

Friends in Carmarthenshire¹

JN the *Inventory* for this, the largest, county in Wales, just issued by the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire, are the following references to Friends' Meeting Houses and Burial Grounds, visited and reported upon by its Inspecting Officer, George Eyre Evans.

FRIENDS' BURIAL GROUND, parish of Llandingat Within. (6in. Ord. Surv. sheet, Carm. 18 S.W.; lat. 51° 59' 39"; long. 3° 48' 10".)

A small site two perches in extent, now covered by railway premises, was formerly known as "Cae Quakers." The ground was acquired in 1689 by the Society of Friends for a Burial Ground, and interments continued to be made in it until the first few years of the nineteenth century. The space was enclosed by walls, and entered by an oaken door on which was the date 1752. The Friends decreased in numbers and influence, and the little burial place was neglected. In 1864 it was acquired for railway purposes, and all recollection of it has faded away save from the memories of a few of the older inhabitants.—Visited 7th April, 1913.²

Transactions Carm. Antiquarian Society, iv. 47 et seq.

MADAM BEVAN'S HOUSE, Laugharne Township. (6in. Ord. Surv. sheet, Carm. 45 S.W.)

The foundress of the system of circulating schools in Wales resided for many years in Laugharne, in a house that stood midway between the Town Hall and Cliff Chapel, and that was pulled down in the year 1859. A visit to this house in 1753 is recorded in a MS. "Account

¹ For "Friends in Montgomeryshire," see vol. xi. no. 3, p. 106; in Radnorshire, vol. xi. no. 4, p. 190; in Denbighshire, vol. xii. no. 1, p. 28.

² The "Llandovery" of early Friends, the town being in the parish of Llandingat Within. For further particulars see *Cardiganshire, Its Antiquities*, 1903, p. 192. The Yearly Meeting was held here in 1709. Richard Headington of Oddington, near Stow-on-the-Wold, who died whilst on a tour to the "Churches of Christ in Wales," was buried here in 1717, on the 25th of Tenth Month, aged 67 years.

of a Journey through Wales," written by John Player, a Quaker,³ and here, in 1761, died the Rev. Griffith Jones, rector of Llanddowror, Madam Bevan's coadjutor in her philanthropic labours.

QUAKERS' BURIAL GROUND, Laugharne Township. (6in. Ord. Surv. sheet, Carm. 45 S.W. ; lat. 51° 46' 35" ; long. 4° 27' 58".)

On the left of the Laugharne-St. Clear's high road, opposite to Ants' Hill House, is a narrow lane, at the further end of which is the site of a Burial Ground of the Society of Friends. It was formerly known as "the Fold, part of the fields called Tucking Mill Park," and as such was purchased in 1726 by Mary Perrot of Laugharne—"to dig graves or pits and to bury therein the descendants of Mary Perrot, and all or any of the people called Quakers." It was used for burials until 1827, when the occupier of the surrounding meadow ploughed it up (*Trans. Carm. Antq. Socy.* iv. 27, 65). The fence which had enclosed it has long since disappeared and the Burial Ground (measuring 75 feet by 30 feet) has been thrown into the field of which it formed part ; but the outline of the enclosure is distinctly traceable. The spot is marked by fine sycamore trees, and is yet known as "The Quakers' Yard."

In the MS. Visitation of 1710 by Archdeacon Tenison is the entry : "In this parish are two meetings, one of

³ Extract from said MS.—"This day, 29th of 11th mo, we [*i.e.*, John Player and William Brown]—set forward for Laugharne from Jamestown, with our Harford hireling, where we got about the 2nd hour afternoon, and was there met by John Allen of Carmarthen. We got a meeting here in the Meeting-house in the evening, but it being very cold there was but few people at it, there being but one in unity with Friends in the town, who was ill : however it pleased the great Lord to Order something for them by way of Invitation—they behaved civil. The morrow being advised that there was a woman of Some Quality in this town, who was much cited up for her Piety and Charitable acts to the poor, and for being a Zealous Christian, my companion found freedom in his mind to see her, and spend some time in religious conversation. Accordingly John Allen went to know if it might be agreeable to see her, but she being engaged in morning prayer with her family, could not speak to her then : but in a little time after we got some breakfast at our inn, and saw the sick friend, and went and saw her—who received us with a great deal of fashionable freedom. She was full of Brain knowledge, being too wise to learn of Christ, and a thorough bigot to the priests, tho' at our parting she said she was much obliged for the visit, and esteemed it a favour."—*Trans. Carm. Antq. Socy.*, iv. 28.

the Quakers, and one of the Presbyterians. They are both of long standing. The Quakers have continued ever since the reign of K. Charles II., and the Presbyterians were here in K. James' reign." The Meeting House of the Friends was built in 1742 on a site "late in the possession of Mary Perrot." It was subsequently used as a dwelling house, and eventually razed. Its quaint interior was sketched in the year 1840, and a copy of the sketch by Mr. Weight Matthews is published in the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society's *Encilion*, No. II, 1913.⁴

It is probably not generally known that the subject of Friends in Carmarthenshire—at Carmarthen, Laugharne, Llandeilo fawr (and Brynman Burial Ground), Llandovery Burial Ground, Llandebie, and Llansadwrn—with *personalizæ* of many little known Welsh Friends was exhaustively dealt with by the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society in its *Transactions* for the years 1908-1909, vol. 4. The particulars were mainly gleaned from the valuable Minute Books and other MSS. then stored in the Neath Meeting House, in the custody of F. William Gibbins, a member of the Antiquarian Society. These documents extended from 1700 to mid nineteenth century, and had not, so far as is known, been previously and systematically "worked." A print of every chapter was deposited in **D**.

GEO. EYRE EVANS.

+ References to Laugharne occur so early as the year 1700 in the Minutes of Pembroke Monthly Meeting, when at Q.M. held at Redstone on the 4th of Ninth Month, "it was concluded that the next Q.M. be held at Laugharne the next fourth day after the General Meeting at Redstone on the 12th of next month." Thomas Connock and James and Michael Sankett are names of resident Friends in 1747.—*Trans. Carm. Antq. Socy.*, iv. 28.

Wherever priesthood was established by law, reformation was punished as sedition.

GEORGE HARRISON, *Adversaria*, 1818, p. 252, *ex* Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, 1792.

He that ceases to be useful to others becomes a burden to himself.

Shepherd of the Pyrenees, quoted in Harrison's *Adversaria*, 1818, p. 1.