COWBRIDGE

1978

W. Selwyn Davies

When one thinks of the changed pattern of social and economic life in Cowbridge, one must not particularise, for this change extends to Glamorgan, Wales, Great Britain, the world generally. But at the same time we can discern certain peculiarities in Cowbridge which to my knowledge do not pertain elsewhere. In my time I can, I think, divide it into three distinct eras - pre 1914-18 war, between the wars and, not as much as post 1939-45 war, as the late 1960s and 1970.

Pre 1914-18, there was, as far as I can recollect, litle social life especially as we know it today. I think I am right in stating there were three distinct classes here and in the surrounding district. First the "county" type, as typified by the local squires - Homfrays of Penllyn, Carnes of Nash, Bassetts of Crossways, and Edmondes of Old Hall. They were known to us youths as the "Nobs". Secondly, the middle class - lawyers, auctioneers, bankers, doctors, and in this class we may identify a second or lower grade, i.e. grocers, chemists, drapers. And indeed perhaps a third tier of this class, painters, decorators, carpenters.Thirdly the working class, who were in the main employed by the above or as odd-job men and charwomen, dressmakers and the like. They were indeed poor and it was seldom, if ever, they went out of Cowbridge except perhaps to visit relatives. (They were the objects of charity and their meagre living was supplemented by gifts of food, clothing, coal and firewood, given by the first and second classes. I can remember in my early schoolboy days a lad coming to school with his toes cut through his shoes.)

Although they intermingled to some extent, there were definite divisions between these classes, as there was between church and Nonconformists and between Tory and Liberal, for in those pre-war days Labour was in its infancy. It was about 1924 before a Labour member sat for Cowbridge and that was because we were joined to Pontypridd which amongst other Welsh industrial areas was turning whole-heartedly Socialist.

Now in trying to remember the pre-war years, one must remember an important factor - the automobile. There were not more than half a dozen cars in the town and district. No buses, and rail travel if not difficult was somewhat inconvenient. To get to Cardiff or Bridgend one had to go by train via Llantrisant, and the GWR and TVR did not always co-ordinate their time-tables to the public benefit. There were certainly balls held here - in the Bear mainly - but they were for the "Toffs". The rest had to make do with concerts, and events run by the various chapels or the church. There was an Institute which had a few billiard tables. And of course, no wireless, television or cinema - occasionally there would be a magic lantern show in the Town Hall. A day in Cardiff would be an event, and anyone going to London would be regarded with awe. So in the main, folks remained at home.

There were 3 or 4 grocers shops, three drapers, two chemists and these kept open until 6 or 7pm, and on Saturdays until 9pm. Some people would go to farms in the district once a week to obtain eggs, butter and cheese (buttermilk cheese I think it was called). Most houses had good gardens and so the majority of the residents had a plentiful supply of vegetables and in many cases, apples and pears. There were 21 public houses here - how they made a living it is difficult to say. The majority of the tenants of the pubs went out to work during the day - their

wives attending to the sparse amount of mid-day customers. Chiefly they were beer houses and only a few sold spirits. I think several made a good living out of the navvies who came here to build the Cowbridge - Aberthaw line (Navvy was short for Navigators which is what these labourers were called). Life was leisurely, sometimes dull, but solid and safe. Unemployment was practically non-existent, but in many cases the wages paid were a mere pittance.

One of the highlights of the year was March fair, held in the third week of that month. The main object of this was the buying and selling of cattle, sheep, pigs and horses, but the cheapjacks had a field day, having their various stalls in the streets. The town was thronged with carts and parking them was as much a problem as it is today with cars. During the afternoon there was held an Entire Horse Parade at which heavy cart horses paraded the main street bedecked with rosettes etc. But the main attraction for the children was Studt's Fair held in the Bear Field, with roundabouts, swings and all the ancillary stalls, coconut shies, hoopla and the such. If one had 1/- to spend one was indeed well off.

