Roedd y llyfrgellydd ar y pryd hefyd yn warden cyrch awyr a byddent yn treulio oriau'n trafod llenyddiaeth a barddoniaeth pan oeddent ar ddyletswydd gyda'i gilydd.

Later he would have his own library at his home in Switzerland. An avid reader he carried his book bag wherever he travelled. Rich's love of reading and poetry was encouraged by his eldest brother Ifor who he idolized. When he spent time back in the family home in Pontrhydyfen, the two of them would sit in the kitchen reciting poetry to each other for hours at a time.

He once said that despite all his wealth, the only present he truly appreciated was a book.

Yn ddiweddarach, byddai ganddo ei lyfrgell ei hun yn ei gartref yn y Swistir. Ac yntau'n ddarllenwr brwd, byddai'n cario'i fag llyfrau ble bynnag y byddai'n teithio. Anogwyd cariad Richard at ddarllen a barddoniaeth gan ei frawd hŷn, Ifor, yr oedd yn ei addoli. Pan dreuliai amser yn ôl yn y cartref teuluol ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen, byddai'r ddau ohony nhw'n eistedd yn y gegin yn adrodd barddoniaeth i'w gilydd am oriau bwygilydd.

Meddai unwaith, er gwaethaf ei holl gyfoeth, yr unig anrheg yr oedd wir yn ei gwerthfawrogi oedd llyfr.



Library in Switzerland
Llyfrgell yn y Swistir

Talbot Memorial Park / Parc Coffa Talbot

24th August 1940

Went to pictures – Saved 2/- to put in fund for Co-op Clearance. Met Eric Nelson and we went to the shelter in the Park when the siren went. There was much fun there. There were many bombs dropped. There were six air raids today.

Diary entry from 1940

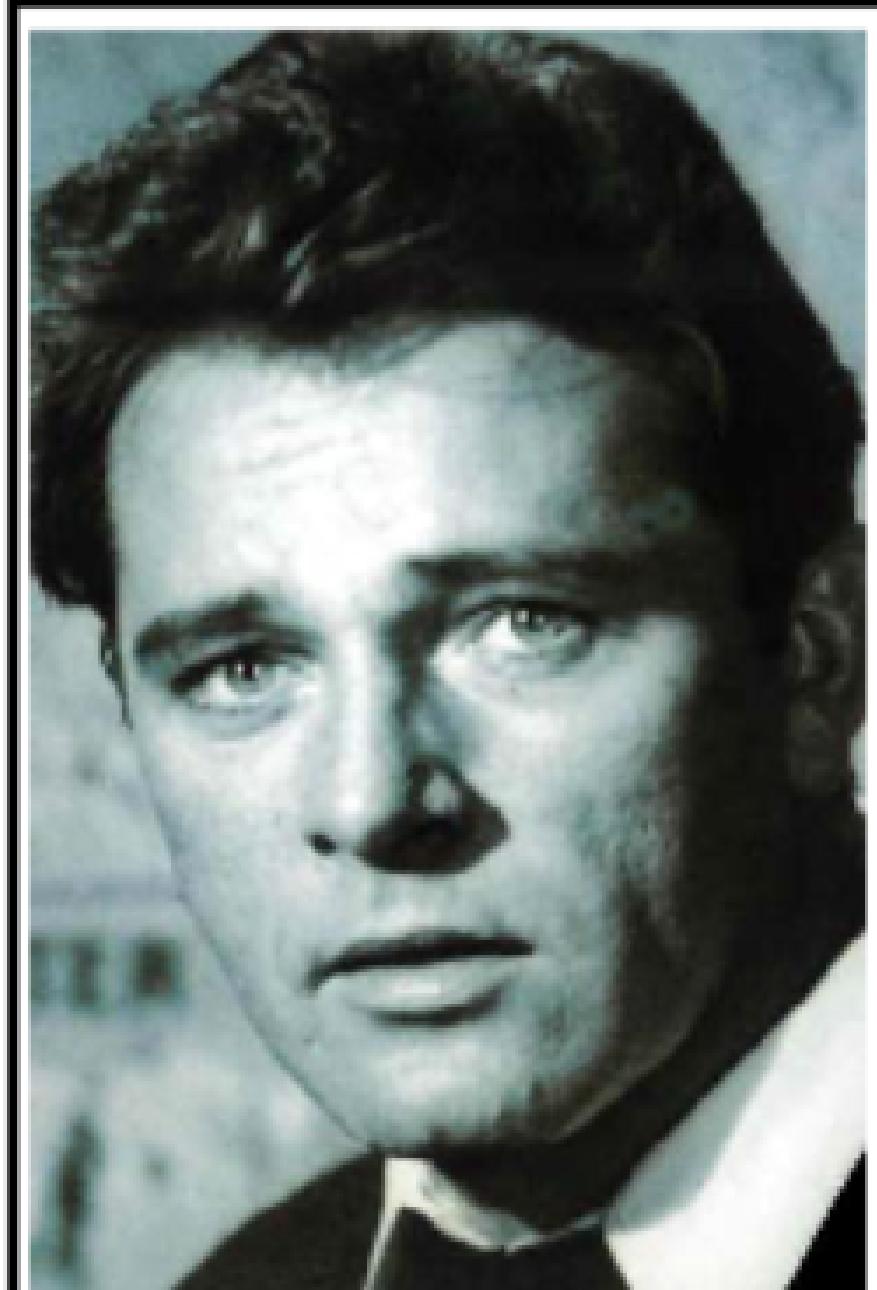


Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot

Talbot Memorial Park is mentioned throughout the diary where Richard would play tennis, cricket and rugby with his friends.

A memorial garden has been dedicated to him. Richard loved language and poetry from a young age and also wrote his own. One of his unpublished works is displayed at the park.

Crybwyllir Parc Coffa Talbot drwy'r dyddiadur lle byddai Richard yn chwarae tenis, criced a rygbi gyda'i ffrindiau. Mae gardd goffa yno er cof amdano. Roedd Richard yn dwlu ar iaith a barddoniaeth o oed cynnar ac roedd hefyd yn ysgrifennu ei gerddi ei hun. Arddangosir un o'i weithiau nas cyhoeddwyd yn y parc.



The mountain earth feels damp against my hand;
Around me sway a thousand sap-filled stalks
Of tender grass; The cows browse drowsily
Below me in the fields, and silly sheep
Bleat so pathetically. Dusk descends
And makes the cool earth cooler; lovers slow
In Sunday best drift past like ghosts of laughs
And murmurings; and some go up and some
Go down the mountain.
I see the gamblers hide behind some hedge or shade,
And pay silently between deserty
Of toil's blunt fingers shuffling dirty cards;
And panting greyhounds run a merry race around them
In the fading light.

There is no life stir now
There is no hub-bub of activity;
The rushing of the whispering waterfall
Breathes silence on the mad tormented valley.
The voices rise insidiously as is
The creeping dusk 'Abide with me', they moan,
A hundred coal-fogged voices harmoniously
Goad up in an ecstasy of melancholy magic;
All is still.
And there were things that made me;
Grew around the core of my young soul,
But I have other worlds for whom to weep;
I shall return no more

Richard Burton

Unpublished poem by Richard Burton
With kind permission of Sally Burton. Source: Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Sally Burton.
Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe

Rugby / RYGBI.

Saturday 2nd March 1940:

'Played against Grammar School in Swansea. It was a very hard game and a hopeless ref. They won 11-5. Went to Plaza in the night. I paid 1/3 to go in George Formby in 'Come on George.'

Dydd Sadwrn, 2 Mawrth 1940:

'Wedi chwarae yn erbyn Ysgol Ramadeg yn Abertawe. Roedd yn gêm galed iawn a'r dyfarnwr yn anobeithiol. Enillon nhw 11-5. Es i i'r Plaza yn y nos. Talais i 1/3 i fynd mewn i weld George Formby yn 'Come on George'.

Rugby was a huge part of Richard's life and he was known to be a force upon the field! He played for the school team and for the RAF. He would watch games at the Athletic Ground with brother in law, Elfed and 'Dad' James later playing for the youth team though he often lamented that he never gained a cap for his country.

In a piece that he wrote for the centenary of Aberavon RFC, Richard wrote: '**To that Town, Aberavon, and its rugby team, I pledge my continuing allegiance. Until death after.**'



Port Talbot School Form 10 Rugby Team 1942. Richard is centre row, third from the right.
With kind permission of West Glamorgan Archive Service

Tîm Rygbi Dosbarth 10 Ysgol Port Talbot, 1942. Mae Richard yn y rhes ganol, y trydydd o'r dde.

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg



Talbot Athletic Ground, home to the Aberavon RFC where a Richard would spend a Saturday afternoon.

Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Maes Talbot Athletic, cartref i Glwb Rygbi Aberafan lle byddai Richard yn treulio prynhawn dydd Sadwrn.

Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot

Roedd rygbi'n rhan enfawr o fywyd Richard, ac roedd yn hysbys ei fod yn chwaraewr grymus ar y cae! Chwaraeodd i dîm yr ysgol a'r Awyrlu Brenhinol. Byddai'n gwyllo gemau ym Maes Talbot Athletic gyda'i frawd yng nghyfraith, Elfed, a'i 'dad' James, a chwaraeodd yn ddiweddarach i'r tîm ieuengtid, er iddo gwyno'n aml na lwyddodd byth i ennill cap dros ei wlad.

Mewn darn a ysgrifennodd ar gyfer canmlwyddiant Clwb Rygbi Aberafan. ysgrifennodd Richard, '**I'r dref honno, Aberafan, a'i thîm rygbi, addawaff fy nheyrngarwch parhaus. Tan farwolaeth.**'

Cinema / Sínema

The 1930s and 40s was the golden age of film, there were many cinemas to visit in Port Talbot showing all that Hollywood offered. Richard frequented them all collecting newspapers for a family run chip shop to pay for his ticket in. There are 42 films mentioned in his early diary.



Known locally as *The Cach*, *The Picturedrome* was a popular cinema in Taibach and mentioned frequently throughout the diary.

Roedd *The Picturedrome*, a alwyd *The Cach* yn lleol, yn sinema poblogaidd yn Nhai-bach, ac fe'i crybwyllyr yn rheolaidd drwy'r dyddiadur.

Sunday 15th December 1940:

I was made a member today and I drank my first drop of wine and ate my first lump of bread.

