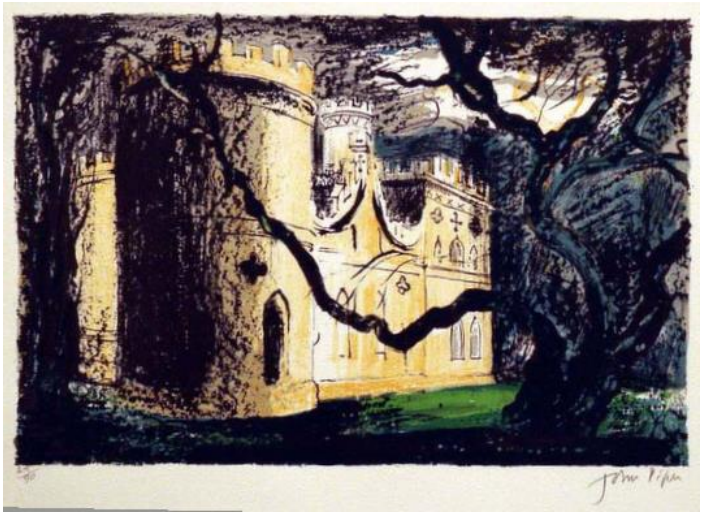
The Landmark Trust

CLYTHA CASTLE

History Album



Written by Julia Abel Smith
with help from Charlotte Haslam and Clayre Percy

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BASIC DETAILS:

Listed:	**Grade I**
Built:	**1790-93 for William Jones**
Architect:	**John Davenport**
Foreman:	**James Yates**
Square tower enlarged mid-19th cent.	
Castle abandoned:	**1948**
Leased by Landmark Trust:	**1973**
Restoration Architect:	**Alan Miles**
Restoration Builders:	**Chappell and Sabin** **W. Branch of Abersychan**
Work completed:	**1974**

Further repairs:	**1992-3**
Architect:	**Andrew Thomas**
Builders:	**Peter Buchanan & Partners**

Further repairs and reorganisation of the ground floor accommodation: 2007

Architect:	**Andrew Thomas**
Contractors:	**I. J. Preece & Son Ltd of Madley, Hereford**

Repairs grant aided by CADW

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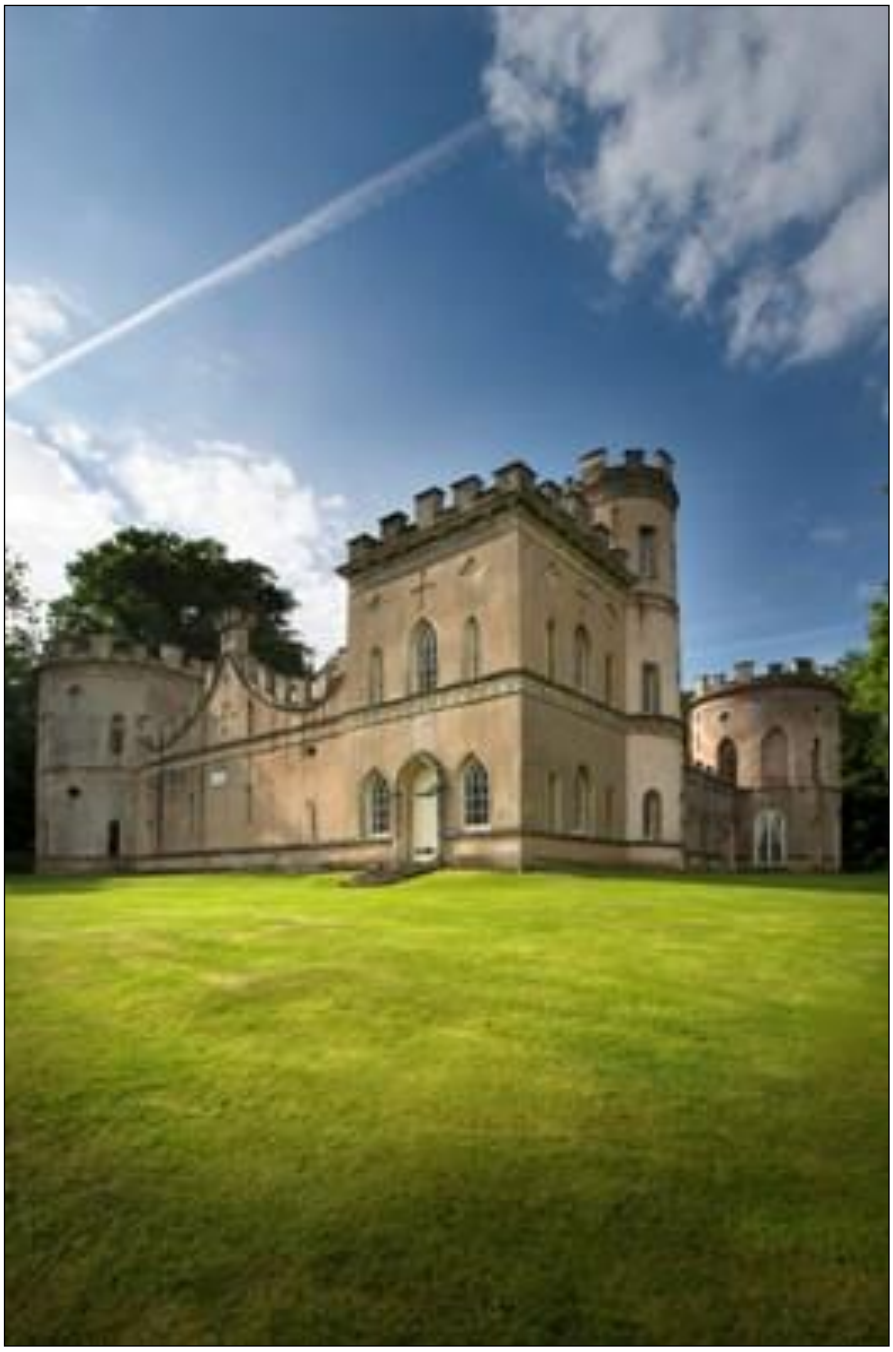


Summary

After the death of his wife in 1787, William Jones consoled himself by creating an ideal landscape at Clytha, the estate he had bought some years earlier near his family home at Llanarth. The Castle was the most important new addition, begun in 1790 and completed two years later. As the tablet on its front clearly states, it was built as a memorial to a beloved spouse and a happy marriage. It was also intended as an ornament to be seen from his house, and a place from which to enjoy spectacular views over the surrounding countryside.