During the year, the children had various seasons ; hoops, marbles, "conkers", the girls having a hop-scotch spell. We also had our "picking" seasons, picking of flowers, blackberries and nuts. We could play on the roads in safety.

There were of course no cocktail or sherry parties, coffee mornings or bring and buy sales. There was a male voice choir and the Dramatic Society ceased to function before the First war, I think. Apart from a printing works and two breweries there were no industries, but there were blacksmiths, wheelwrights and a cooper. Two, I believe, boot repairers plied their skilful craft. The church and three chapels were well attended as were the Sunday Schools. We had three schools, the "Board" now Iolo Morganwg on Broadway, the Grammar School and the Girls High School.The day scholars walked four times a day to and from these schools. Discipline was strict in those days, and the cane much in use. There were of course no school meals. On Saints' Days, day boys (Church or nonconformist) had to attend a service at Holy Cross in the mornings. A week's holiday at Easter and Whitsun, four weeks in the summer and I think a fortnight at Christmas.

Here may be interposed the manner of spending Christmas. The shops were not decorated to the extent they are today. People did not commence shopping in earnest until a week or ten days before Christmas. Children went around carol-singing a few days before, and everybody had Christmas dinner at home. Nobody ate in hotels. The better-off saw that the poorer had a Christmas dinner of sorts, be it pork or beef. Services were held in the mornings in chapels and the Church and in one chapel there was a concert when the children recited and received gifts of books from the Sunday School, and the adults sung, "sung" in some cases being of doubtful calibre.

There was no electricity; the streets were lit by gas, a man with a pole switching the light on at dusk and off at dawn. Cowbridge had its own gasworks, where Limes Court is now. Some houses had gas lighting, many only paraffin lamps for the living room and candles for the bedrooms. Cooking in the main was done in ovens heated by a coal fire. There was no mains water. Water for washing was obtained by pumps in the garden from a cistern fed by a pipe from the water shutes. For drinking purposes, water was fetched from the pumps in the town fed by springs - one near the Police Station, one by the Town Hall (these two remain) and one opposite the entrance to Druids Green. No sewerage existed - the privy, as it was known,

being at the bottom of the garden and had to be emptied periodically. Telephones were few and far between, but there was a post office which opened about 8.30am and closed at 7. Four deliveries daily - one at 5pm, and several collections. Cockles, mussels and laver bread were sold by ladies from Gower who it must be presumed came from Swansea to Bridgend by train and then walked to Cowbridge.

Law and order were maintained by a Sergeant and 2 constables. In the main they had a far easier task than the police of today. The most they had to deal with was a few drunks and perhaps now and again a poacher.

Such then was the pattern of social and economic life here prior to 1914. Easy for some, tolerable for others and hard for many others. There were divisions of class (sometimes snobbery), religion and politics. These may have obtained in other places but it has often been maintained that there was "something" about Cowbridge which could not be well defined. There was hardly any Welsh spoken - it was not I believe taught in the Board School and in my memory not in the Grammar School. The main thing about it on recollection and reflection was that it was still Victorian. A lady would not dare enter a pub - if she did so she was beyond the pale. Divorce was unheard of, and if a married man or woman strayed from the domestic hearth it was spoken of in hushed whispers if at all. One could say there was a moral and ethical code which does not prevail today.

What one must remember is that the parents of the children of the time we are describing were born and brought up in the Victorian era. Doubtless the grandparents could remember Trafalgar and Waterloo. And although the reign of Edward VII brought in a different code of life, there still remained an aura of Victoriana.

The years 1914-1918 changed all that. The war did not greatly affect Cowbridge - many joined the Forces and some gave their lives, and one won the Military Medal. Concerts were held at which servicemen on leave were presented with gifts. Several families of Belgian refugees were taken in and the Womens Land Army cultivated the Downs - mainly potatoes.Of course all sport - cricket, tennis, football - ceased and the Athletic ground became a wilderness. A great acreage of pasture land was turned into arable.