Dydd Sul, 15 Rhagfyr 1940:

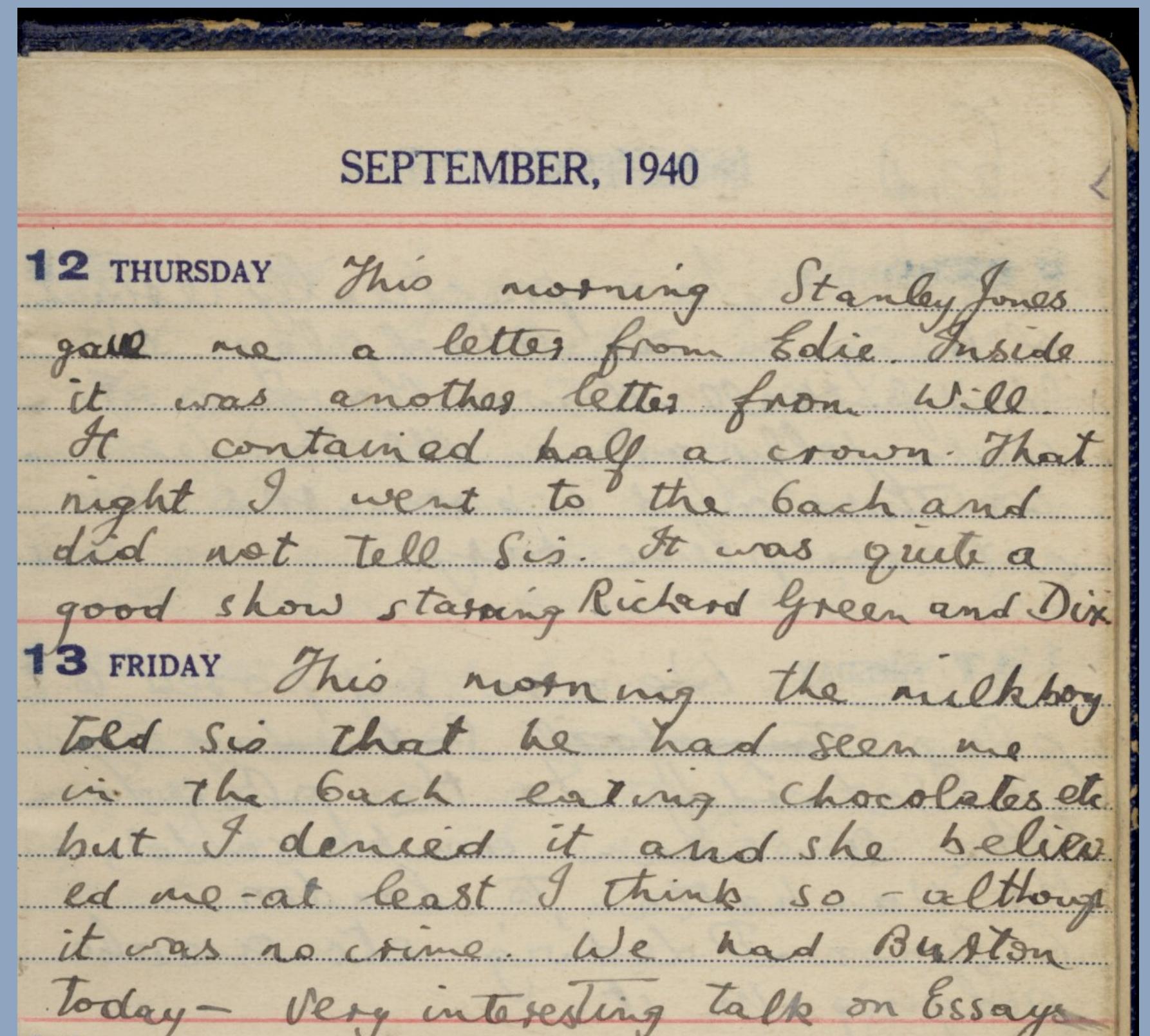
Ces i fy ngwneud yn aelod heddiw, ac yfais fy niferyn cyntaf o win a bwytais fy narn cyntaf o fara.

Chapel and religion played a very big part of family life and Richard would spend every Sunday at the Noddfa Welsh Congregational Chapel on Commercial Street, Taibach listening intently to the rousing sermons that introduced him to the power of language, song, music and oration.

As a child he and his nieces (who were younger than him) would enthusiastically re-enact the preacher's sermon and sing the hymns in the family parlour to the delight and giggles of his audience!

Roedd y capel a chrefydd yn chwarae rhan fawr iawn ym mywyd y teulu, a byddai Richard yn treulio bob dydd Sul yng Nghapel Cynulleidfaol Cymreig Noddfa, ar Heol Commercial, Tai-bach, yn gwrando'n astud ar y pregethau angerddol a'i cyflwynodd i bŵer iaith, caneuon, cerddoriaeth ac arraith.

Fel plentyn, byddai ef a'i nithoedd (a oedd yn iau nag ef) yn ailgreu pregethwr gyda brwd frydedd, ac yn canu'r caneuon yn y parlwr er llawenydd i'w cynulleidfa a fyddai'n piffian chwerthin!



Y 1930au a'r 40au oedd oes aur ffilm, ac roedd sawl sinema ym Mhort Talbot i fynd iddo a oedd yn dangos popeth y gallai Hollywood ei gynnig. Roedd Richard yn mynd i bob un ohonynt, gan gasglu papurau newydd ar gyfer siop sglodion a physgod deuluol i dalu am ei docyn. Crybwyllyd 42 o ffilmiau yn ei ddyddiadur cynnar.

Chapel / Capel



Noddfa Welsh Congregational Chapel, Taibach
Capel Cynulleidfaol Cymreig Noddfa, Tai-bach

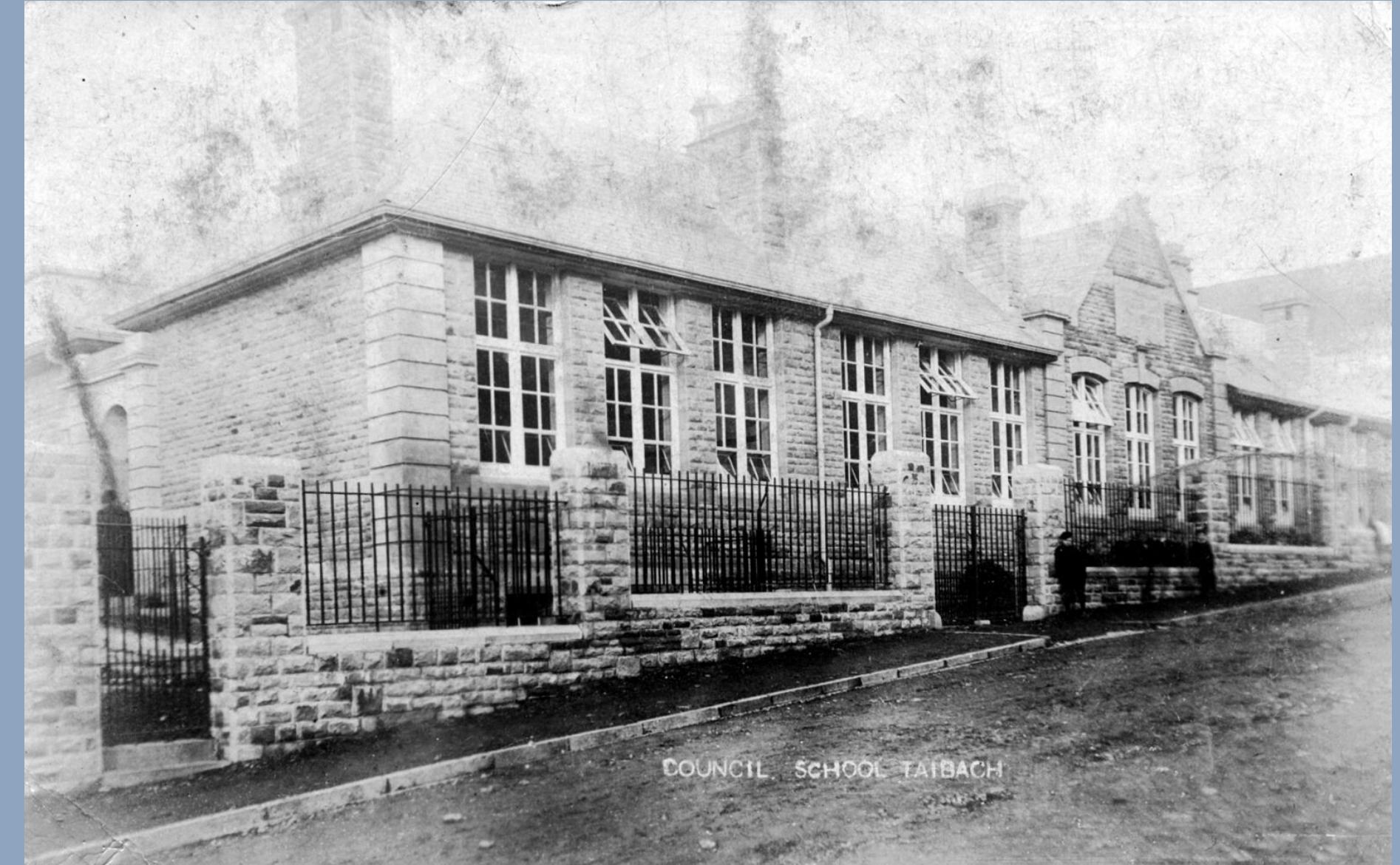
Education / Addysg

15 SUNDAY 17th Sunday after Trinity Determined to work hard at school and break all records by passing matric ⁹⁹ 1st time. Very few Van boys have ever done it.

Richard attended Eastern Boys School until 1937 when he took a scholarship exam for admission into Port Talbot Secondary School (The Sec), the first of his family to do so.

He was a popular boy at school and his diaries reflect his eagerness to learn. He would spend hours studying into the night writing notes to revise and keeping them in the end pole of his bed. His memory was so good that he never needed them.

His family relates stories of his ability to recite any passage from Shakespeare simply from the first line.



Eastern Boys School, Taibach where Richard first went to school.

Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Ysgol y Bechgyn Eastern, Tai-bach, lle'r aeth Richard i'r ysgol yn gyntaf. Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



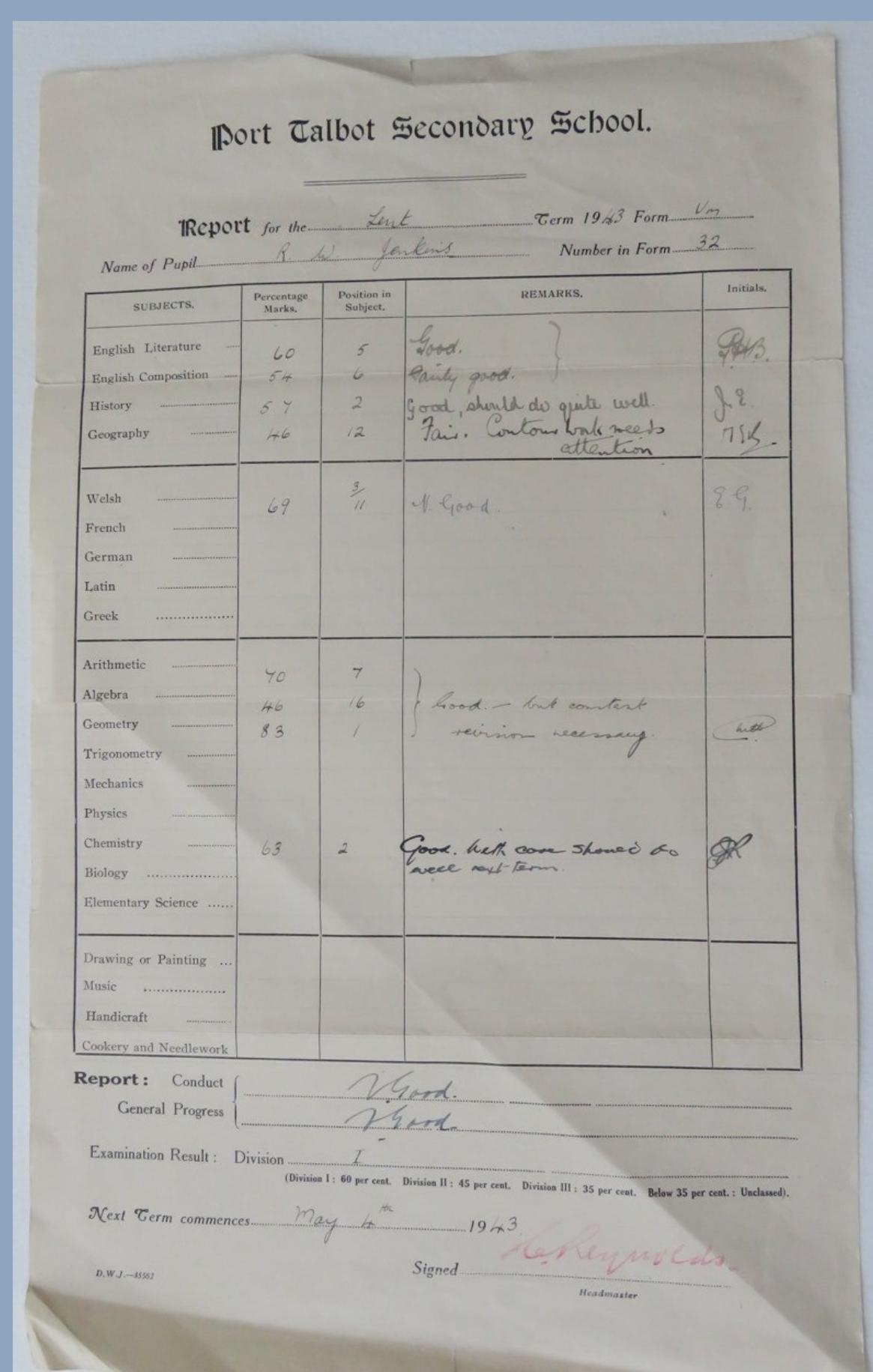
Class photo Port Talbot Secondary Grammar School, circa 1942

courtesy of the West Glamorgan Archive Service

Llun dosbarth, Ysgol Ramadeg Uwchradd Port Talbot, tua 1942, trwy garedigrwydd archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg.



Port Talbot Secondary Grammar School
Ysgol Ramadeg Uwchradd Port Talbot



School Report 1943

With kind permission of Rhianon Trowell

Aeth Richard i Ysgol y Bechgyn Eastern tan 1937 pan safodd arholiad ysgoloriaeth i Ysgol Uwchradd Port Talbot (y Sec), y cyntaf o'i deulu i wneud hynny.

Roedd e'n fachgen poblogaidd yn yr ysgol ac mae ei ddyddiaduron yn adlewyrchu ei awydd i ddysgu. Byddai'n treulio oriau'n astudio tan yn hwyr y nos, gan ysgrifennu nodiadau i'w hadolygu, a'u cadw ar bolyn gwaelod ei wely. Roedd ei gof mor dda, nid fu angen y rhain arno erioed.

Mae ei deulu'n adrodd straeon am ei allu i adrodd unrhyw ddarn o waith Shakespeare o glywed y llinell gyntaf yn unig.

Jenkins the Co-Op / Jenkins y Co-Op

Thursday 4th January 1940:

...Went to have an interview tonight for the job in the co-op. Everything went splendidly and I have been told that I have had the job.

Dydd Iau, 4 Ionawr 1940:

...Bues i i gael cyfweliad heno am y swydd yn y Co-op. Aeth popeth yn wych, a ches i wybod mod i wedi cael y swydd.

In April 1941 money became tight in Caradoc Street as brother-in-law Elfed had become ill, preventing him from working. Richard left school to work in the drapery department of the Co-Op store on Commercial Row, Taibach. It was a job he loathed and was known to allow suits out of the shop 'to be tried on' with little care for their return, reciting Shakespeare verbatim as he went about his day often leaving the store to visit the library just across the road.

By the autumn of 1942 his old teacher Meredith Jones had orchestrated his return to school to finish his education, a dramatic second chance for Richard that would change the course of his life.

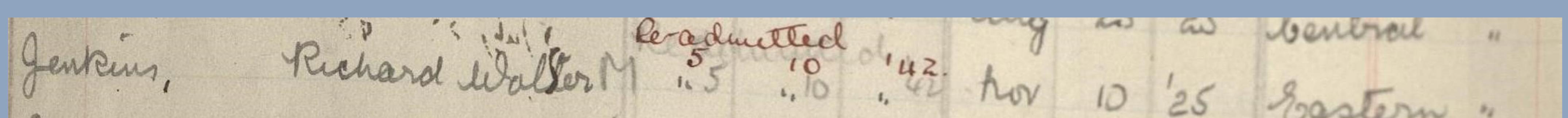


The Taibach Co-Op where Richard would work as a draper's assistant.
Courtesy of Port Talbot Historical Society

Siop y Co-op, Tai-bach, lle bu Richard yn gweithio fel cynorthwy-ydd brethynnwr.
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



Meredith Jones: The teacher who helped Richard return to school



Port Talbot Secondary School Admittance Register shows Richard Walter Jenkins' return to school in October 1942.
courtesy of the West Glamorgan Archive Service

Mae Cofrestr Dderbyn Ysgol Uwchradd Port Talbot yn dangos dychweliad Richard Walter Jenkins i'r ysgol ym mis Hydref 1942.
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg

Ym mis Ebrill 1941, daeth arian yn fwy tynn gan fod ei frawd yng nghyfraith, Elfed, wedi mynd yn sâl, gan ei atal rhag gweithio. Gadawodd Richard yr ysgol i weithio yn adran gwerthu dillad siop y Co-op ar Res Commercial, Tai-bach. Roedd hi'n swydd yr oedd yn ei chasáu, ac roedd yn hysbys ei fod yn caniatáu i bobl fynd â siwtiau o'r siop i'w 'rhoi amdanynt i weld', heb ofidio dim ynghylch a chânt eu dychwelwyd. Byddai'n adrodd Shakespeare air am air wrth iddo gyflawni ei orchwylion dyddiol, gan adael y siop yn aml i ymweld â'r llyfrgell ar draws y ffordd.

