

# Welsh Tit-Bits.

Ticyon o Dypynau Cymreig.

GAN CADRAWB.

## A Celebrated Glamorganshire Estate Agent.

The name of John Franklen ought to be borne in mind by the farmers of Glamorgan on account of the good done by him to the farming industry in the Vale during the first half of the last century. Of what family he sprang it is not my intention to inquire, and whether he was of English parentage, as the name suggests, I am not able to determine. But my object is to try and point out the chance diversion of his course when going to Llanmihangel, and to relate some things which he did to benefit the county in his capacity as an estate agent.

About the middle of the last century he was a clerk in the employ of Sir John Morris, of Swansea, who was engaged in manufacture. He had several young gentlemen in his office, of whom Mr John Franklen was one. It shows the simplicity of the times when I say that these young men lived in Sir John Morris's house and ate at his table. However, before he was of full age, Franklen thought it prudent to leave Swansea, where I suppose his salary was not very large, and try his fortune in London.

Here again fortune did not smile upon him, and after wearily waiting he determined to go out to India, then the El Dorado to which every ambitious youth turned his thoughts. He had not only taken his passage, but his luggage was aboard ship, when a friend heard that Lady Edwin, of Llanmihangel, required an agent to manage her Glamorganshire property, and to reside on the estate. This friend had interest sufficient to secure the appointment, and being cognizant of Mr Franklen's movements, went down to the docks hoping to find him. He was not on board ship; but his friend waited not for his return, or to consult him at all; he ordered all his luggage to be taken on shore. In a very short time Mr Franklen was at Llanmihangel. He found on his arrival that the property had been very sadly neglected, and at once set to work to improve matters. He did what many people in those days of revived pseudo-federal tastes, hardly thanked him for. He somewhat modernised the old house at Llanmihangel, and the windows of the principal apartments he took out and replaced with larger ones. The roads also between the house and the town of Cowbridge, which were almost impassable, he put into repair. Soon his position in the county as

*see page 14*  
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the representative of Lady Edwin led other landlords to place the management of their estates in his hands, and in a few years the supervision of almost all the large estates in the Vale of Glamorgan was entrusted to his care. The home farm at Llanmihangel he had in his own hands, and this afforded him an opportunity of giving the neighbourhood an example of improved mode of farming in the culture of crops and the rearing of cattle.

"The Welsh farmers," he said, "were two hundred years behind those of England." Perhaps no person was better qualified than himself to express an opinion on the subject, for in the earlier years of his agency he drove to London every year, and closely observed all he saw. His annual journeys to London he turned to profit. He was a breeder of capital horses, and sent some up before him, and as soon as he arrived in town he advertised these his horses newly arrived from Wales. Welsh hacks were in demand, and he quickly found a market for them at a good price.

It was a century of movement; people were beginning to feel a desire for quicker and better means of communication with one another, and question of better roads in the county came to be considered. Mr Franklen undoubtedly had a hand in obtaining the Act of Parliament for the making and maintaining of the mail road between Swansea and Cardiff, for his name is associated with the making of the roads in the county through the last half of the 18th century. The mails were carried on horseback at this period, and a post-boy blowing his horn to announce his arrival, as described by a well-known English poet regarding the social life in England down to the early years of the present century.

The Glamorganshire Agricultural Society originated in Mr Franklen. It is, I think, the oldest society of its kind in Wales, and is in itself an evidence that Mr Franklen thought the Welsh behind the English, and that he did not mean them to remain so.

There is a fair also at Cowbridge which Mr Franklen was the means of establishing. Finding that the tenants upon the various estates under his management had no great fair in the neighbourhood between December and May, and that they were often short of money before May came around, he made arrangements that a fair should be held on Ladyday. It has often been one of the largest fairs of the year. Formerly it was known through the county as Franklen's Fair.

hangel was cleared out by the auctioneer. Much of the furniture in the house, perhaps the whole of it, had been there from the time of the Edwins, and there was a great number of pictures; and none were saved, as I have been informed, but the rare tapestry which hung on the walls of two of the rooms when I had the pleasure of visiting the place, and the picture in the large hall. There is a mythical story as to this picture—that it is the picture of the heiress who brought the estate into the family, and must not be taken out of the house, or the title of the estate will be forfeited. It is also said that amongst the pictures sold were several choice examples of Sir Peter Lely, and so low was the appreciation of art in the neighbourhood at the time that they were knocked down at 2s 6d each.