To help him realise his plans, William Jones commissioned a garden designer and architect from Shropshire, called John Davenport. Davenport had worked at several houses in Gloucestershire, notably at Daylesford, where he built an Orangery for Warren Hastings which has a similar Gothic character to Clytha Castle. The Castle is a far more imaginative and accomplished building, however, and it may be that William Jones himself helped with its design.

William Jones was very closely involved in all the building works on his estate and being a methodical person kept detailed accounts, in his own hand, of everything that went on. The entries for the castle start early in 1790, with payments for stone hauled up the hill in waggons. The rough stone for the walls came from nearby, but Bath stone for the parapets had to be shipped across the Bristol Channel, and then up the Usk to Newbridge, from where it was transported overland. As work progressed, entries appear for scaffolding, and then in June for timber and slates. By April, 1791, plasterers were at work as well as carpenters and a specialist joiner, perhaps making Gothic windows and doors. Quantities of lime continued to arrive, and lead for gutters.

In 1791, William Jones started to plan the decoration of what he referred to as the 'lodging rooms', the two large rooms in the main tower. There are payments for silk and French chintz, for paintings for the chimney pieces and finally for 'Gothic style furniture' from Mayhew and Ince of London. In 1792 came the finishing touches: painting and paper hanging, and fitting stair rods. The final bill for the work was £3,823 1 6s 9d.

Mr Jones died in 1805 and left the Clytha estate to his great-nephew, another William Jones. William Jones the younger demolished old Clytha House and built the present Greek Revival house, designed by Edward Haycock and completed about 1828. In 1862 William Jones assumed - or resumed - the name of Herbert, from which ancient family the Joneses of Llanarth and Clytha descended. He died in 1885 leaving the estate to his son, Reginald. Reginald had no son but his second daughter, Gladys Herbert, lived at Clytha Park until she passed the house to the Welsh Office about 1950.

In its original use, Clytha Castle provided a destination for walks and for picnic parties. William Jones may also have slept here sometimes. In the 19th century, extra rooms were added to the main tower, to make a very unusual estate cottage. Whoever lived here had also to act as caretaker for the main rooms. From 1936 until 1947 the gamekeeper, Mr Price, and his family were the tenants. His daughter, Mrs

Olwen Smith, was for many years the Landmark's Housekeeper. She described for us the Castle as she knew it. Even then, the sitting room was kept for Miss Herbert's private use, and she often used to spend an hour or two there during her walks around the estate. The estate is now owned by the National Trust, which leased the Castle in 1973 to the Landmark Trust.

Restoration of Clytha Castle

When the Landmark Trust took on Clytha Castle it had been empty since 1948. Extensive repairs were needed inside and out, but no radical changes were made. Work started in 1973 under the architect Alan Miles of Newport. The restoration was completed, and the castle received its first visitors, in 1974. Most of the accommodation is in the central, square tower. The southern round tower, at the back, provides an extra bedroom. The passage leading to it, hidden behind the screen wall, already existed. The other tower has been left empty.

In the south tower the wash house inside it was taken down, and a new roof made at ceiling height. The large windows were unblocked and new Gothic casements fitted, matching one that had survived in an upper window. The existing flagstones on the floor were relaid on a new hard base. The roof of the long passage was renewed, in slate as before. An outside door at its northern end was blocked up, the other doors repaired and the windows renewed. Inside, a new vaulted ceiling was made, and the flagstones relaid, as in the bedroom.

The lower section of the main tower was also reroofed, with asphalt instead of corrugated iron, and a new parapet all at one level where before it had stepped up and down. The main tower itself was given a new flat roof. The walls were thoroughly repaired before being rendered as they had been originally. A pink Herefordshire sand was used to achieve the right warm colour. All the coping stones on the parapets were checked and renewed or rebedded where necessary, along with the cornices and string courses.

On the main north elevation, the front door and the windows were repaired, rather than renewed, as were those on the west. Many of the windows in the stair turret and at the back of the building were renewed, however, the original ones having been replaced over time in a variety of different designs.

Inside the Castle decayed floors were renewed. The boards in the two main rooms are oak, with pine in the other rooms. The rest of the joinery - doors, dado rails, shutters and window surrounds - only needed minor repair and repainting. To link the sitting room to the dining room, a new door was made, copying the Georgian ones. In the main bedroom, the plaster frieze had been cut away. A new frieze, therefore, was made, copying that in the sitting room. Both rooms are painted to match the old colours.

Running water and electricity were laid on for the first time, and a new bathroom and lavatory provided. In the kitchen a stair leading to a cellar was removed and the

opening floored over, with a new trap for access. New kitchen units and a new dresser were then fitted, to complete the restoration.

Best practice as then identified was followed in 1974, but a number of problems eventually arose, making the castle difficult to maintain. Its exposed position means that water still gets into the walls, causing staining and invisible damage. Unfortunately the benefits of using lime, rather than cement, in mortars and renders had not been fully realised in the 1970s. Cement render on the Castle traps the wet and causes further problems, whereas lime, by drawing moisture out of the walls and allowing it to evaporate, does not.

Little by little, this problem is being dealt with. In 1992-3 the stair turret was stripped and re-rendered in a lime and sand mix. Further repairs have been carried out to parapets and cornices, allowing them to shed rain more effectively. The remaining cement render on the back of the building was painted with Keim, a porous mineral paint. William Jones and his architect did not give the same attention to the back of the castle as they did to its more visible front. As a result it had always been a little forbidding, but we hope it is now less so.

In 2007, another major maintenance and refurbishment campaign was undertaken, that this time also reorganised the 1974 layout of accommodation. The ground floor bedroom in the round tower (up to then a double bedroom) was made into a kitchen in which you can also eat and spend time. The former kitchen (by now rather small and poorly laid out by today's standards) became an additional, en suite bathroom for a replacement double bedroom, created out of what was formerly the dining room. This was a reorganisation we had had in mind for several years, both to allow the building to be lived in to best effect and to meet the rising expectations of our visitors. Further repairs were also carried out to decaying stonework and joinery, with further re-rendering in hydraulic lime, more or less completing the replacement of the old cement in the areas that need it. The repairs were assisted by generous grant aid from CADW to supplement our own maintenance and refurbishment budget generated from letting income.

Elizabeth Jones, nee Morgan, who died in 1787 and in whose memory Clytha Castle was undertaken by William Jones 'for the purpose of relieving a mind afflicted by the loss of a most excellent wife'.

From Rev William Coxe A Historical Tour through Monmouthshire (1801)

Introduction

After the death of his wife in January, 1787, William Jones moved himself back to Wales from London. He consoled himself during his bereavement by creating his own personal Elysium at Clytha, the estate he had bought some years earlier near his family home at Llanarth. The Castle formed the most important new feature, begun in 1790 and completed two years later. It was a memorial to a beloved spouse and a happy marriage, but was also intended as an ornament to be seen from his house, and a place from which to enjoy the spectacular views.