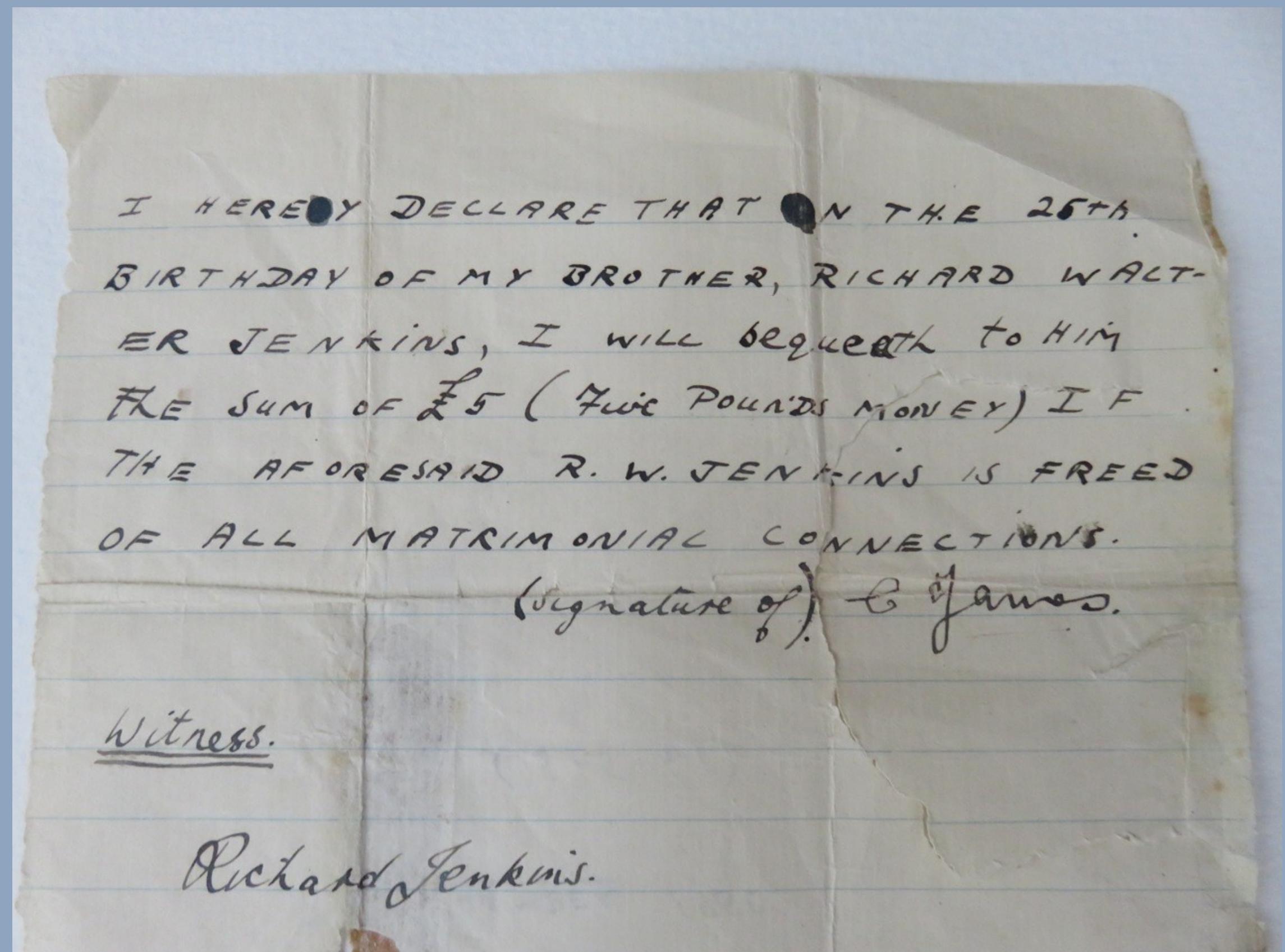
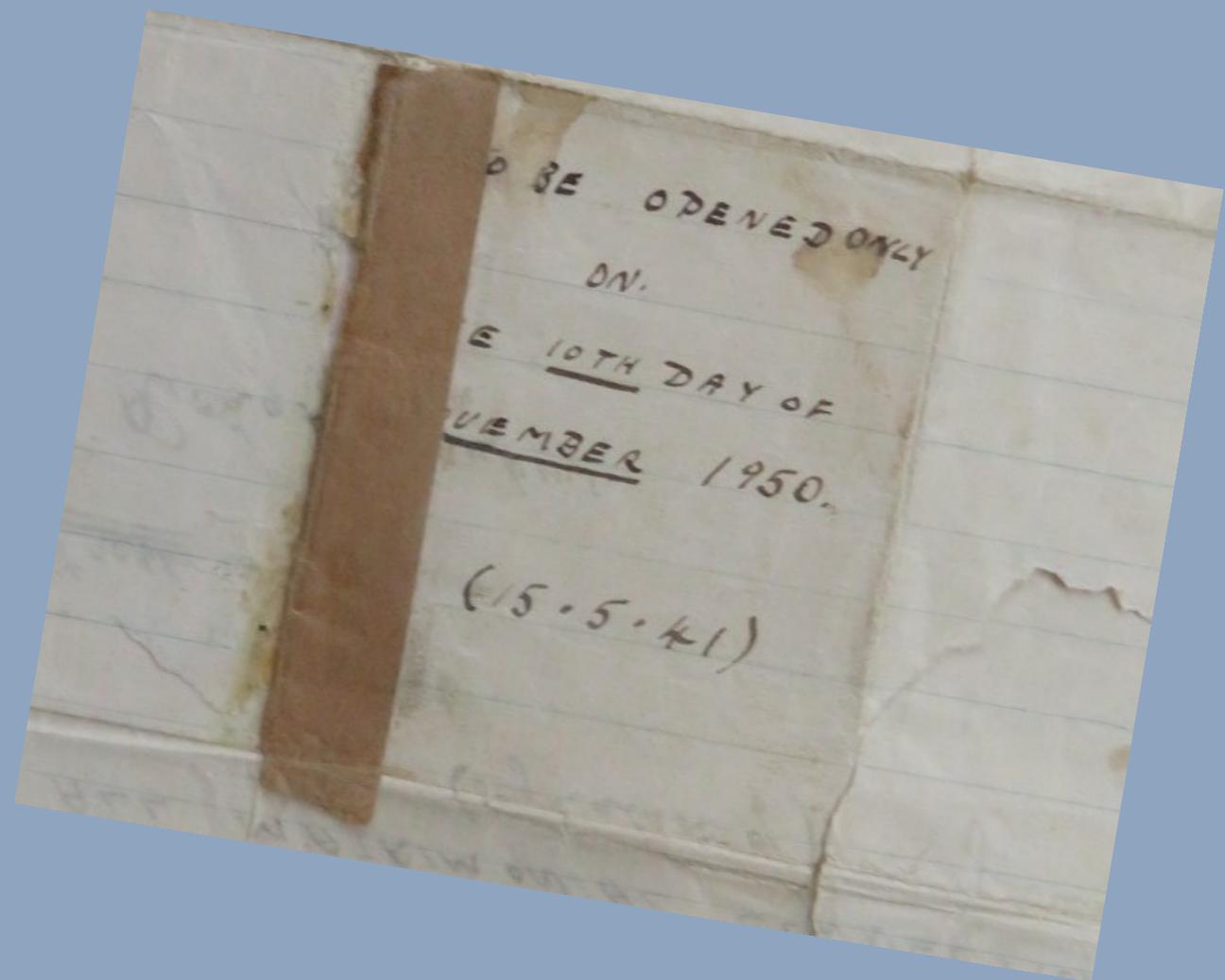
Erbyn yr hydref 1942, roedd ei gyn-athro, Meredith Jones, wedi llwyddo i drefnu iddo ddychwelyd i'r ysgol i orffen ei addysg, penderfyniad a fyddai'n newid hynt ei fywyd.

A Teenage Heart-throb / Throb calon yn eu harddegan



Richard was a handsome young man at school and had plenty of admirers who he would court around the Memorial Park. However he frequently forgot to turn up for dates, preferring football practice to romancing!

His niece Rhianon remembers forlorn young ladies sitting at the kitchen table at Caradoc Street with Cis waiting for his return home.



Handwritten letter of agreement between Cis and Richard drawn up in May 1941
With kind permission of Rhianon Trowell-James



Richard, sister Cis and first wife Sybil on a visit home to Taibach

With kind permission of Rhianon Trowell

Exasperated with her brother, Cis warned the 16 year lothario that he would be married before he was 25 and she drew up an agreement between them on the page of an exercise book, sealed with blackout tape!

On the 5th of February 1949 Richard married Welsh actress Sybil Williams in the Kensington registry office. He sent Cis a £5 note in the post to honour his debt!

World War II / Ail Ryfel Byd

Monday 2nd September 1940:

Last night we had the worst air raid of the war. Over 200 people were killed in Swansea, and Ben Evans, the market and Marks and Spencers were hit while Swansea Station was completely wrecked.

Dydd Llun, 2 Medi 1940:

Neithiwr cawson ni gyrch awyr gwaethaf y rhyfel. Lladdwyd dros 200 o bobl yn Abertawe, a thrawyd Ben Evans, y farchnad a Marks and Spencers, a dinistriwyd Gorsaf Abertawe'n gyfan gwbl.

The continuing war prevails throughout the diary with comments on air raids, family servicemen and building air raid shelters. In 1942 Richard joined 499 Port Talbot Squadron of the Air Training Corps for older schoolboys prior to taking their war service. Teacher Philip Burton was Flight Lieutenant and had received an MBE for his work with the squadron. Part of the cadet's role was to undertake fire watch duties during air raids.

After leaving school he was given the rare opportunity to study at Exeter College, Oxford on a six month scholarship through the RAF in 1944. Here he was given the opportunity to further his education and star in the Friends of Oxford University Dramatic Society production of *Measure for Measure*.

He began his national service and training as a flight later that year serving on bases in England and Canada until demobilisation in 1947.



With kind permission of Sian Owen, family collection
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Siân Owen, Casgliad Teuluol

Mae cyfeiriadau at y rhyfel, wrth iddo bara, yn bresennol drwy'r holl ddyddiadur, gyda sylwadau ar gyrchoedd awyr, aelodau o'r teulu a fu'n gwasanaethu yn y lluoedd arfog, ac adeiladu llochesau cyrch awyr. Ym 1942, ymunodd Richard â Sgwadron 499 Port Talbot o'r Corfflu Hyfforddiant Awyr i fechgyn ysgol hŷn, cyn iddynt gyflawni eu gwasanaeth rhyfel. Yr athro Philip Burton, oedd yr Awyr-Lefftenant ac roedd wedi derbyn MBE am ei waith gyda'r sgwadron. Rhan o rôl y cadlanciau oedd cyflawni dyletswyddau gwyliau rhag tân yn ystod cyrchoedd awyr.

Ar ôl gadael yr ysgol, cafodd gyfle prin (diolch i Phillip Burton) i astudio yng Ngholeg Caerwysg, Rhydychen ar ysgoloriaeth chwe mis drwy'r RAF ym 1944. Yma cafodd y cyfle i hybu ei addysg ac ymddangos yng nghynhyrchiad Cymdeithas Ddrama Cyfeillion Prifysgol Rhydychen o *Measure for Measure*.

Dechreuodd ei wasanaeth milwrol a'i hyfforddiant fel llywiwr hediadau yn ddiweddarach y flwyddyn honno, gan wasanaethu mewn canolfannau yn Lloegr a Chanada tan ei ddadfyddino ym 1947.



Courtesy of the West Glamorgan Archive Service
Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg

Early Acting / Actio Cynnar

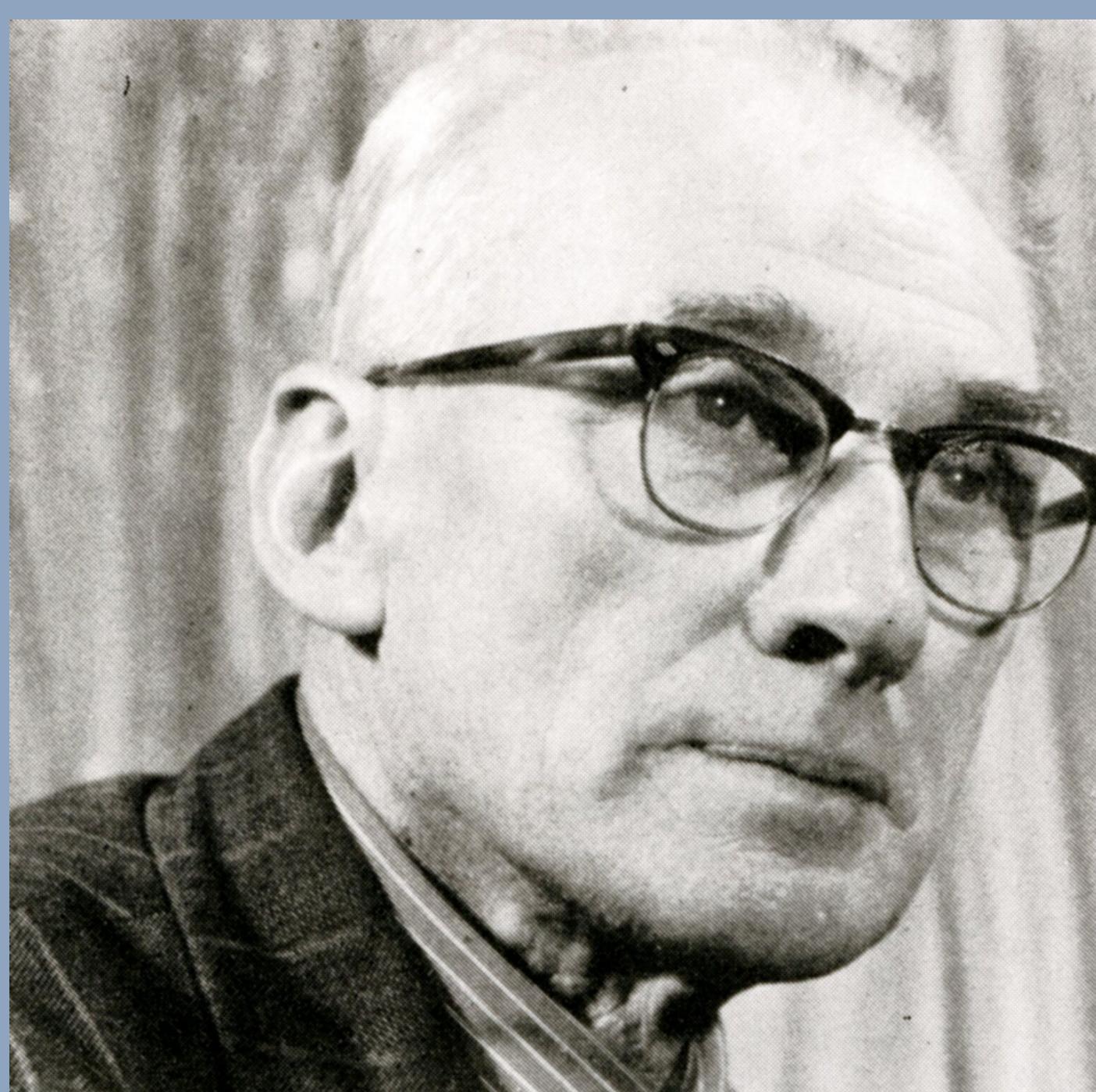
Richard's first introduction to theatre was in a minor role in the school production of *The Apple Cart* directed by teacher Phillip Burton in 1941. Due to safety concerns and war time restrictions the play was staged at the YMCA on Talbot Road.