And so inevitably but slowly 1919 and the 1920s saw a change, it was soon apparent. First of all transport. There were more cars and many youngsters had motorbikes and one could go far afield to Cardiff, Bridgend, Llantwit Major, and Porthcawl became a favourite venue for it was becoming a growing seaside resort. A bus service started by a Mr Maddox to Cardiff, eventually to Bridgend. Owing to the amalgamation of the railways, the TVR was taken over by the GWR and the connections at Llantrisant became more harmonised. As a result the Cowbridge youth began to find jobs in Cardiff, for it was easier at this early stage to go by train as the early bus service was not so frequent. But in reverse, bank clerks and school teachers were expected to 'dig' in the town even if their homes were a comparatively reachable distance of Cowbridge. A few houses began to be built - up the West End and on Broadway, and "strangers" appeared. Whereas then a newcomer was a rarity, today a Cowbridge person is such, and newcomers are in the vast majority. Certain shops and houses were slightly altered and dances in the Town Hall were frequently held. The cricket team quickly revived and soccer and hockey were prominent. The Amateur Dramatic Society revived. These things took place slowly and so there was still a languid and easy-going life here for a while after the war. It was well into the 1920s before a noticeable change began to

take place: mains water and electricity were installed, bus services were improved and extended to Llantwit Major and Pontypridd via Talbot Green. The Cowbridge Rural District Council began to expand, and that gave employment to local lads. The Cowbridge Show was revived and held in the Bear Field. Mr Mills built a cinema and Dance Hall. But the pattern changed slowly and the rate can in no way be compared to the rate of the last 10/15 years. Boys still played some of the old games, but these gradually faded away. It was not safe to play on the roads any longer for cars were increasing although there were few if any two-car families. Radio of course was becoming quite common, although many were without. It was after the 1939-45 war that my aunt allowed one in our domain.

But still, few people ate out - there were 3 thriving butchers here and at least 2 greengrocers, and people still had good and productive gardens. And of course the Council built housing on Broadway and in Borough Close. Poverty was still in existence and the poor were always with us, although not to the same extent as previously. The upper crust began to mix more freely with the others although they were still addressed as Mr or Mrs whereas today it is more frequently "John" and "Mary".

The Bear and the Duke provided meals and were frequented for this mainly by people from outside. Dances were held frequently in the Pavilion built as mentioned above by Mr Mills. More boarders came to the Grammar School, and Franklen House was taken over to accommodate them. But the number was offset by "Train" boys who came from Pontyclun and district, as did girls to the High School.

Then the South Wales Commercial Motors took over Maddox's service, and at the outset there was an hourly service to Cardiff, Bridgend and Porthcawl, augmented later on by one from Cardiff and Neath.

And so we progressed gradually - indeed towards the 1939-1945 war one could say with a good measure of truth "Cowbridge has not changed a lot". Roads had improved and the market prevailed, and March Fair was still an event to be looked forward to.

So while there were changes in character and manners and customs, Cowbridge did not to any startling effect live up to its motto of "Awn Rhagom". And really a man coming back here in the 1930s would not see a great deal of difference from the time he had left in say 1914. The attendances at Church and chapels died off somewhat and while one would hardly have seen a Sunday paper before 1914 they were now becoming the rule rather than the exception.

One could say the big places like London and Cardiff made far more advances than Cowbridge, and in saying that I am not unaware of the vast differences in the size of these towns but in proportion to these sizes I think it is a fair comment. We lost the breweries, but gained another industry in Bird's Motor Mower business, and of course there were 4 garages here now. But overall one could see a perceptible change, not so much in manners and customs but in the way of life generally.

People moved about the country more - no holidays abroad to any great extent yet, but to seaside resorts farther afield than Porthcawl or Mumbles - to the South Coast and Conwall. A considerable number of the male population worked outside Cowbridge and travelled either in their own cars or by what was now a quite frequent bus service, although a few did travel by train.

Could we say that 1919-1939 was a transitional period between the Victorian/Edwardian era and the present 70s? It certainly was for those growing up at the time. Family life did not disappear altogether but the youth (both male and female) had more freedom than previously.