Mr Jones died in 1805 and left the Clytha estate to his great-nephew, another William Jones. William Jones the younger demolished old Clytha House and built the present Greek Revival house, designed by Edward Haycock and completed about 1828. In 1862 William Jones assumed - or resumed - the name of Herbert, from which family the Jones of Llanarth and Clytha descended. He died in 1885 leaving the estate to his son, Reginald. Reginald had no son but his second daughter, Gwladys Herbert, lived at Clytha until she passed the house to the Welsh Office about 1950. The estate is now owned by the National Trust, from which the Landmark Trust acquired a long lease on the Castle in 1973.

In the original building accounts for the Castle, Lodging Rooms are mentioned, so it seems likely that William Jones used to stay here for short periods. It would also have provided a destination for walks and for picnic parties, as well as a retreat. At some point in the 19th century, extra rooms were added to the main tower: the present kitchen and dining rooms, and the bedroom and bathroom above.

This was probably done to make the Castle habitable by an estate employee, who would also have acted as caretaker for the main rooms. From 1936 until 1947 the gamekeeper, Mr Price, and his family lived here. By the greatest good fortune his daughter, Mrs Smith, was for many years our Housekeeper. She described for us the Castle as she knew it, and what it was like to live in what must have been one of Wales's most unusual estate cottages. Even then, the sitting room was kept for Miss Herbert's private use, and she often used to spend an hour or two there. .When the

Landmark Trust took on the Castle it had been empty since 1948. Extensive repairs were needed inside and out, but no radical changes were made (apart from the introduction of such modern necessities as running water and electricity), to prepare the building for its new inhabitants.

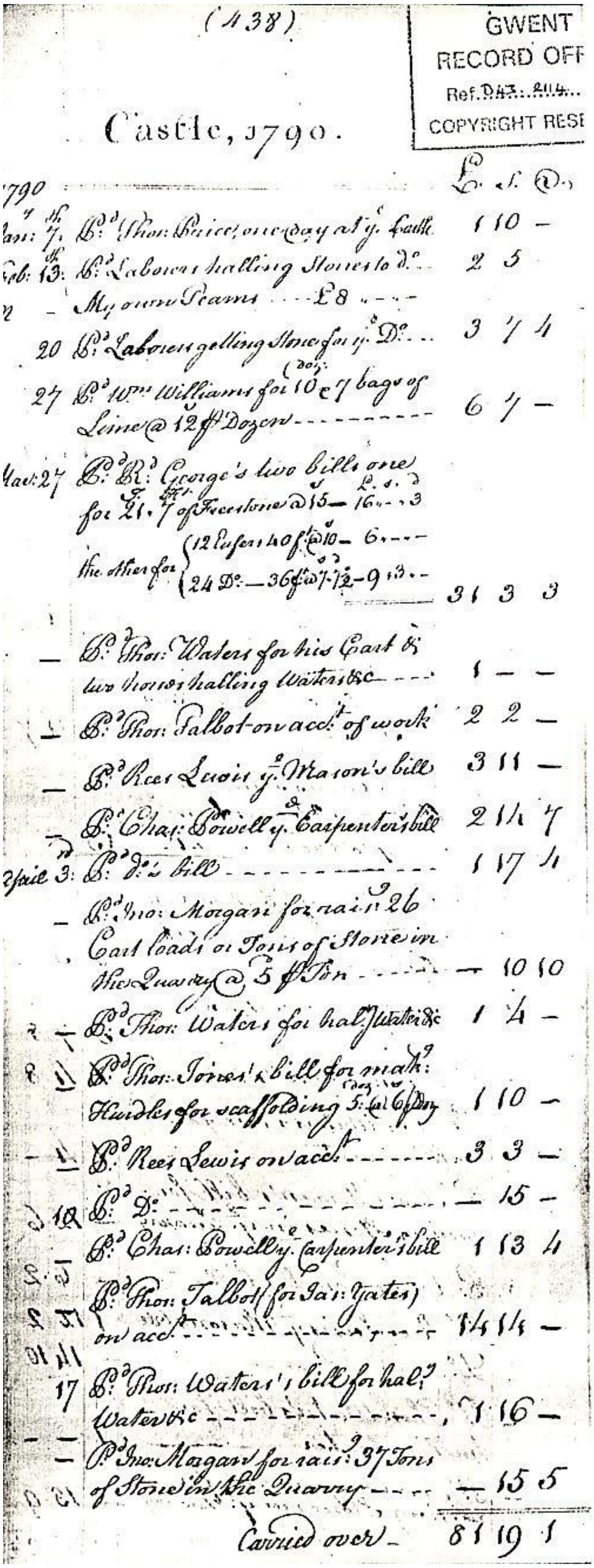
An Account of the Building

In 1788, a year after the death of his wife, William Jones paid his tenant, John Smith, £100, "for giving up Clytha House at midsummer". Shortly afterwards he moved there from his London home in Hanover Square. He began the task of remodelling his Monmouthshire estate by having it surveyed by John Aram in the spring of 1789. In the New Year, 1790, work began on Clytha Castle - a Gothick eyecatcher and memorial to Elizabeth. As the tablet reveals, it "was undertaken for the purpose of relieving a mind sincerely afflicted by the loss of a most excellent wife".

William Jones was an exceptionally methodical person and he has left us a fascinating record of one part of his life in the form of an account ledger. It is held at Cwmbran in the County Record Office and it covers the years 1771 until 1792, when the Castle was nearly finished. The ledger, in his own hand, records all his personal payments, ranging from items like new opera glasses when a previous pair had been pick-pocketed, to the landscape and garden improvements at Clytha.

What particularly concern us here are the Castle building accounts. Instead of employing an agent to pay the builders and suppliers, he did all this himself, effectively acting as his own clerk of the works. Every delivery of stone, timber or other material is recorded, as are the wages of the men. Not only are the accounts a full and accurate survey of the building's early history, therefore, but they also show his personal commitment to a project which was clearly very close to his heart.

The ledger is divided into specific headings and in 1790, fourteen pages of Castle accounts succeed payments concerning shrubberies and the ice house. The first item is dated 7th January and work seems to have got well under way in February, when the first materials were delivered. The hill-top site cannot have been without its problems, and its steepness must have caused the hauliers many a groan and grumble. Despite the inconveniences of the site, Mr Jones must have been a good employer because the main craftsmen - James Yates, mason-foreman, Rees Lewis, mason, Charles Powell and William Vaughan, carpenters, Thomas Talbot, bricklayer, and George Goodall, joiner - remain the same until the end of 1792.


(438)

Castle, 1790.