Later that year he joined the Taibach Youth Club where, despite having left school, he would continue to perform under the guidance of Leo Lloyd who he later claimed made him want to be an actor and taught him the fundamentals of acting.

School Dramatics.	
Matinee performances of "The Apple Cart" (Bernard Shaw) will be given at the Y.M.C.A. Hall from January 22nd—25th, with the following cast:	
Pamphilus	D. WILLIAMS (Vt).
Sempronius	A. COCHLIN (Vt).
Bonerges	S. JONES (VIa).
King Magnus	M. GRIFFITHS (Vt).
The Princess Royal	SHEILLA WILLIAMS (Vt).
The Prime Minister	J. E. DAVIES (VIb).
The Foreign Secretary	C. EYNON (Vt).
The Colonial Secretary	S. JONES (Vt).
Chancellor of the Exchequer	J. BEYNON (Vt).
The Home Secretary	G. WILLIAMS (Vm).
The Post Mistress General	SUSIE PREECE (Vt).
The Power Mistress General	BETTY BROWN (VIb).
Orinthia	PHYLLIS WILLIAMS (Vt).
Queen Jemima	GLENYS HARE (VIb).
The American Ambassador	R. JENKINS (Vm).
Producer	Mr. BURTON.

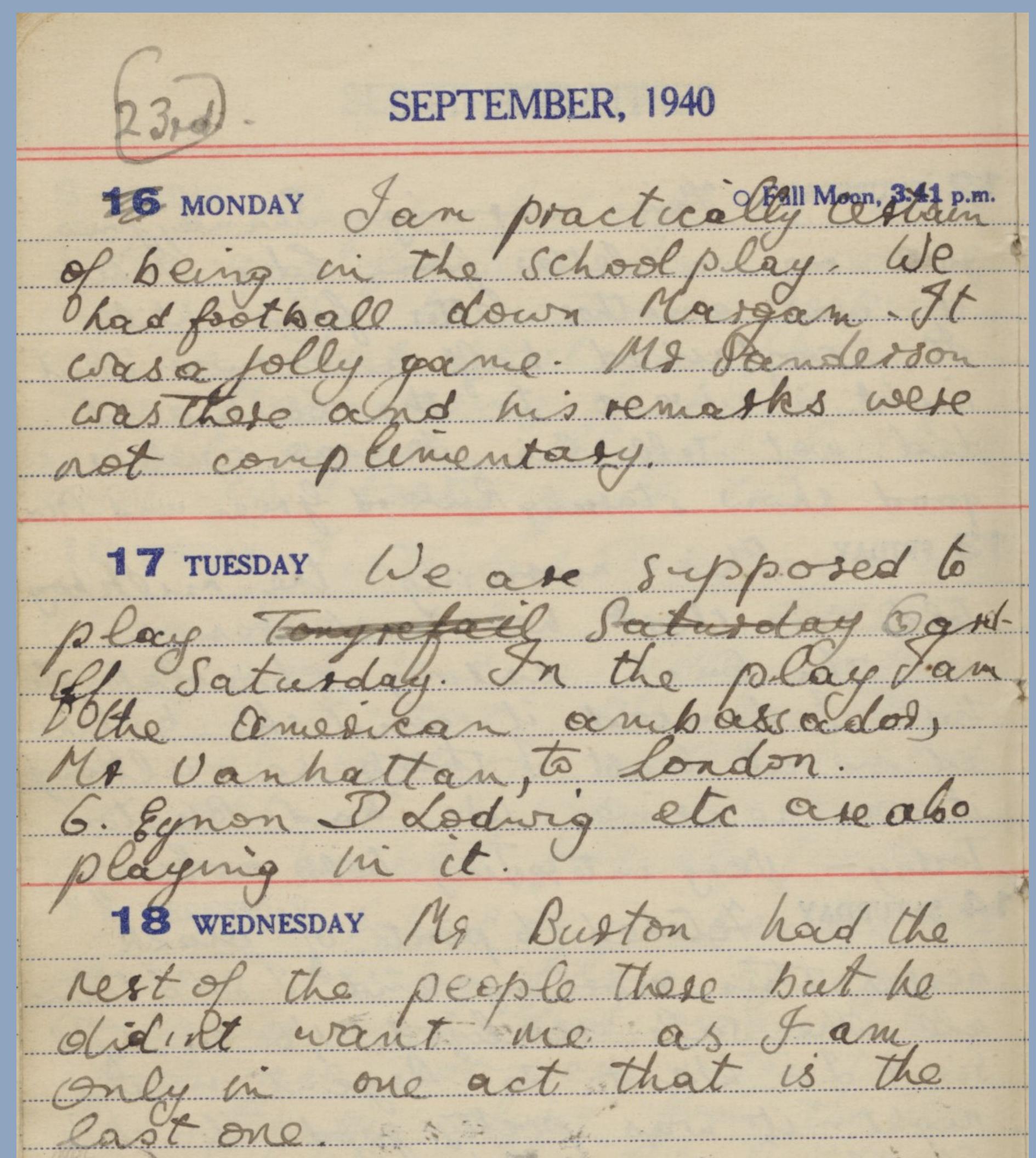
Cast list of *The Apple Cart* from *The Wayfarer School magazine*, 1941
With kind permission of The West Glamorgan Archive Service

Rhestr o gast *The Apple Cart* o gylchgrawn *The Wayfarer School*, 1941
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg



Leo Lloyd, founder of the Taibach Youth Club, a great influence on Burton.
Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Leo Lloyd, sylfaenydd Clwb Ieuenciad Tai-bach, dylanwad mawr ar Burton.
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



September entry to the diary shows Richard's excitement of performing in the school play and mention of an upcoming rugby match.

Mae cofnod mis Medi yn y dyddiadur yn dangos cyffro Richard ynghylch performio yn y ddrama ysgol ac mae'n crybwyllyd gêm rygbi sydd ar ddod.

Cyflwyniad cyntaf Richard i'r theatr oedd mewn rôl fechan yng nghynhyrchiad yr ysgol o *The Apple Cart* a gyfarwyddwyd gan yr athro Phillip Burton ym 1941. Oherwydd pryderon am ddiogelwch a chyfngiadau amser rhyfel, llwyfannwyd y ddrama yn yr YMCA ar Heol Talbot.

Yn ddiweddarach y flwyddyn honno, ymunodd â Chlwb Ieuenciad Tai-bach. Er gwaethaf y ffaith ei fod wedi gadael yr ysgol, parhaodd i berfformio yno dan arweiniad Leo Lloyd yr honnodd yn nes ymlaen iddo godi awydd arno i fod yn actor, ac a addysgodd hanfodion actio iddo.

Phillip Burton

Phillip Burton was English teacher at the Port Talbot Sec and director of the school plays as well as a published playwright. When Richard returned to school in 1942 it was under the watchful eye of his teacher Burton. When it became more difficult living with his sister and family after leaving employment and returning to school he moved in to the same lodging house as his teacher on Connaught Street, Taibach. Phillip Burton became Richard's legal guardian until he turned 21 prompting the change of name from Jenkins to Burton.

It was here that Richard was coached in schoolwork and to become an actor. Hours were spent reciting psalms and works of Shakespeare until his voice lost roughness and gained the distinct beauty that he became famous for.

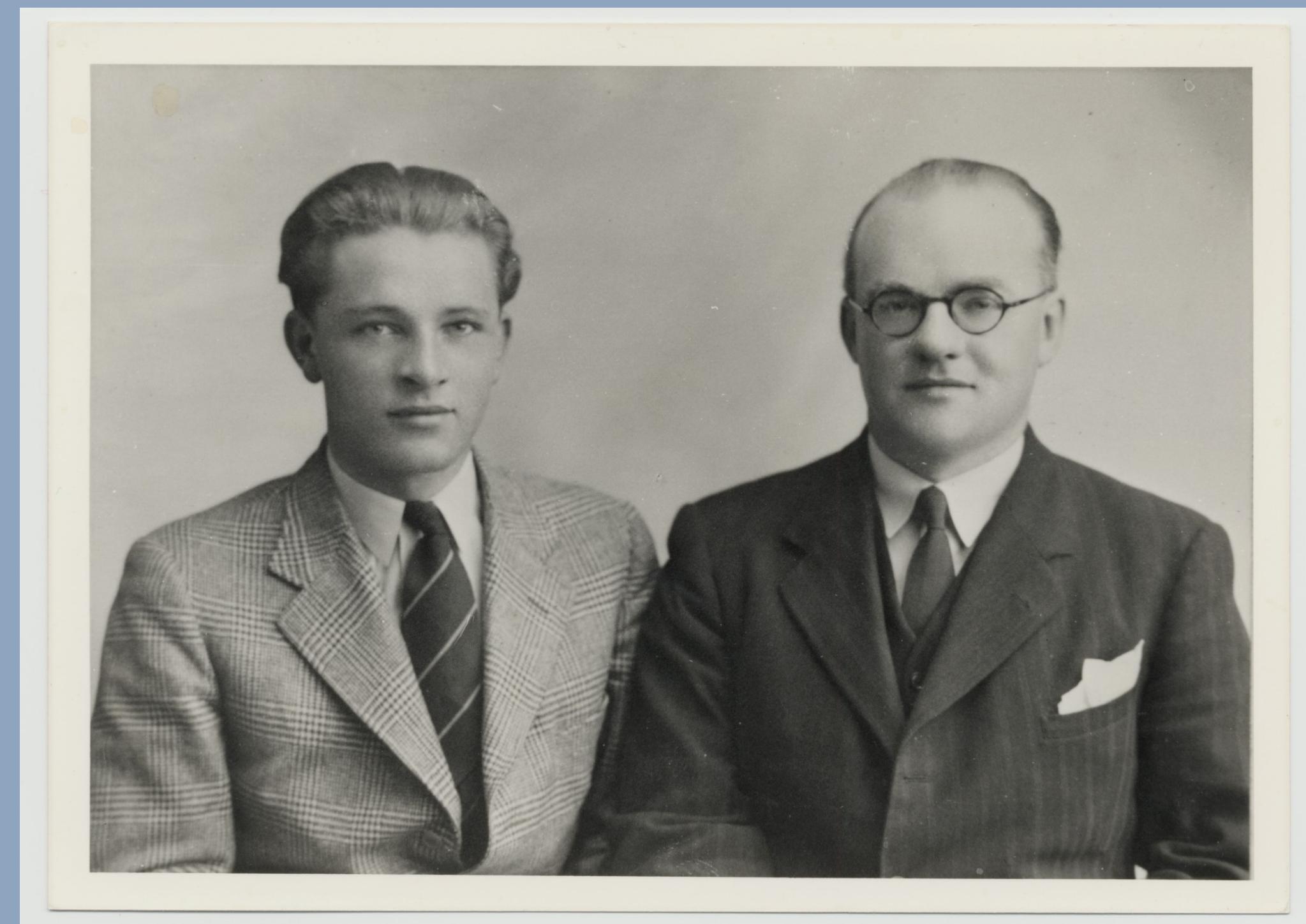
SCHOOL PLAYERS IN "PYGMALION"