I have said little about farming so far. While it cannot be said that Cowbridge was wholly dependant on this activity, it had a great impact on it. There were two agricultural merchants here who did a thriving trade, and a chemist who came here in the early 20s provided a very efficient veterinary service. Once outside the confines of the borough you were in farmland and the Cowbridge Market (two for a period) and the Fairs still flourished. Farmers too moved with the times and the horse drawn hay-cutting machine was gradually replaced by tractors drawing the cutter, and early versions of the combine harvester put in an appearance. Most farmers too now had cars. Milk which was previously supplied by famers going around with pitchers from which via a metal mug they poured into jugs, was now collected by the Milk Marketing Board and delivered by bottle. While hay was cut by more modern methods, it was not yet baled and was still loaded on to the wagons by pikes and then by a grab from the wagons to ricks.

This then was a fair depiction of the scene in 1939 when since 1938 war seemed inevitable. While the 1914-1918 war had an impact on the social and economic life of Cowbridge, which really was a reflection of the impact on the whole country, the 1939-45 war had a far greater influence on life in the 60s and 70s, as we shall see after we have mentioned the war years and how it affected the Ancient Borough.

And then in 1939 the storm broke. Cowbridge was almost immediately involved for only 4 miles away was the new RAF station at St Athan. It was not what was known as an operational station for there were no fighter or bomber squadrons operating from there. But there was a multitude of airmen there and while the majority visited Barry or Llantwit, which were easier of access, quite a number came to Cowbridge and were given cups of tea by the inhabitants. Now I can't write a great deal about the town during the war as I was away on active service, but from what I have heard and perceived from my spells on leave, things were harder here than in the 1914-18 war. Rationing came soon, petrol was also rationed, bus services were curtailed and long queues gathered at the bus stops. The train service which ceased in 1951 continued to run and thus gave some relief in transport.

Of course the blackout. The Church and chapels held the evening service in the afternoon during the winter. Many of the local lads joined and as in the previous war some gave their lives. A Home Guard was formed in 1940 under the efficient and energetic command of Mr RH Williams the Chemist who was an ex-officer. There were some troops here for a while - billeted I believe in the Pavilion and later in the School Canteen in Town Mill Road - and a few ack-ack sites in the district around.

A comforts fund was established to send articles of clothing such as gloves, scarves, socks and balaclava helmets to the local serviemen.

Air raid warnings were frequent, owing to our proximity to Cardiff and the Bridgend arsenal. Very few bombs fell - and those on the fields around, except for one which hit a farmhouse at St MaryChurch, fortunately without loss of life.

I have forgotten the evacuess. A horde of schoolchildren and teachers descended upon us from the north coast of Kent, and were distributed around the town. In common with the rest of the country, many returned home after the blitz, but I believe a few remained until the end of the war.

Agriculture again played a prominent part in the war and, as during the first war, a lot of pasture land was turned into arable under the direction of the War Agricultural Executive Committee.

In common with other places, Cowbridge had a Savings Warship Week, 31st January to 7th February 1942, and adopted HMS Gardenia. There is a plaque in the Council Chamber to commemmorate this, presented by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. Cowbridge must also have done well for National Savings. There is a Wedgwood plaque in the Mayor's Parlour presented by the National Savings on their 50th Anniversary.

The war eventually came to an end but it was a long time before life became normal, because petrol, food and clothing rationing continued for some time.

However, a fair amount of building took place, mainly by the Local Authority. Private building was in the main on Broadway and Tyla Rhosyr, both in the RDC, for it must be remembered there really was little or no space in the Borough itself for new buildings.

Gradually newcomers came into the area and took part in various activities. The Amateur Dramatic Society was revived and cricket and rugby were soon being played with enthusiasm. Bus services were improved and one or two shops were renovated. Some employment was to be found at the RAF station St Athan, and at Llandow Trading Estate which was previously an RAF station. At a later date, employment was found at the new power station at Aberthaw.