		£	s.	d.
1790 Jan: 7th	Pd Thos: Price one day at ye Castle	1	10	–
Feb: 13th	Pd Labours halling Stones to Do		2	5
–	My own Teams ... £8 ...			
20	Pd Labours getting Stone for ye Do	3	7	4
27	Pd Wm Williams for 10 (doz:) & 7 bags of Lime @ 12 pr Dozen	6	7	–
Mar: 27	Pd Rd George's two bills one for 21 ft 7 in of Freestone @ 15 – 16 .. 3; the other for (12 Lofers 40 ft @ 10 – 6 .. –; 24 Do – 36 ft @ 7 – 12 – 9 13 ..)	31	3	3
–	Pd Thos: Waters for his Cart & two horses halling Water &c	1	–	–
–	Pd Thos: Talbot on acct of work	2	2	–
–	Pd Rees Lewis ye Mason's bill	3	11	–
–	Pd Chas: Powell ye Carpenter's bill	2	14	7
April 3	Pd Do's bill	1	17	4
–	Pd Jno: Morgan for rais 26 Cart loads or Tons of Stone in the Quarry @ 5 pr Ton	–	10	10
–	Pd Thos: Waters for halg Water &c	1	4	–
–	Pd Thos: Jones's bill for mak: Hurdles for scaffolding 5 doz @ 6 pr Doz	1	10	–
–	Pd Rees Lewis on acct	3	3	–
10	Pd Do	–	15	–
–	Pd Chas: Powell ye Carpenter's bill	1	13	4
–	Pd Thos: Talbot (for Jas: Yates) on acct	14	14	–
17	Pd Thos: Waters's bill for halg Water &c	1	16	–
–	Pd Jno: Morgan for rais: 37 Tons of Stone in the Quarry	–	15	5
	Carried over	81	19	1

The first page of Castle accounts in William Jones' account book.

The accounts give us an intriguing insight into the logistics of procuring and transporting the great variety of materials necessary for such an expensive and complicated building. Water was always necessary and its provision crops up in the accounts all the time. The first occasion was on 27th March, when Mr Jones paid Thomas Waters (appropriately) £1 "for his Cart & two horses halling Water". The provision of bags of lime is another common item. This would have been used for mortar, and also for the render with which the rubble stone walls were finally coated.

Labourers are paid for "halling stones" throughout 1790, and on 17th April, John Morgan was paid just 15s. 5d for "raising 37 tons of stone in the Quarry", a payment that was frequently repeated. Mr Jones does not inform us where the quarry was but it must have been local, possibly even on the Clytha estate itself. At the very beginning he seems to have used his own horses, but thereafter the names of two different carriers, Henry Morgan and Evan Evans, make regular appearances, bringing materials from nearby and further afield.

Obtaining good quality freestone for copings and parapets and other decorative work was, in particular, a complicated matter. There was no local source for this, so Mr Jones opted for the fashionable Bath stone, concerning which James Yates made a number of journeys. The supplier chosen was Richard George, who seems to have been general builders' merchant, probably in Bristol. He charged 10s a ton, plus 5s a ton for freight by barge from Bath to Bristol.

From Bristol, most of the stone was carried on sloops belonging either to Captain William Richards or Edward Richards. Crossing the Bristol Channel, they sailed up the River Usk as far as Newbridge, from where the stone was transported by waggon to Clytha. So for example on 22nd May, 1790, Edward Richards submitted a bill for £8.5s.6d for "freight of Freestone from Bristol to Newbridge"; and at the same time Henry Morgan was paid £4.5s "for halling 4 Waggon loads of Freestone from Newbridge & Turnpikes". The tolls paid on the turnpike roads, as on a continental motorway, of course had to be accounted for as an extra expense incurred by the carriers.

Occasionally another route was used. On June 12th, Morgan Williams was paid for transporting 60 deals (timber) and 28 blocks of Bath stone from Bristol by the Tredegar sloop to Newport. On another occasion the consignment for Clytha was carried up the Usk only as far as Caerlon and had to be brought on by waggon from there to the site.

The journey did not always go without a hitch. On one occasion, an extra payment had to be made to Mr George for keeping Mr Ward's Bath barge waiting five days for William Richard's sloop. Sometimes Henry Morgan had to lend a hand with unloading at the other end. Once, the stone had to be unloaded into 3 smaller vessels, and then lifted from these by crane, a process that took three and a half days.

As the walls went up, so did an intricate web of scaffolding. The materials for this arrived early on: in April, Thomas Jones and William Coleswere each paid £l.10s for making 5 dozen hurdles, 6s per dozen; the latter was also paid the princely sum of 2s.8d for 400 poles of scaffolding at 8d per 100. Then, as now, security was a consideration. On Sundays, when there was no work going on at the Castle, William Jones paid a watchman 1s a day.

Work proceeded apace. At the end of June four tons of blue slate were purchased at £2 a ton; a great deal of timber was being bought for roof and floors and on 7th August William Vaughan submitted a bill for 9s for going to Bristol and back "for alabaster". The same day Philip Williams was paid for "Tyling the Roof of the Castle". By November, 14 yards of paving stone were being bought at Davauden, a village north of Chepstow.

1791 was an equally busy year at the Castle, with another fourteen pages of payments recorded in the ledger. In April, the first of many payments is made to Samuel Archer, "plaisterer". There are still consignments of Bath stone, lime, and timber, and lead for gutters and flashings, but the emphasis in the second year is on carpentry and joinery, as well as tiling.

As a specialist joiner, Jones employed William Field from Worcester, rather than a local man. His first bill appears for "work and Journey from Worcester to Clytha" on 2nd July, 1791 and amounts to £2.7s. In August some casements were fixed into place.

It was during the second year of construction that William Jones began to think about the decoration of the Castle's interior. The two main rooms, it seems, were always meant to be lived in for short periods, for there is a payment at the end of 1791 for reducing the chimneys in the "lodging rooms". Moreover the vast sums of money spent on furnishings and equipment implies that the Castle was used for more than just picnics or the occasional visit in the course of an afternoon walk. The 1792 accounts mention a tin flue, perhaps for a range, and also a payment for "stew-pans etc". Food may have been prepared in the little stone bothy behind the Castle, with its Gothick detail. In May, 1791, Mr Jones paid a bill from Wedgewood & Co for £33.15s.1d, and also paid Mr Henry Jones for a set of French China costing £8.8s. He did not stint himself on materials: Moore, Foskett & Co. received £9.14s.1½d. for silk and four further payments were made for French Chintz (£41.10s), callico (£33), India material (£10.17s.1½d) and Irish Cloth (£16.5s). In October, Jones bought "paintings for the chimney pieces" from G. Brookshaw (£34.2s.6d).