There was no blue pencil censorship for Shaw's problem play, "Pygmalion," when performed on Wednesday at the Y.M.C.A., Port Talbot, by the pupils of the Secondary School, and which will be continued throughout the week. It produced no expressed shock, but plenty of admiration from a responsive audience. Stage-craft, confidence, and clever make-up, together with a realistic atmosphere, made it difficult to believe that the play was being acted by youth, and not adults; nevertheless, it was a triumph for the producer, Mr. P. H. Burton, and the young players.

There were outstanding characters. Richard Jenkins as the "Professor" and creator of the plot, displayed dramatic talent that made him a dominating personality, and brought out all that was best in the acting of his opposite number, Dilys Jones, the London flower girl, who blossomed into a society lady through the tuition of the professor. Jestyn Francis as "Colonel Pickering," did some clever acting, and his expressions were, at times, as eloquent as the lines which Shaw called upon him to put over. Upon this trio the success of the play depended, and there was not a weak link in the chosen cast. The quiet dignity and grace of Dorothy Mainwaring, the "mother" of the professor; the autocratic bearing and splendid diction of Phyllis Dolan as Mrs. Eynsford Hill, radiated the right society atmosphere for her rather austere daughter and giggling son—Jean Richards and Brinley Phillips—to achieve success in their respective parts. Other members of the cast that helped to make the play a triumph were Joan Rees, Glenys Daniels, Graham Hughes, Arnold Meads, Roy Vincent and Ieuan David. The pianists were Sheila Coombes and Gareth Morgan.

Richard's first critical review in the Port Talbot Guardian for his portrayal of Professor Higgins in his last school production of Pygmalion in October 1943.

Adolygiad beirniadol cyntaf Richard yn y Port Talbot Guardian ar gyfer ei bortread o Professor Higgins yn ei gynhyrchiad ysgol olaf sef Pygmalion ym mis Hydref 1943.



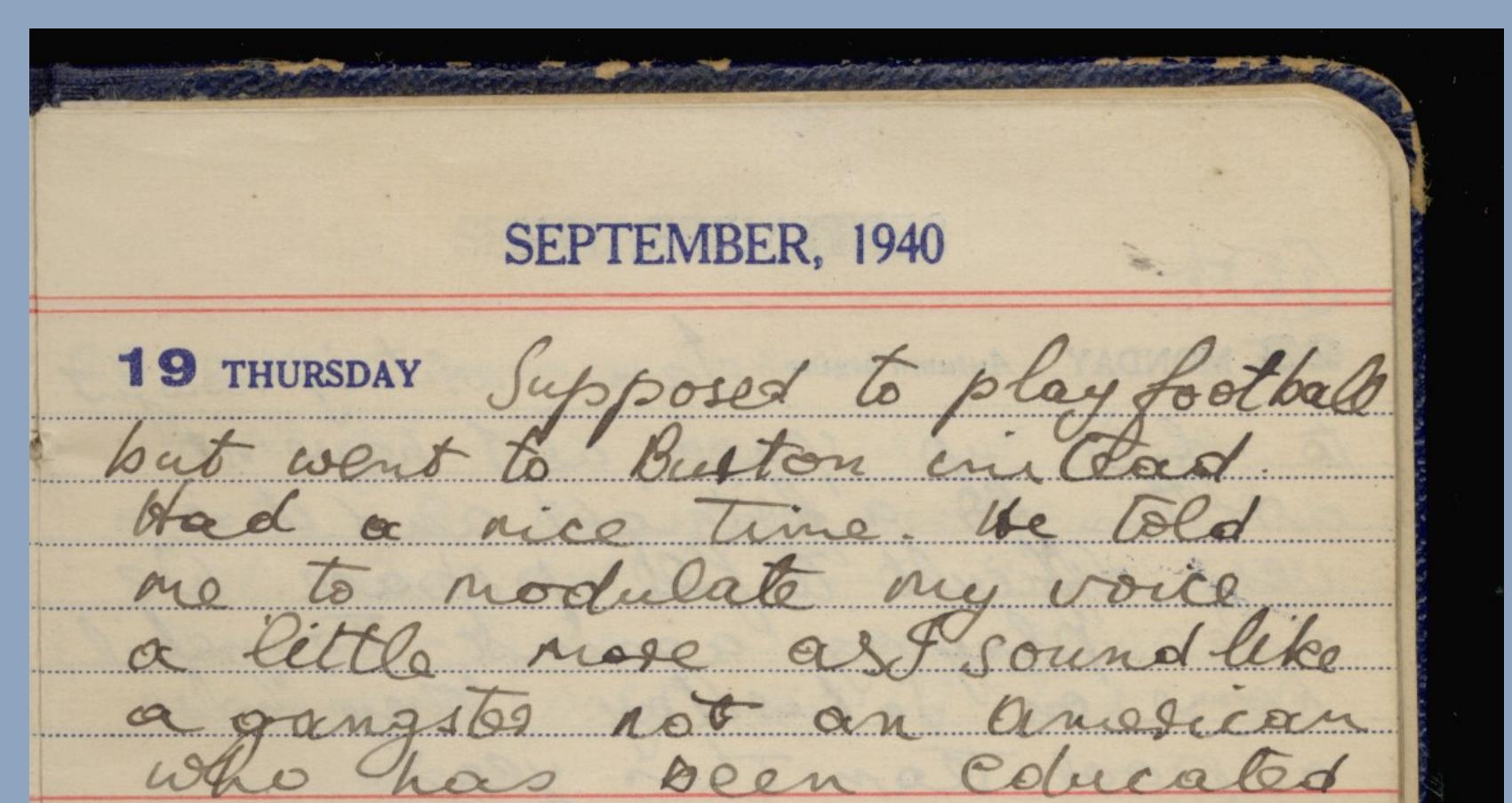
Richard Jenkins and mentor Phillip Burton.

With kind permission of Sally Burton

Source: Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University

Richard Jenkins a'i fentor Phillip Burton
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Sally Burton.

Ffynhonnell: Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe



Roedd Phillip Burton yn athro Saesneg yn Ysgol Uwchradd Port Talbot ac yn gyfarwyddwr dramâu ysgol yn ogystal ag yn ddramodydd cyhoeddiedig. Pan ddychwelodd Richard i'r ysgol ym 1942, roedd hynny dan lygad gwyliadwrus ei athro, Burton. Pan ddaeth yn anos byw gyda'i chwaer a'i theulu ar ôl gadael cyflogaeth a dychwelyd i'r ysgol, symudodd i fyw i'r un llety â'i athro ar Stryd Connaught, Tai-bach. Daeth Phillip Burton yn warcheidwad cyfreithiol i Richard nes iddo droi'n 21 oed, gan ysgogi'r newid enw o Jenkins i Burton.

Yma y cafodd Richard ei hyfforddi yn ei waith ysgol ac i fod yn actor. Treuliodd oriau'n adrodd salmau a gwaith Shakespeare nes i'w lais golli gerwinder ac ennill yr harddwch croyw y daeth yn enwog amdano.

Professional Work / Gwaith Proffesiynol

Between 1942 and 43 he had already had some radio work and thanks to a successful audition arranged by Phillip Burton, in November 1943 took his first professional role in Emlyn Williams' production of *The Druid's Rest* at The Royal Court Theater, Liverpool and later in London from January 1944.

His first film was Emlyn William's, *The Last Days of Dolwyn* in 1949 in a part written especially for him and where he met his first wife, Welsh actress Sybil Williams. They made their first home together in London where his stage career had blossomed.

1952 took Burton to Hollywood for a role in *My Cousin Rachel* which earned him his first Oscar nomination and catapulted him from Shakespearean stage actor to international film star leading to starring roles in 'Cleopatra', 'The Spy Who came in from the Cold', 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolfe' and 'Becket'.



Courtesy of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



Burton in Henry IV. Photo by Angus McBean, Royal Shakespeare Company

Burton yn Henry IV. Royal Shakespeare Company

Rhwng 1942 ac 1943 roedd eisoes wedi cael peth gwaith radio, ac o ganlyniad i glyweliad llwyddiannus a drefnwyd gan Phillip Burton, yn mis Tachwedd 1943 derbyniodd ei rôl broffesiynol gyntaf yng nghynhyrchiad Emlyn Williams o *The Druid's Rest* yn theatr y Royal Court, Lerpwl ac yn nes ymlaen yn Llundain ym mis Ionawr 1944.

Ei ffilm gyntaf oedd un o ffilmiau Emlyn Williams, 'The Last Days of Dolwyn' ym 1949, mewn darn a ysgrifennwyd yn arbennig ar ei gyfer, a lle cyfarfu â'i wraig gyntaf, yr actores Gymreig, Sybil Williams. Roedd cartref cyntaf y ddau ohonynt yn Llundain, lle'r oedd ei yrfa lwyfan wedi datblygu.

Ym 1952, aeth Burton i Hollywood ar gyfer ei rôl yn *My Cousin Rachel*. Fe'i henwebwyd am ei wobr Oscar gyntaf ar gyfer y ffilm hon, gan ei ddyrchafu o fod yn actor llwyfan Shakespearaid i fod yn seren ffilmiau gan arwain at brif rolau yn 'Cleopatra', 'The Spy Who Came in from the Cold', 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf' a 'Becket'.