But in the main one could say with some element of truth that again, Cowbridge had not changed a great deal. The town got a lot fuller on a Saturday morning, but in the 50s and early 60s it was as peaceful on a Saturday afternoon as previously, apart fom traffic. During the week and weekends the traffic passing through Cowbridge grew and grew until it became intolerable. It literally could take one five or ten minutes to cross the road. Heavy lorries greatly added to the problem and really were a menace to life and limb, the drivers with their heavy vehicles and loads obviously realising that they would come off best in the event of an accident.

But in all there were more changes in Cowbridge immediately following 1945 and later than there were following 1918.

Worship declined in this period. There were 4 places of worship here: Church of the Holy Cross, Limes or Zion (Presbyterian), Ramoth (Baptist), and the Wesleyan Chapel. Up to 1939, they were fairly well attended. And even after the war, they all kept going, and each had a Pastor or Vicar and Curate. The Wesleyan Methodists were the first to give up the struggle, due to poor attendances as much as anything. Some of the Methodists favoured the Presbyterians and worshipped at the Limes. Then after a while the ministers of the Limes and Ramoth got together and arranged to have monthly united services - one at Ramoth and the next at the Limes. But it soon became obvious owing to declining congregations that the churches should be united and it was only a question as to which building should be used.

After long discussions Ramoth was decided upon, and by the early 70s the Limes closed. The Church of the Holy Cross kept going and under difficult circumstances held its head above water. Some time in the 1950s Mr L.E.W. Williams of Verlands House (now demolished) where the Verlands estate is now, gave a piece of land to the Roman Catholics who built a church there.

And then they began to build! Estate after estate came into being - the first I believe the Llantwit Road Estate, followed (not necessarily in this order) by Broad Shoard, Druids Green (now extended further) Mill Park, Verlands and Brookfield park. A few non-estate houses were built, i.e. Aberthin Road and Llantwit Road. prices ranged from £3500 to £8/9000. Now the lower range fetch £18/19,000 and the upper £25/30,000. We must not forget building in the surrounding districts - Welsh St Donats, Trerhyngyll, Llandow, Colwinstone, Penllyne and St Hilary, for those places have some bearing on the economic, and to some extent the social, life of the town. Therefore Cowbridge is now inundated with a vast throng of newcomers, and on Saturdays it is heaving. In the main these people have integrated very well with various organisations, and indeed a list of officials of these bodies shows that the newcomers predominate, although it must be remembered that many of them, while not natives of Cowbridge, have been here 20/30 years or more. I divide the inhabitants into three groups - those who have been here all their lives (and their sons and daughters), those who have been here 20-30 years or more, and those who have come to live here in the last ten years.

One of the results of this explosion in population is the increase in the number of shops. In the past it was necessary to go to Cardiff or Bridgend to get certain articles but now one can get practically everything one needs without going out of Cowbridge. There are three supermarkets, three butchers, several drapers and dress shops, two restaurants (apart from those in hotels). many offices, including 5 estate agents, 4 banks and 8 public houses (including hotels). We would appear to be well-provided in respect of shops but as I write (1978) more are being erected.

A problem arising out of this is parking. There are 3 car parks and restricted parking in the street, but quite inadequate for the number of cars that pour into the town especially on Saturdays. And although a by-pass was built in 1964, an enormous amount of traffic passes through the town - this is aggravated around about 9 and 4 in term times by School buses, and now that Bridgend market has been transferred to Cowbridge there is utter chaos here on Tuesdays.

So can we sum up? I think we can safely say there have been tremendous changes since the early 1900s and that most of these changes have been more apparent in the last 10/15 years. A change from a village to a town - yes, in spite of what some of the older inhabitants would say - a village. A compact and elongated village it is true - not one's idea of a village as such - say St Hilary, Aberthin and so on, witness some Ordnance Survey maps which mark West Village, East village. Not so much a village in shape and form but in character. And although the structure of the town and district has altered and the population increased, the Town still retains some village characteristics - W.I., Amateur dramatics, cricket (Cowbridge XI enter the Haig Village Cricket competition). But I think the influence of the early century has completely disappeared. There are few now who remember the "old" times. And of course, owing to the evil machinations of some faceless morons in Whitehall, we have lost our Borough status. The old council did not have a lot of power, but it did care for local views as

far as possible. Now, in spite of the efforts of the Town Council, Cowbridge has become the Cinderella of the District Council and subject to the whims and condescensions of the vast impersonal organisation at Barry with which we have no ties or common interests. Whether changes through the years are good or bad, this take-over has been nothing less than disastrous.