The largest sum went on furniture. Jones paid the fashionable London firm of cabinet-makers and upholsterers, Mayhew & Ince, no less than £1,000 in 1791-2: a first payment of £600, on making the order, and a second of £400 six months later, on delivery. A later source records another payment to the same firm for £342.19s.6d for "Gothic style furniture", made in September, 1793.

For 1792 there are just two pages of accounts under the Castle heading. They are mainly concerned with internal works - paint (supplied like much else by Richard George of Bristol), locks, glazing, and ironmongery. In June, Jones was buying paper and paid a bill for having it put up but he does not say in which room. The next month bars were being let into "ye stair case". There is a mildly disturbing payment to Thomas Rachel for "setting up ye Terrets which were blown down by the Wind", but it is only for 3s.9d so the damage cannot have been a complete disaster.

The last two pages of Castle accounts.

(563)

Castle 1792

1792		£. s. D.
7th:	Pd. Wm. Field the Joiner's bill	– 16 –
–	Do. Wm. Yates by agreemt. for setting up a Chimney piece	– 7 6
–	Do. Do.'s allowance	– 2 –
–	Do. Rd. Bennett ye Smith as pbill	1 17 4
–	Do. Jn. Andrews ye Ironmonger for Sundries as pbill	20 1 2½
11	Do. Geo: Lewis ye Joiner's bill	– 10 8
21	Do. Do.	– 12 8
–	Do. Wm. Vaughan's bill	– 15 –
–	Do. Jos: Higham on acct. of Mayhew & Ince	2 2 –
–	Do. Thos: Rogers for trespass on his Land in haul.g Sand & Gravel	– 10 6
28	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner as pbill	– 12 8
30	Do. Edw: Haskew in part	100 – –
Jan. 3	Do. Thos: Barrett ye Tinman's bill for the Tin roof	3 4 –
27	Do. Jas: Maddocks for ye use of his Pullies	– 10 6
Apr. 7	Do. Rd. Bennett ye Smith as pbill	– 3 6
–	Do. Thos: Rachel's bill for setting up ye Turrets which were blown down by the Wind	– 3 9
27	Do. Mayhew & Ince on acct. of the Furniture	400 – –
May 8	Do. Robt. Bakethorpe for Wedgwood's bill	8 8 –
26	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner's bill	2 13 4
June 2	Do. Do.	1 3 4
5	Do. Saml. Archer on acct.	15 15 –
9	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner's bill	– 5 4
16	Do. Do.	– 10 8
18	Do. Jn. Middleton's bill for paper &c	38 14 9
23	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner's bill	2 3 2
30	Do. Davd. Price ye Joiner for help: Mr. Higham 3 quarters of a day to put up the Papers	– 2 –
July 7	Do. Thos: Rachel's bill for filling in the bars in ye Stair Case	– 5 –
–	Do. Rd. Bennett ye Smith as pbill	1 3 6
11	Do. Rd. George as pbill for Paint &c	11 5 8
	Carrd. on	614 19 –

(564)

1792	Castle	£. s. D.
	Brought over	614 19 –
July 19th	Pd. Jn. Andrews ye Ironmonger as pbill	8 17 3
21	Do. Chas: Powell ye Carpenter as pbill	– 5 –
–	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner as pbill	2 11 8
–	Do. Phil: Williams ye Tiler's bill	– 12 –
–	Do. Edw: Howell's bill for Turnpike to Caerleon w. ye Cart for Paint &c	– 6 8
25	Do. Jn. Price for S. S. B. Bledyn Barnt. for 126 loads of Stones for the building of the Castle	1 1 –
28	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner's bill	2 3 3
Aug. 4th	Do. Rd. Bennett ye Smith as pbill	– 9 –
11	Do. Wm. Field ye Joiner as pbill	– 5 8
18	Do. H. Stockdale discount of £1000 pd. to Mayhew & Ince 3 pCt.	12 10 –
25	Do. Jn. Davenport Esq. (by draft on Wright & Co.) for Edw. Standley's bill for Locks &c as pbill	42 5 –
30	Do. Thos: Bauch's bill for Fire Grates Stew pans &c	98 13 8
Sept. 15th	Do. Thos: Rachel's bill for day work at the Chimneys	– 3 10
22	Do. Do.	– 11 8
–	Do. Chas: Powell ye Carpenter as pbill	– 5 –
–	Do. Thos: Rachel's bill at ye Castle	– 11 8
29	Do. Thos: Barrett ye Tinman on acct. of the Tin flue	1 1 –
–	Do. Thos: Rachel for help: to measure the Castle	– 0 3
Oct. 6th	Do. Rd. Bennett ye Smith as pbill	1 2 6
13	Do. Thos: Rachel for fixing the Tin flue at the Castle	– 4 –
–	Do. Jos: Higham on acct. of Messrs. Mayhew & Ince	4 4 –
–	Do. Thos: Barrett ye Tinman on acct. of ye Tin flue	5 5 –
20	Do. Thos: Rachel's bill	– 2 –
–	Do. Nicholas Lyewood ye Glaz: as pbill	1 7 –
Nov. 3	Do. Rd. Bennett for Bacon &c as pDo.	1 16 3
17	Do. T. Barrett ye Tinman on acct. of ye Tin flue	5 5 –
Decr. 18th	Do. Mr. Jas: Millard for ye Survey of the Freestone work & valuing ye same	10 – –
22	Do. Buck Aubrey ye Plaisterer ye balance of his bill in full	41 13 1
29	Do. Jn. Andrews ye Ironmonger as pbill	2 7 5
		864 7 10

The last two pages of Castle accounts.

By the end of the year, the work must have been all but complete. A total of £3823.16s.9d had been spent and, methodical to the last, some of the final payments were for measuring the castle, and surveying and valuing the freestone work. The main tower, at least, must have been ready for use at Christmas. There is some evidence, however, that there were still some tasks to be done the following year, and that finishing the castle took rather longer than the initial work.

As stated, this most informative ledger ends at the close of 1792. There must have been another volume: William Jones lived until 1805 and must surely have carried on keeping his detailed household and general accounts. Indeed, in 1990, Landmark was sent a recently-discovered page of notes copied earlier this century by a family friend of Miss Herbert, from what he called "an old commonplace book kept by the great-uncle who built Clytha Castle", which had been shown him by Reginald Herbert. Since the notes are all of payments, dated 1793 and 1794, this was very probably William Jones's succeeding account book. Tantalisingly, its whereabouts now are unknown.

