

TANYFRON VILLA 1870 -1955



Dr John Davies
1849/50-30/9/1915 (65yrs)



Mrs Elizabeth Alban Davies
1854-27/6/1918 (64yrs)

Both John and Elizabeth were born in the early 1850's and both came from farming families in the area of Llanbadarn Trefeglwys. Educated in a country school John Davies won a scholarship to Westminster Medical School in 1872 and took up an apprenticeship with an uncle in London. In 1872 he was a house physician, 1874 a house surgeon and in 1875 he decided to become a General Practitioner. He and Elizabeth married in their early twenties Tanyfron was to be their home circa 1876. The practice covered a wide area and in early days he travelled on horseback or horse and carriage and on occasions one of the children would accompany him. Mileage covered could be up to 25 miles a day.

John and Elizabeth had the following children

Mary Jane b.1875 (May)	Alban Aeron b. 1883	Gwilym Atherstone b. 1892
Annie Maria b. 1876	Issac Milton b. 1884	Ernest Llewelyn b. 1894
John Alban b. 1877 (Jack)	Evan Edgar b. 1885	Bessie Myfanwy b. 1897
Thomas b. 1879	Daniel Octavius b. 1887 (Oci)	Mabel Aeronwy b. 1898
David Morgan b. 1880	Albert Gordon b. 1889	
Morgan Evans b. 1882	Alice Margaret b.1891	

THE HOME

The Household had two maids and a manservant who usually came from Shropshire, whose main job was to look after the horses. If required the boys would be involved in digging in the garden or cleaning the stables, sometimes doing the work before going to school. The children became adept at packaging the medicines made up by their father. John Davies was very active in the church and a prominent member of the Church governing body. The children were very regular church attendees. Octavius wrote that John Davies was very strict father and *'it needed mother's more gentle ways to counteract it'*.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Horse riding was one of the pastimes that the boys enjoyed and they would sometimes be involved with fox hunting rides. Their physical fitness was encouraged by their father who set up horizontal bars in the garden. The brothers and sisters would play tennis and hockey, one brother was to play hockey for Wales and two others had trials. The local Bank Manager Mr Munro Hughes taught the boys wood carving and boxing whilst he also took part in Fox Hunting.

During the summer holidays the children would spend part their time with relatives on their farms and would take part in the harvests

1908



Back : OCI, ALBERT, (COUSIN JACK), EVAN.
Middle: TOM, DAVID, JACK, AERON, MILTON .
Front: ERNEST, GWILYM

On Boxing Day 1908 Tanyfron X1 played against Aberaeron town on the Square field in Aberaeron. Cousin Jack played instead of Morgan who was indisposed. The first two matches resulted in a draw and then a win of 1-0 for Tanyfron X1. The proceeds of the game were given to Dr. Barnados. It was described by the Cambrian News and the Welsh Farmers Gazette as an 'unparalleled Football match'

(Cousin Jack eventually became a teacher and lived in Leatherhead, England)

Oci went on to play for Wales in the 1910/11 season. Albert and Aeron played in the Welsh hockey trials and Aeron coached the Ladies International Hockey Team.

LADIES OF TANYFRON



Back: Alice
Middle: Annie, Mary, Mrs E Davies
May's Daughters: Ethel & Joan



Mabel and Bessie

Mary (May) and **Annie** were the eldest girls educated at a private school in Aberaeron by Mrs T.Z. Jones. Both then went to private school in Chester. In 1901 May married a Dr Jack Rees who was in a practice in Newport Pembrokeshire. They lived in Cambria Terrace Newport, and had two daughters, Ethel was born in 1902 and Joan in 1906..

Annie spent nearly all her life in the family home. Where she helped her mother look after the younger children. She was an organist and a Sunday School Teacher. In 1945 Annie went to live in Brynawel with her sister **Bessie** and husband Byron Lloyd until her death in 1953.

Alice Margaret went to a private school on the Isle of White. She was later ill for some years and died of consumption on 18th of November 1921. She is interred in Henfynyw with her parents and her sister Annie who died on 9/03/1953 aged 76.

Bessie and Mabel. After attending the Aberaeron School they both went to Domestic Science College in Gloucester. Bessie took up a teaching post in Exeter Episcopal School and later married Byron Lloyd a Dental Surgeon based in Aberaeron. Bessie died 27/1/1987 aged 89

Mabel returned to Tanyfron and assisted David with his dispensing work. Mabel then married Jack Davies a curate in Lampeter. Jack eventually became the Archdeacon of Meirioneth but Jack died very suddenly at the age of 61. Mabel and their son David was given a home by Bessie and Byron. Their only child David Davies won a scholarship to Magdalen College before becoming a Barrister and Judge. Mabel eventually went to live in Newport with Milton for 13 years before her death in 1968 aged 70.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR



Standing: L-R: Aeron, Oci, Edgar. **Seated:** Jack, Alice, David, Annie. **Front:** Mabel
Probably taken after their mother's death in 1917 as her sons are wearing black armbands



Octavius, Ernest, Albert
Seated Jack



Albert & Octavius's Medals & Ribbons

Lieut. Colonel Jack joined the RAMC and was in charge of a hospital in Italy

Captain Aeron Davies was an army chaplain in France and was Mentioned in Dispatches. He stayed on with the occupying forces at the end of the war

Captain Ernest Davies served in France and later in India with the Gurkha Regiment

Tom Davies served as a Doctor for the Yorkshire Regiment

Edgar Davies was an Army Chaplain at the French Front

Gwilym Davies joined the Merchant Navy during W.W.1

Lieut. Daniel Octavius Davies -5th Battalion. Royal Welsh Fusiliers: acted as Hawke Battalion Adjutant in September 1918 and was awarded the M.C. on 3rd Sept. 1918 for leading his battalion forward under fire. He was wounded in the leg near Cambrai and from the base he was sent to the Royal Free Hospital, London early in October.

Lieut. Albert G Davies was awarded the Military Cross. He was killed in the Battle of Messines on Messines Ridge on the **1st August 1917**

Albert: Citation-London Gazette 25th August 1917

"For conspicuous, gallantry and devotion to duty. During an attack in complete darkness he pushed through our own barrage to the enemy line in order to restore the direction which his platoon had lost, afterwards leading them to their objective. He displayed magnificent gallantry throughout."

Octavius: Citation-London Gazette 11th January 1919

"For conspicuous gallantry, while acting adjutant during an attack. Under intense enemy fire of all kinds he was instrumental in getting the battalion forward, and when heavy casualties were being inflicted after the objective was reached, he led on the line to a trench system some 300 yards ahead. Later, he carried out dangerous reconnaissance's and brought back valuable reports. Throughout he showed fine courage and leadership".

Lieutenant Octavius Davies's notes

"From the end of August and during operations for the first two weeks in September Lt. Commander Lockwood was in command of Hawke Battalion and I was acting Adjutant as Lieut. Blackmore was away on leave. We slept that night (2nd Sept.) in dug-outs in a high bank flanking a main road about 4-600 yards from the Hindenburg support line. In the dark we advanced to within about 300 yards of the Germans who opened heavy fire so that we had to retire in the dark to these dug - outs and the following morning the 3rd September we were ordered to advance. We did so without artillery support, and not in touch with any battalion on our right or left. We advanced in line towards the Hindenburg support line but the "left" off our line was definitely held up by machine gun fire. Things looked very bad for us, but Sub. Lieut. Harris (awarded the D.S.O.) moved his company skilfully on the right of our line to slightly elevated ground and brought enfilade fire to bear on the Bosche line. This considerably eased matters and we eventually captured the trench with many prisoners. I was now in command of the Battalion while Lt. Commander Lockwood went forward to a pre- arranged point. Later I received orders to bring the battalion forward to a spot indicated on the map where Lt. Commander Lockwood would again take charge of the battalion. This I did without encountering opposition to a position about 3-500 yards in advance of the trench we had taken that day.

An enemy airplane circled over us fairly low but out of reach of rifle fire. For some reason she did not fire at us as she could have done with bad results for us. We were now in touch with the Drake and Hood Battalion. We then endeavoured to consolidate (after reorganizing with the Hood)) on the southern outskirts of Inchy. We endeavoured to consolidate our hold on Inchy and to secure a bridgehead across the Canal du Nord. The bridgehead was rushed by Sub Lieut. Harris of the Hawke Battalion at 7a.m. on 4th Sept. but could not be held."

6th January 1926

Mabel's Wedding to Rev. John (Jack) Rhys Davies



Back Row: Aeron, Edgar, Octavius (Oci), Milton, Ernest, Morgan, Tom
Front Row: Bessie, Mabel, John (Jack), David, Annie, Mary (May)

(Alice died in 18/11/21., Gwilym is not present in this photograph – could he have been away on sea at this time? Albert had killed in Battle of Messines in 1917)

ALBERT AND GWILYM



Albert worked in the National Provincial Banks becoming a clerk at the Head office in London. He joined the Inns of Court O.T.C. on 26th November 1915. He became a 2nd Lieutenant of the 5th Regiment of the Royal Fusiliers. He was awarded the Military Cross during the Battle of Messines and died on Messines Ridge on August 2nd 1917. He is buried at Bailleul Community Cemetery Extension (Nord) Plot 3. Row e. Grave 265.



Gwilym Atherstone the youngest brother went to sea, and when he joined the Merchant Navy he was in sailing ships. During the First World War he was torpedoed on two or three occasions. After he retired from the sea he managed a Poultry Farm at Valrona, Felinfach a property which had been owned by his brother David.