One final thought. In the 1850s what was once the Great Western Railway sought powers to construct a line from Cardiff to Swansea via Cowbridge. The local landowners turned the plan down flat and absolutely refused to have anything to do with the scheme. and so the line was routed through Pontyclun. If it had come via Cowbridge what effect would it have had on the social and economic life here, and what would Cowbridge be like today? I wonder!

Some Memories of Cowbridge 1914 –1918 **by Councillor Selwyn Davies**
(written for the parish magazine in 1978)

I was actually living in Cardiff when the 1914-18 war broke out, but came to Cowbridge for school holidays. One of the first things that I remember is that a Volunteer Corps was formed and trained on the Cricket Field under the late Mr Vivian Gwyn, a partner of Messrs Gwyn and Gwyn, and ex-Sgt Major Brown, whose wife was for many years Town Hall caretaker. This force was eventually disbanded and the men had to enlist through official channels. Later on, enlisted troops trained in a field which is now the new Sheep Market. This adjoined the bottom wall of my grandmother's garden*, and I remember remonstrating violently at the Sgt Major for shouting and swearing at the soldiers.

I came to live here in 1916. Rationing came, and I believe the Food office was where the dry cleaner's is now**. A depot was opened at Pickard's shop (where the old R.D.C. offices were – now Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council***) for the reception of comforts for the troops, manned voluntarily by the ladies of the town.

The Stalling Down (north side) was ploughed up for potatoes, and the Welsh Allotment Association cultivated it. Incidentally, the memorial on the south side is to the men of the Glamorgan Yeomanry who trained there.

If I remember rightly, unlike the war of 1939-45, there was no black-out in force, and the services at the church and chapels continued normally. Revd Isaiah Roberts was Vicar, followed by Revd L Hopkin-James.

Every now and then, there would be entertainments at the Town Hall when gifts were presented to soldiers home on leave.

At the Grammar School, the staff were depleted, and consisted of the headmaster, Revd W.F.Evans; a master unfit for military service, and part-time, Revd D.N.Davies, curate, and Mr J.P.Marks, organist. I only recall one lady teacher, Miss Davies from Eglwys Brewis, who taught music.

Ash Hall, Ystradowen, and New Beaupre were turned into hospitals for wounded soldiers, and those who could walk came into town in blue uniforms and were entertained to tea by the townspeople.

The master who was unfit formed a small orchestra from the Grammar School boys, and we used to go to Ash Hall and Beaupre to play. Whether the patients improved or deteriorated after our efforts, I cannot say!

Cowbridge was a big centre for the collection of hay for the feeding of the cavalry, and many a truck was transported from Cowbridge station to military depots. This was very unpopular with local farmers.

You will, of course, be aware of the very close connection earlier in the century between the church and the Grammar School – also now non-existent. A point of interest is this – during my years at the school (1917 to 1921), it was compulsory for the scholars (day boys and boarders, churchmen or non-conformists) to attend a short morning service on Saints' Days, for it meant we then had a half day! I do not know when this practice ceased.

I think the first lady driver in the town was my second cousin, Mrs Helen Miles, wife of E.W.Miles, solicitor, Taynton House, whose practice was taken in turn by Mr Wayne Morgan (father of Mrs Dr Evan Thomas), Mr Gaskell, and now, of course, Mr Thornley Taylor.

I referred to rationing. I cannot remember the quantities of the various foods we were allowed, but do recollect that dripping was a valued substitute for butter or margarine. We picked nuts, blackberries, water cress etc, which made quite a contribution to the larder at various seasons.