Home / Eí gartref - Le Pays de Galles

In 1957 the Burtons bought a villa in a small Swiss village, Celigny that would be Richard's permanent home all his life he named it Le Pays de Galles, 'Wales' in French. The move meant he couldn't spend as much time in Britain but despite this and his growing fame Richard continued to visit family in his home town, often arriving by helicopter landing in a field in Pontrhydyfen or in one of his luxury cars that he would stop in the middle of the road when he spotted an old friend.

When he returned he would stay with his sister Cis or Hilda in Pontrhydyfen and when the fame increased he had a suite in the Aberavon Beach Hotel but still visited the local fish and chip shop, Miner's Arms in Pontrhydyfen and watched his beloved Aberavon at the Athletic Ground.

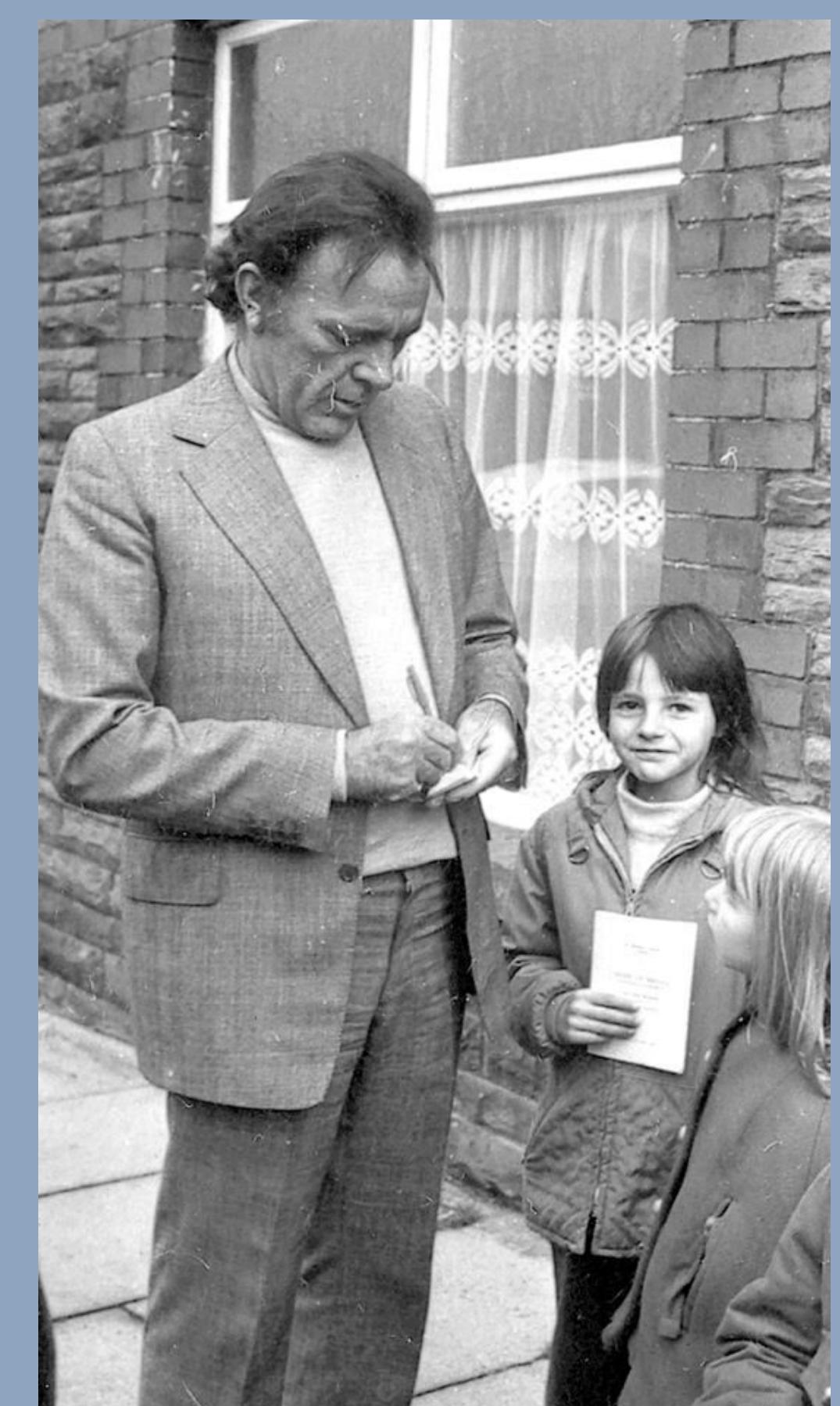
His address book held at the Richard Burton Archives reveals a man who was always connected with his home town with names and addresses of friends and family alongside some of the most well-known personalities in the world!



With his nieces, Marion and Rhianon
With kind permission of Rhianon Trowell
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Rhianon Trowell



With kind permission of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



Siging autographs on a visit home.
Port Talbot Historical Society
Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot

Ym 1957, prynodd y teulu Burton fila mewn pentref bach yn y Swistir, sef Celigny. Hwn fyddai cartref parhaol Burton drwy'i fywyd ac fe'i henwodd 'Le Pays de Galles' sef Cymru yn Ffrangeg. Roedd symud yma'n golygu na allai dreulio cymaint o amser ym Mhrydain, ond er gwaethaf hyn a'i enwogrwydd cynyddol, parhaodd Richard i ymweld â'i deulu yn ei bentref genedigol, gan gyrraedd yn aml mewn hofrennydd a glanio mewn cae ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen, neu yn un o'i geir moethus y byddai'n ei stopio yng nghanol y ffordd pan welai hen ffrind.

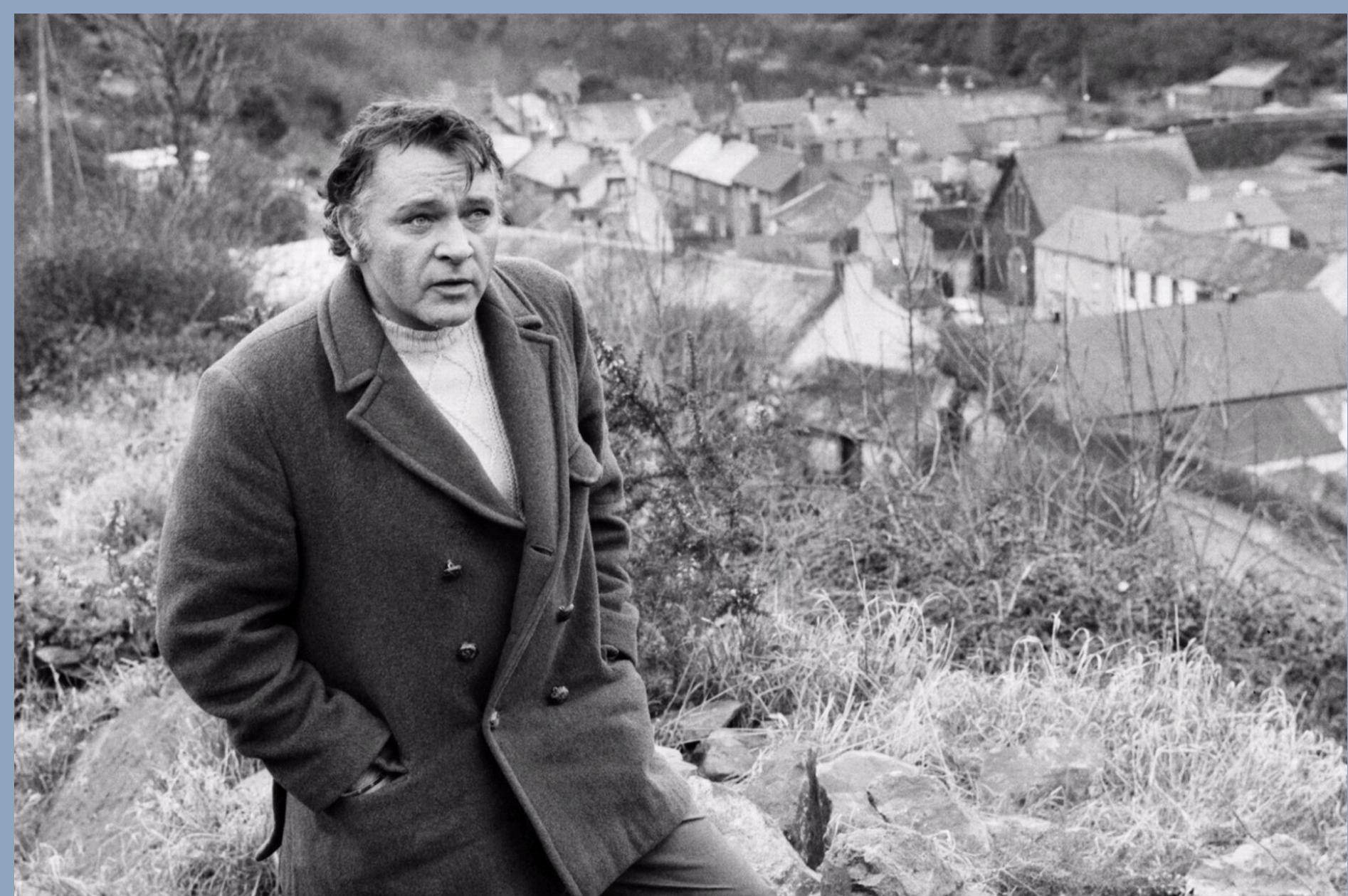
Pan fyddai'n dychwelyd byddai'n aros gyda'i chwaer Cis neu Hilda ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen, a phan gynyddodd ei enwogrwydd, arhosai mewn ystafelloedd yng Ngwesty Traeth Aberafan. Ond roedd yn dal i ymweld â'r siop pysgod a sglodion leol a thafarn y Miner's Arms ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen, ac yn gwyllo'i hoff dîm, Aberafan, yn chwarae ar faes Talbot Athletic.

Mae ei lyfr cyfeiriadau a gedwir yn Archifau Richard Burton, yn datgelu dyn yr oedd ganddo bob amser gysylltiad â phentref ei fagwraeth, gydag enwau a chyfeiriadau ei ffrindiau a'i deulu ochr yn ochr â'r personoliaethau mwyaf adnabyddus yn y byd!

Farewell / Ffarwel

Richard Burton, the acclaimed actor and international film star. Son of a miner and bar maid from Pontrhydyfen died suddenly at his home in Switzerland on the 5th of August 1984 of a cerebral haemorrhage, he was 58 years old. He was buried in Celigny, Switzerland in a red suit with a book of Dylan Thomas' poetry.

On the 11th of August a memorial service was held at the Bethel Baptist Chapel in Pontrhydyfen. Hundreds of mourners attended the service inside and outside the chapel.