THE CLERGYMEN FROM TANYFRON



Morgan won a scholarship to Llandoverly College and Jesus College Oxford graduating with Honours. He played full back for the University. He was vicar of Abergavenny for over 40 years and was made a Canon. He married Celia late in life.



Aeron trained at St David's College Lampeter and later went to Wycliffe Hall in Oxford. During the 1st World War Aeron was an Army chaplain and was mentioned in dispatches. In 1920 Aeron married Ruth Walton whom he had met in France. He became vicar of All Saints in Penarth and had two children with Ruth, Honor and Douglas. However the war had affected Aeron's health and he died in 1936 when Honor was about 8 yrs. Later she married a doctor who became Vice Dean of King's Hospital.



Edgar also trained at St. David's Lampeter and afterwards went to Wadham college Oxford. He was an Army Chaplain on the French Front. He married Dorothy Jebb and their only child John Atcherley later became a Chaplain in the Royal Navy. Edgar was vicar of Combe Hay, Somerset when he died.



Octavius (Oci) the eighth son was a bank clerk in civilian life but a few years after the war decided to become a clergyman. He went to Lampeter College and was a curate in North Wales for 2 and a half years. He decided to become a Catholic but the seven years training required in those days became too much. Oci then got a job as an accountant in Stafford living in digs and doing a lot of good work with prisoners. He never married and died at 95 years in Aberystwyth.

THE DOCTORS FROM TANYFRON



John Alban (Jack) took his medical course in Owen's College Manchester. He settled in practice in Towyn and carried on there for about 45 years. He succeeded in having Towyn Cottage Hospital built, he was a magistrate and active in the social affairs of the town, He married a Kathy Dickson and their two sons Alban & Denys in the late 1960s early 70's were Executives in Tea Companies in Kenya.



Tom went into teaching and became a Science Master for a few years before completing his Medical training in UCH London. During the war he served in France as a doctor to a battalion in the Yorkshire regiment. He was in practice for 40 years in North Road Cardiff and was assisted in his day to day work by his wife Connie. He obtained an O.B.E and lived to the age of 95.



David Morgan joined his father in his practice circa 1906 after graduating from Charing Cross Hospital. He could have become a surgeon but returned home and to take over the practice when his father died in 1915. David became one of the leading citizens of Aberaeron. He was Chairman of the County School 1928-1939, Chairman of the Memorial Hall Committee. When the Ministry of Health decided to close the Poor Law Institution he took part in persuading the authorities to convert it to a Cottage Hospital. He was elected member of the County Council in 1919 and was Chairman in 1933-34. He died on the 11th of November 1939 aged 59.



Milton completed his medical course in Charing Cross Hospital followed by a few years at Cardiff Medical School. He then went to Newport Pems to assist his brother in law Dr Rees and on his death in 1918 Milton took over his practice and continued in Newport for 40 years. His obituary states that *'he rendered excellent service at Cardigan Hospital where he performed many operations'* also *'he had been a rector's warden for 30 years'* His eldest sister May and her children Ethel and Joan lived with him after the death of Dr Rees. May assisted Milton with the administrative side of the practice



Ernest Llewelyn He was in the army for some time after the war got engaged in India to Georgette, who was half French & considered unsuitable by his brother David! Ernest studied medicine in UCH London and joined David in the practice in 1927 until David's death in 1939. He had several other romances before eventually marrying Nancy Howell, also a doctor, in 1943. They practiced together at Tanyfron until their retirement .Ernest served as M.O.H of the Urban District council and during the 2nd World War was County Director of the Red Cross. In the early 50's Ernest and Nancy went to live in a house built for them called Greenacres in South Rd. Aberaeron

Dr Ernest Davies was to leave Tanyfron in the very capable hands of **Dr Hugh Herbert and his wife Mrs Edith May Herbert** who joined the practice in 1954 and lived in Tanyfron from **1955** to be later followed by their daughter **Dr Helen Herbert in 1984**. This would be another family with a General Practice at **Tanyfron** and who also involved themselves with the local chapel and local community. However that is Another Story to be told.

Information on the **Davies Family** of Tanyfron Villa was obtained from:

Reminiscences written by **Daniel Octavius Davies**, in the 1970's for his niece Honor.

Reminiscences were written in the 1980's by **Elizabeth Joan Spillane** for her grandchildren. She was Mary Jane Davies's second daughter.

Debrett's Ancestry Research on Tanyfron (Obtained by Dr Hugh Herbert in 1991).

With gratitude to **Dr Helen Herbert** for loaning all the information she has collected on the John Davies family of Tanyfron. Additionally I wish to thank **Judge David Davies** (Mabel's Son) for allowing me to copy the family photographs.

Elinor Gwilym
2024