Wigs were worn in Mr Franklen's time. There were two kept, one to be in use while the other was being dressed. I will conclude with the following anecdote about Mr Franklen and one of the tenants of an estate whose management Mr Franklen was relinquishing. The farmer was in great sorrow at the change, for times were bad—the man had a large family, and Mr Franklen had been indulgent to him. The new agent was supposed to be a hard-hearted man, who wanted the rent and nothing but the rent the day it was due. The farmer was regretting the change to the retiring agent, and wondering how he should get on with the new one. Mr Franklen said, "I hear that Mr A. is a proud man, and likes to be bowed to a great deal. Take off your hat to him and bow, where there is interest." "I would take off my hat to a gate-post," said the farmer, "if it did me any good."



"Old Chairs to mend"  
 & "Wheatley," "Itinerant Trade,"

JESTRE AB GWYBAN.—Gwilym ab R. Lloyd, ma. with Margaret, the da. of John ab Lewis ab Morgan Vaughan, ab Morgan Caradock ab Jestyn, as before. She beareth G. S. Chepheraut o. et A.

LENON AB COLLWYN.—This Gwilym ab Rees Lloyd and Margaret had issue—Lln., and others. A daughter of theirs ma. with Roger ab Thomas ab David, of whose Doctor Aubrey is descended by the mother's side. Lln. ab Gwilym ma. with Joan, the da. of Rees ab Jenkins ab R. of Glynneth, Esquire, sister of John Price, the father of famous Rees ab John, of Glynneth. She beareth S. a Chepheraut A. 3 flower de luce Lln. and Joan had issue—Glin. Gwynne, and others. This Jenkins was father of Lewis Gwyne, of Bishop's Castle, Esq., Lln. and Joan had also issue, Margaret, the last wife of Morgan David Gam, mother to Lln. Vychan ab Morgan, Esq., father to Jno. the father of John Games, Esq., father of Thomas Games, of Aberbran, Esq., late deceased.

AWBREY.—Gwilym Gwyn, Esq., and father to Rees ab Gwilym, ma. with Stryll, the da. of Jenkin Awbrey, and had issue by her John Vaughan Lln. and others. John Vaughan was father to Hopkin, also to Rees, and William, father to the Right Wor. Sir David Williams, Knight, one of the Justices of the King's Bench or Common Pleas, and of the assize in divers shires, now living (1607.)

Lln. ab Gwilym Gwyn was father to Gwilym the father of Lln. ab Gwilym of Carreg Yawr, now living, and his sister — ma. with Howell Gwyn Thomas ab Rytherch, of Treccastell, in Llywel, Esq., and Elenor ma. with the Right Worshipful Sir Jno. Games, of Newton, Knight, now living, sene and heir to Edward Games, Esq., the son of Jno., the son of Morgan, the son of Jevan, the son of Morgan, the son of Sir David Gam, Knight.

MOREIDDIG.—Rees ab Gwilym Gwyn ma. with Gwenllian, da. of Howell, ab Maddoc, ab Jevan, Vychan, ab Jevan, ab Gwilym ab Owen, ab Cynorwys, ab Lln., ab Moreiddig, as before. She beareth Moreiddig's coat.

This Rees and Gwenllian had issue Sir John Price, Knight, and others. The said Sir John Price, of Hereford, Knight, ma. with Joan, the da. of John Williams, whose pedigree followeth in this present book, and they had issue.

Gregorie Price, of Hereford, Esq., ma. with Marie, the da. of Humphrey, Esq., Richard Price, of Brecon, Esq., ma. with Eliza, the da. of — Weightmane, Esq., John Price, who ma. with Eliza, the da. of John Games, of Aberbran, Esq.

Bartholomewe Price, gent., Wm. Price, gent., Elenor Price ma. with Thomas Wallwyne, gent., Joan Price, ma. with Thomas Williams, of Ystradyfn, Esq., Marie Price ma. with Thomas Morgan, of Llanveire-gilroed, Esq.

Ursula Price ma. with John Wynter, of Brecon, gens