For the first time, I think ladies appeared in banks as clerks, and there was, I believe, a lady postman.

We did have Belgian refugees. I do not remember how many, but some lived in a house (next door to Iolo Gallery****) where Mr and Mrs Davies live now.

One last thing, I think my only visit to the tower in Cowbridge church was when the bells rang out on November 11th 1918!!

* Preswylfa, Westgate ** 35 High St *** 79 Eastgate

**** Iolo Gallery adjoined Stafford House, Westgate

COWBRIDGE 1914 - 1918.

I found the article by Councillor Selwyn Davies in the April issue of the magazine to be of much interest.

There are very few of us left from those far-away days but perhaps a little further information might not be out of place.

Before the First World War there were 3 garages, 23 public houses, 2 breweries, 3 Doctors and one Blacksmith. One of the Doctors, Dr.Charles Booth Meller attended to his patients invariably dressed in a top hat and a long-tailed coat. He was very much loved and respected and a great philanthropist. The other two were Irish; Doctor Hastings Torney and Dr. Moyhihan.

Only two of the public houses were self-supporting - the Duke and the Bear. The landlords of all the others were fully employed in various capacities unconnected with the beer trade. In those days, the City Inn, the Bush and Cross Inn were all quiet country inns with rarely a customer during the daytime.

The two Breweries were situated in the High Street - one opposite the Duke and the other near the present Betting Shop at the Bridge (but the other side of the river (before it was altered).

I believe Colonel Homfray owned the first motor car in Cowbridge. I remember it well - a blue Daimler limousine - L.6. - the sixth car to be registered in Glamorgan. Other early motor car owners were the late Mr Ebsworth of Llandough Castle, the late Sir Thomas Mansel Franklin and Sir Francis Price Fothergill of Monsol Castle. The cars were Wolseley, Talbot and a white steam car. I do not know who the first lady motorist was but my late sister, Mrs Dena David, started driving in 1914. I had my first licence in 1911 (one could get a motor cycle licence at the age of 14 in those days). I used to borrow my brother's 1909 3½ h.p. Triumph.

The late Mr Arthur Evans opened the first garage, about 1909, at the Old Armbury, which stood at the site of the Spar Deep freezer shop. Mr W.E.Jones opened his garage opposite the Bear (now Eddershaws) and soon afterwards came Mr A.T.Mills, who built an imposing place where the Co-op now stands. The imitation motor car wheels are still to be seen at the window corners. There was much rivalry between the three. Motor cycle races were held starting at the Town Hall and finishing at the top of Primrose Hill. Stewards stopped all traffic at the cross roads where the traffic lights now operate!

Every March a great fair was held in Cowbridge and the main street was choked with carts which were parked on either side of the road. "Roundabouts" were sited on the Bear Field and it was a great time for the youngsters.

Compulsory attendance by Grammar School boys at all 11.00 a.m. Saints Days Services at the Church was the rule. We did not get a half day but if the Revd. Isaiah Roberts officiated we had to return to finish off the morning session; where the Curate was not in so much hurry and if the service finished after 11.30 a.m. we were allowed the rest of the morning off! The Vicar had a tiny 6 h.p. single cylinder De Dion car.

Before 1914 there were only 60 boys at the School. The hours were 6.55 - 8.00 a.m. (7.30 - 8.00 a.m. in the Winter); 8.55 - 12.00 (Noon); 1.55 to 4.00 p.m; 6.55 - 8.20 p.m. The Headmaster, the Rev.William Franklin Evans was greatly respected by the staff and pupils.

When the War broke out most of the cricket team joined up at once. Several joined the 5th Welch Regiment. Two of the Dunn brothers, Frank and Jack, were killed at Suvla Bay. They went there with my brother Bruce. A third brother, Tom, was drowned at Monmouth early in the War. That meant the loss of three brothers out of 5 whilst Mr and Mrs Dunn also died during the War. One brother - Guy - still lives.

(Concluded overleaf)