According to the notes, however, under the date 1793 was written: "Now building a Castle - a Gothic Summer House - which will be a memorial to my wife", which implies an introduction from the last ledger. In addition to the payment to Mayhew & Ince already mentioned, and another for a stone chimney piece, in October 1793, Jones paid £80 for "the Gothic sashes for the round room", presumably the present kitchen. No more payments relating to the Castle were noted for that year, so perhaps we may assume that by the end of 1793, the building was complete and had indeed provided solace for the sorrowing widower.

The Castle's Designer

Contemporary descriptions of Clytha Castle, for example in William Coxe's *Tour through Monmouthshire* of 1801, while admiring the building's Picturesque qualities, make no reference to the architect responsible for its design. This very anonymity made it unlikely that he was one of the leading figures of the day. However, in recent years, the Castle has been attributed by some scholars to John Nash, on the basis of a payment to him in William Jones' account book of £10, "for his plan". An alternative suggestion, made by Richard Haslam in his article on Clytha Park in *Country Life* (December 8th, 1977), was that it could be the work of a Bristol or Bath architect, if not that of Jones himself.

A further study of the account book reveals that the Nash payment probably does not relate to the Castle at all. It is much more likely that its design can be seen as that of a relatively little-known garden designer and architect called John Davenport, perhaps with some help from his client. Previously taken to be only the builder of the Castle, recent research shows Davenport to have had a small but flourishing practice in Wales and the border counties, and proves him fully capable of designing in the Gothick style.

On 14th November, 1789, the year before work began on the Castle, William Jones paid "John Davenport, himself, foreman, for journeys, plans complete, plans for hot houses etc. £98.17.6d". The next year, he was at Clytha for ten days in July, and in the Castle accounts, payments totalling £91 5s were made "To James Yates on account of John Davenport". (James Yates acted as foreman for the work, and was probably in Davenport's employment).

There are, on the other hand, no payments to John Nash under the "Castle" heading in Jones's account book. The payment to "J. Nash" comes at the bottom of a list of servants' bills under Contingents. Moreover, it is dated 28th October, 1790, by which time work at the Castle was well advanced.
In view of the fact that John Nash was clearly known to William Jones, for a payment to have been made at all, is there still a possibility that he played some part in the Castle's design? It seems most unlikely. Nash was practicing from Carmarthen at this

time, having moved there from London after being declared bankrupt in 1783. But the architectural historian Nicholas Kingsley recently pointed out in a letter that if Clytha Castle were the work of Nash, "it would be the earliest appearance by some years of the vigorous picturesque asymmetry that characterises his houses after 1800".

This is borne out by a letter of 1798, written to George Beaumont by Uvedale Price, for whom Nash had built a triangular castellated house in Aberystwyth after 1794. Price tells Beaumont that having explained to Nash the arguments for the Picturesque siting of his house, the architect "was exceedingly struck with these reasons, which he said he had never thought of before in the most distant degree".

This admission implies that the Aberystwyth commission was one of Nash's first contacts with the philosophy of the Picturesque, so effectively and confidently applied at Clytha Castle back in 1790. It therefore seems likely that the Nash plan, for which William Jones paid £10, relates to some other, perhaps unexecuted, project.

John Davenport

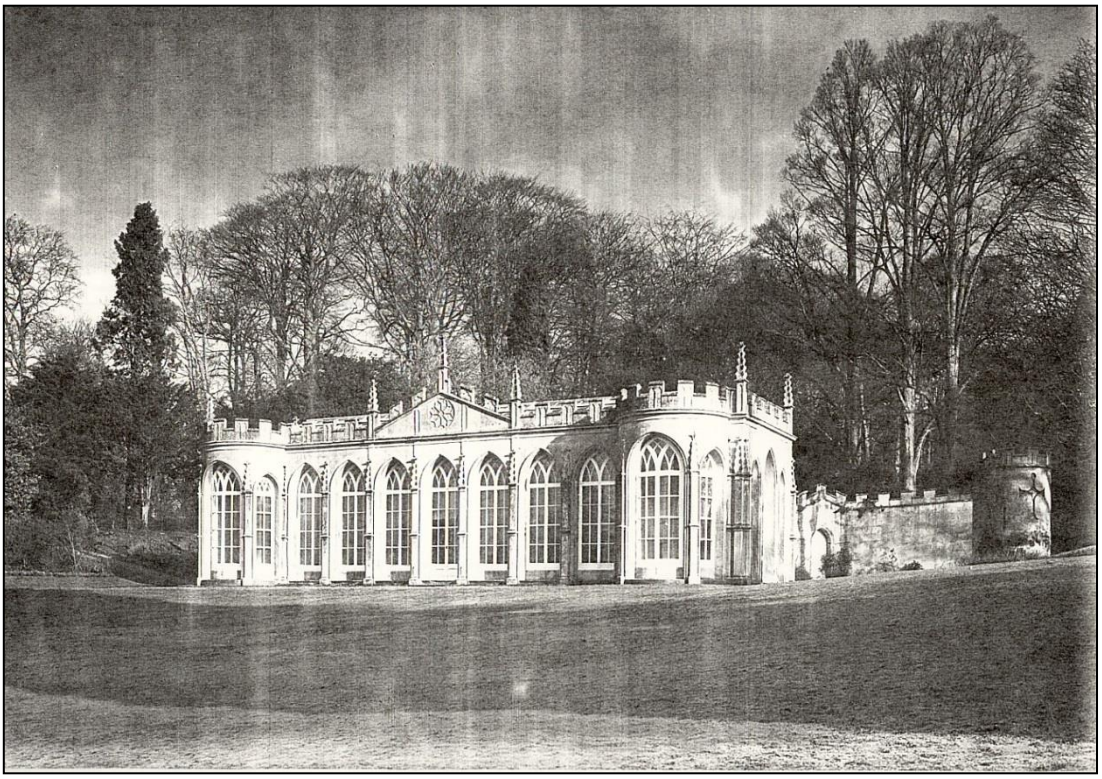
John Davenport has been an obscure figure until recently, but thanks to investigations by Howard Colvin and Nicholas Kingsley, we now know rather more about him. He came from Burlton Grove, near Wem in Shropshire, and began practising as an architect and landscape gardener in about 1768. At the same time as working at Clytha, Davenport was employed by Sir Walter Blount at Mawley Hall, Shropshire, and by Lord Hawke at Scarthingwell Hall, Yorkshire.