With kind permission of The Port Talbot Historical Society
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot



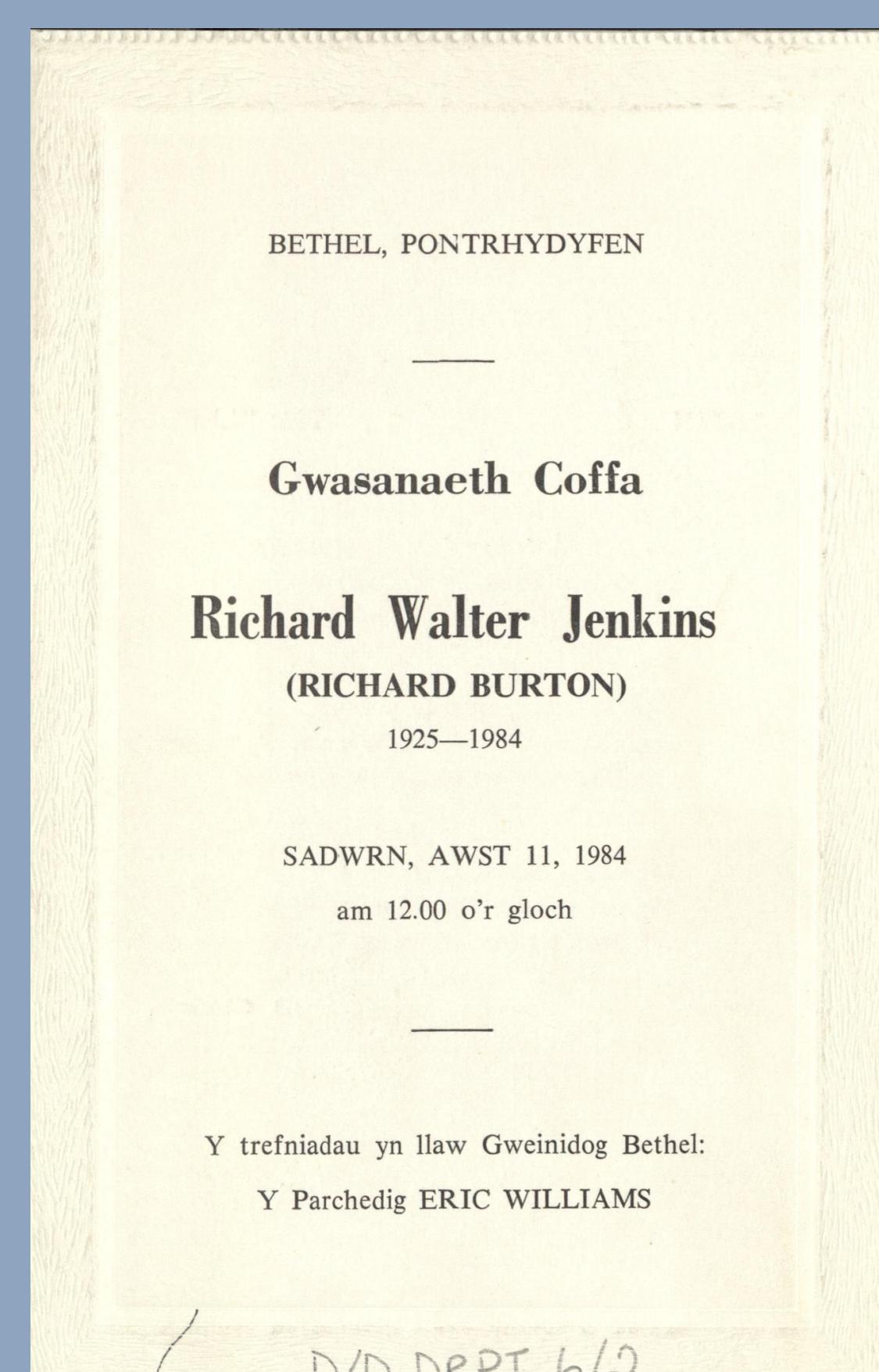
Family, Friends and Local People gather at Bethel Baptist Chapel to say goodbye to their local legend.

With kind permission of The Port Talbot Historical Society

Teulu, ffrindiau a phobl leol yn ymgynnill wrth Gapel y Bedyddwyr, Bethel i ddweud ffarwel wrth eu harwr lleol.
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Port Talbot

Richard Burton, yr actor clodfawr a seren ffilmiau rhwngwladol. Bu farw'r mab i llowr a barforwyn o Bont-rhyd-y-fen yn sydyn yn ei gartref yn y Swistir ar 5 Awst 1984 o waedlif ar yr ymennydd. Roedd yn 58 oed. Fe'i claddwyd yn Celigny, y Swistir, mewn siwt goch gyda llyfr o gerddi Dylan Thomas.

Ar 11 Awst, cynhaliwyd gwasanaeth coffáu yng Nghapel y Bedyddwyr, Bethel ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen. Aeth cannoedd o alarwyr i'r gwasanaeth, yn y capel a'r tu allan iddo.



Memorial Service Order of Service Courtesy of the West Glamorgan Archive Service

Archeb gwasanaeth, gwasanaeth coffa,
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Gwasanaeth Archifau Gorllewin Morgannwg

The Burton Legacy / Etifeddiaeth Burton

A life size sculpture of Burton stands proudly over the Afan Valley at Afan Forest Park alongside Rob Brydon and Dick Wagstaff. The Richard Burton 10K run is a popular annual event that has been running for over 30 years and there is a popular walking trail that follows Burton's birthplace and childhood haunts around Pontrhydyfen and Taibach. There is also a memorial flowerbed in Talbot Park.

More recently a Swansea University project engaged with young people from the area to explore the impact of Burton on the town, and the town on Burton. This project has instigated a new wave of enthusiasm for creating a lasting legacy to Burton within the town and a group of local people with Swansea University and Neath Port-Talbot County Borough Council are working to find ways to achieve this.



Saif cerflun maint go iawn o Burton yn falch dros Gwm Afan ym Mharc Coedwig Afan ac mae ras 10k Richard Burton yn ddigwyddiad blynnyddol poblogaidd sydd wedi'i gynnal ers 30 mlynedd. Mae llwybr cerdded poblogaidd iawn ar gael sy'n mynd heibio man geni Burton a mannau ei blentyndod, a gwely blodau coffa ym Mharc Talbot.

Yn fwy diweddar, roedd prosiect Prifysgol Abertawe wedi ymgysylltu â phobl ifanc o'r ardal i archwilio effaith Burton ar y dref, a'r dref ar Burton. Mae'r prosiect hwn wedi sbarduno ton newydd o frwdfrydedd er mwyn creu etifeddiaeth barhaus i Burton yn y dref, ac mae grŵp o bobl leol yn gweithio gyda Phrifysgol Abertawe a Chyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Castell-nedd Port Talbot i ddod o hyd i ffyrdd o wneud hyn.

Do you have a story to share? In 2019 there will be a Richard Burton exhibition, in partnership with Swansea University, at National Museum Cardiff. If you think you can contribute, please get in touch with Elen Phillips (elen.phillips@museumwales.ac.uk).

Oes gennych chi stori i'w rhannu? Yn 2019, bydd Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Caerdydd, mewn partneriaeth â Phrifysgol Abertawe, yn cynnal arddangosfa am Richard Burton. I gyfrannu, cysylltwch ag Elen Phillips os gwelwch yn dda (elen.phillips@amgueddfacymru.ac.uk)

When I met Rich... / Pan gwrddais i â Rich...

Happy to meet and chat with people it seems everyone has a story of when Richard came home. Below are just a few that have been shared, with thanks to all who contributed.

Mae'n ymddangos bod gan bawb stori am yr adegau pan fyddai Richard, a oedd yn hapus i gwrdd a siarad â phobl, yn dod adref. Isod ceir ychydig sydd wedi cael eu rhannu, a diolch i bawb sydd wedi cyfrannu.

Ann Good Loved this man. I remember being on duty when he and Liz visited his sister in Pontrhydyfen. He knew my cousin too, in Caradoc Street and spoke with him on a visit there. He gave my cousin a bank note when he had heard my cousin had passed his 11 plus. What a moment that was.

Roeddwn i'n dwlu ar y dyn 'ma. Rwy'n cofio bod ar ddyletswydd pan ddaeth e' a Liz i ymweld â'i chwaer ym Mhont-rhyd-y-fen. Roedd e'n 'nabod fy nghefnder hefyd, yn Stryd Caradoc, a siaradais ag e' ar ymweliad yno. Rhoddodd bapur banc i'm cefnder pan glywodd e' ei fod wedi llwyddo yn ei arholiad '11 plus'. Roedd hynny'n foment go arbennig.



A Return visit to Caradoc Street in the 1950s. Contributed by Gaynor Evans
Cyfrannwyd gan Gaynor Evans

Ann Parry He went to school with my mam and threw her in duckpond when they were kids they also born on same day.

Aeth i'r ysgol gyda fy mam a thaflodd hi i mewn i'r pwll hwyaid pan oedden nhw'n blant - cawson nhw eu geni ar yr un diwrnod hefyd.

Russell Morley I'll never forget meeting Richard Burton, when he came to visit our teacher Dennis Burgess in Sandfields junior school, The film Alexander the Great had been showing in the Plaza , then suddenly he was in our classroom. Absolutely amazing, Like a bronze god, and that voice.

Wnai fyth anghofio cwrdd â Richard Burton pan ddaeth i ymweld â'n hathro, Dennis Burgess, yn Ysgol Gynradd Sandfields. Roedd y ffilm Alexander the Great wedi cael ei dangos yn y Plaza, yna'n sydyn, roedd yn ein hystafell ddosbarth! Hollol anhygoel, fel duw efydd, a'r llais hwnnw.



Marilyn Jones meets the Burtons at Aberavon in the 1970s

Contributed by Natalie Foley
Cyfrannwyd gan Natalie Foley

Dennis Preston The late Barry McKenna. Once told us that when his young sister went to buy fish and chips from Ivor's chip shop in Gyfer Lane Margam. Elizabeth and Richard were also buying fish and chips. Richard paid for the family order. The young girl was not aware who the gentleman was. Her dad checked with Ivor the next day, to find out who the person was who had paid for the order. Ivor said "Oh" Richard and Liz Taylor were in here buying fish and chips last night"!!

Dyweddodd y diweddar Barry McKenna wrthon ni unwaith pan aeth ei chwaer ifancach i brynu pysgod a sglodion o siop sglodion Ivor yn Lôn Gyfer, Margam, fod Elizabeth a Richard yn prynu pysgod a sglodion yno hefyd. Talodd Richard am archeb y teulu. Doedd y ferch ifanc ddim yn gwybod pwy oedd y gŵr bonheddig hwn. Aeth ei thad i weld Ivor drannoeth i gael gwybod pwy oedd y person oedd wedi talu am yr archeb. Meddai Ivor, "O. Roedd Richard a Liz Taylor 'ma neithiwr yn prynu pysgod a sglodion"!!



With kind permission of Malcolm Evans
Gyda chaniatâd caredig Malcolm Evans