These two clients were both Roman Catholics. (Having visited Mawley in 1771 Mrs Lybbe Powis wrote that "Lady Blount has more chintz counterpanes than in one house I ever saw ... a thousand nick-nacks from abroad, as one generally sees in these Catholic families".) It may be in this connection that Davenport was suggested to Jones, himself a Catholic.
In Gloucestershire, Davenport seems to have worked at Adlestrop and Batsford Parks, and Susan Morris has discovered that it was he, rather than S.P. Cockerell, who designed the Orangery at Daylesford for Warren Hastings. This is a neat one-

storied building set close by Cockerell's Classical house, and completed in the Spring of 1790, jus twhen work was getting going at the Castle at Clytha. Like the Castle, the Orangery is a right-angled composition, with one arm sweeping backwards and terminating in a battlemented round tower. One of the decorative features on this tower - the blind cross-loop - is found all over the walls at Clytha.

At the same time, the Castle is a much more accomplished and lively work than the Orangery, which has a stiffness and tightness not seen at Clytha. It is tempting to attribute the difference between the two buildings to the helping hand of William Jones himself, and to his knowledge of the Picturesque ideas being developed further north on the Welsh border. Carefully sited to be seen on the diagonal from the house, against the skyline, Roger White in the exhibition catalogue *Georgian Arcadia* (1987), describes how "the curtain wall ... sweeps up to an elegant if unarchaeological peak ... and the building is made to seem asymmetrical by the addition of a slim circular stair turret to the square angle tower".

Conceived by a deeply emotional widower whom we know to have been very close to the project, the Castle has a flamboyance that could be the result of his involvement. On the other hand, while the overall design is handled with great imagination, the basic form has been prepared by someone with a firm grasp of technicalities, and that must be the professional, John Davenport. Whether Davenport was also responsible for the other notable feature in the Clytha landscape, the elegant Gothick gateway to the house, we do not know. No mention of this appears in the surviving account book, but the friend of the Herberts who made notes on the Castle from the next book also remembered making notes on the gateway, although he could not lay his hand on them. It must date from after 1792, therefore, and if Davenport was responsible, from before 1795, when he died.



The Daylesford Orangery, designed by John Davenport, completed 1790.

From Rev William Coxe *A Historical Tour through Monmouthshire* (1801).

The Picturesque in Wales

On his *Historical Tour through Monmouthshire*, made soon after the Castle was built, Archdeacon William Coxe spent a few happy days with William Jones at the old house at Clytha. He was much taken with the place:

> A beautiful gateway leads to the house, which is a comfortable and commodious mansion. Mr. Jones has considerably improved the grounds by plantations, and displayed his taste as well as his affection to the memory of a beloved wife, by building Clytha Castle, which is an ormnament to his residence, and to the surrounding country.
>
> The Castle is built on the brow of an eminence mantled with woods, and at the abrupt termination of a chain of hills which bounds the southern extremity of the Vale of the Usk. It commands a view of a fertile and well wooded region, swelling from the sinuous banks of the river, into gentle undulations, and gradually expanding into hills and mountains; among these, the Skyridd, the Sugar Loaf, and the Blorenge are most conspicuous and contrasted. From this point of view, the beauty of the landscape is heightened by numerous churches, differing in shape and colour, rising amid tufts of trees, or over-hanging the banks of the Usk.
>
> There are prospects far more extensive but few so pleasing; nature has placed the hills and mountains at such fortunate distances from this point of view, that the eye is lost in the endless variety of bewitching scenery, and knows not on what to rest. On leaving to contemplate this delightful prospect, I did not retire from the building without sympathising with the regret and applauding the gratitude, affection and taste of the owner.

The landscape of Monmouthshire with its "fertile and well-wooded regions", "sinuous" rivers and gentle hills was ideal countryside for a disciple of the Picturesque like Mr Jones. Mr Coxe's description of Clytha and its surroundings must have warmed his heart. The Picturesque philosophy - a desire to create a natural landscape punctuated by buildings in an appropriate style, or a series of views worthy of a great artist - was widely held amongst rich country gentlemen when Clytha Castle was built.

Two of the foremost, and most famous, protagonists of Picturesque Taste were Richard Payne Knight, of Downton in Herefordshire, and his friend Uvedale Price, both of whom wrote lengthy treatises on the subject. They in turn infected Payne

Knight's cousin, Thomas Johnes. At Hafod in Cardiganshire, Johnes began work in the 1780s on the creation of an ideal landscape on a grand scale, around a house built by Thomas Baldwin of Bath in the Gothick style in 1786-88 (John Nash was later employed to build an octagonal library).

It may well have been Thomas Johnes who, in turn, inspired William Jones in his own pursuit of the Picturesque. Johnes' sister, Betsey, of whom he was particularly fond, had married John Hanbury Williams of Coldbrook (now demolished), in the village of Llandenny, a couple of miles from Clytha. The brother and sister visited each other regularly, and no doubt Johnes knew many of Betsey's Monmouthsire neighbours.

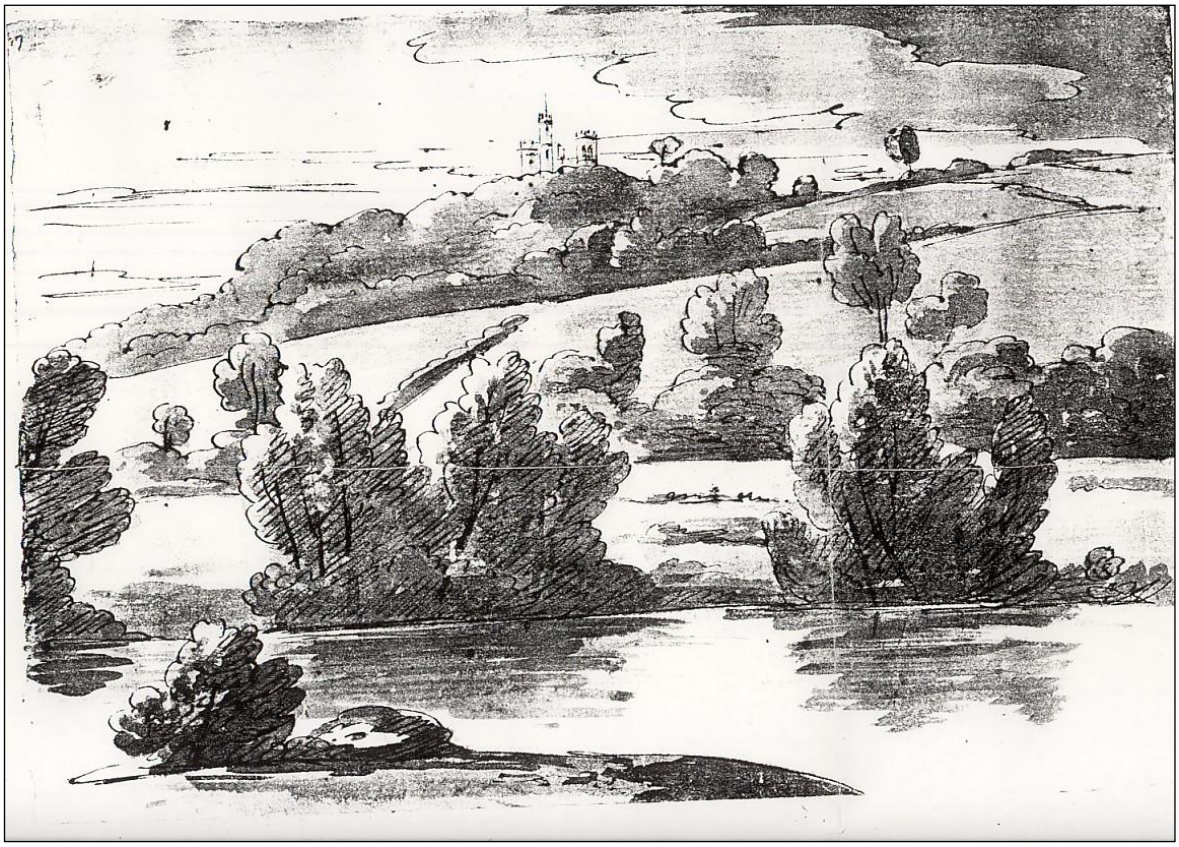
While Thomas Johnes of Hafod did more than anyone else to draw attention to the beauties of the more distant parts of Wales, Monmouthshire had no need of such publicity. As David Watkin has pointed out in *The English Vision* "The eighteenth century was not only the age of the continental Grand Tour, but also of touring in search of picturesque scenery in England, Scotland and Wales".

Monmouthshire was probably the most popular county in Wales for this pursuit because it abounds in beautiful scenery, contrived or natural, and breathtaking buildings, ruinous or otherwise. Not far from Clytha, tourists like William Gilpin and Arthur Young in the 1770s travelled up the River Wye, exploring Chepstow Castle, the famous landscape garden at Piercefield, Tintern Abbey and Symonds Yat. Even closer to Clytha was the historic and romantic castle at Raglan. Sometimes these jaunts were mixed with socialising, as Mrs Boscawen wrote to her friend Mrs Delany from Badminton, in October, 1770:

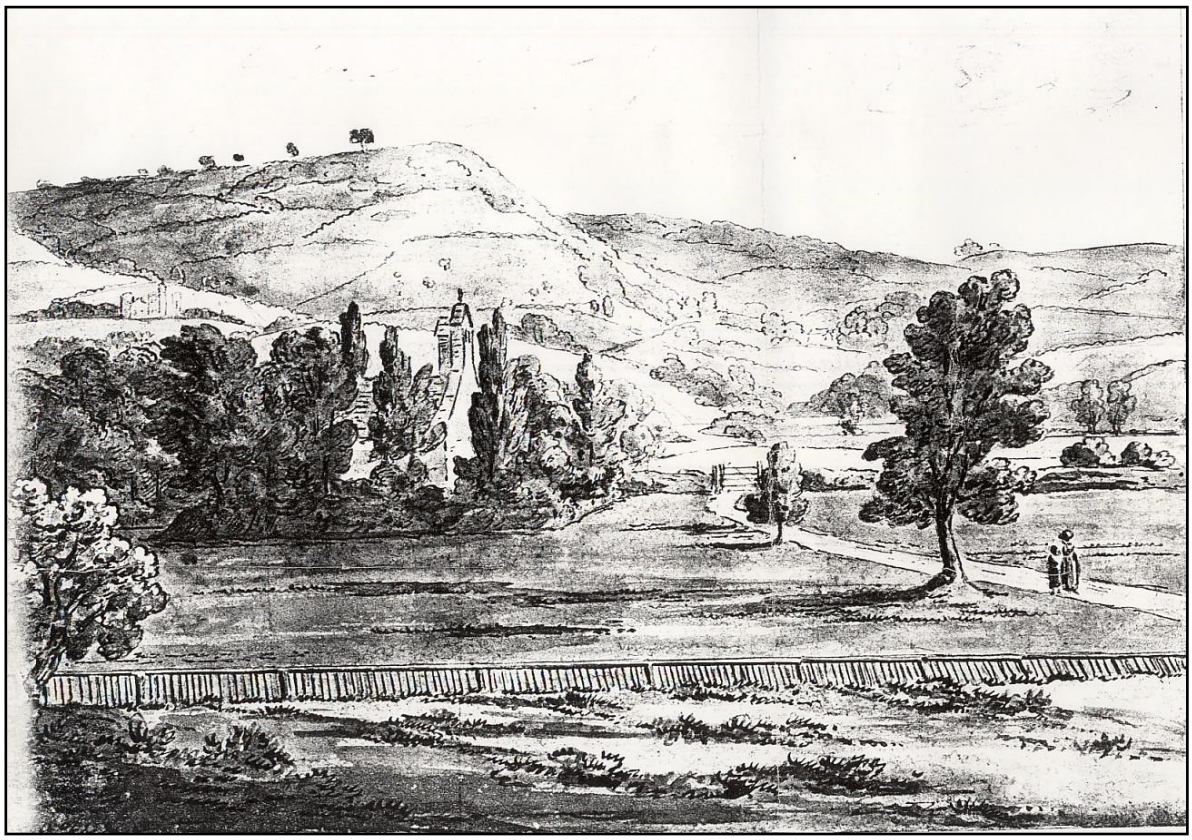
> I had promised to be of an expedition to Monmouth, which was performed last week, and consisted of such a perpetual gala as I was most unworthy to partake of. Public breakfasts of 400 - races - public dinners, balls at the Town Hall, - in short, divertmenti sans fin et sans cesse, j'en fus exceedee. At length, et pour la bonne bouche, I was carried to visit Tintern Abbey, which is charming, Raglan Castle which is superb ... At length we repaired to Persfield, a charming place which I dare say you have seen ... We went also to Chepstow, where there is an old castle belonging to the Duke of Beaufort, and to Chepstow church, in which some of his ancestors have ancient tombs".

Clytha Castle was built on two Picturesque principles. Firstly, as Mr Coxe says, as an "ornament" to Mr Jones's residence in the form of an attractive eyecatcher; secondly, as an enhancement to the natural landscape. It is in the Gothick style which, as Richard Payne Knight discovered in his own house at Downton, lends itself to asymmetry and pictorial grouping. Both these qualities in turn provide, as at the Castle, an intriguing silhouette. That Davenport and Jones succeeded in their purpose may be seen in the watercolour by Barker of Bath painted in 1808. While the Castle on its hill-top site dominates the scene above the River Usk, its Picturesque grouping of turrets, towers and battlements perfectly echoes the "tufts of trees" below.

The Castle also draws on another, more literary, theme of the period, that of Romantic association. While some gentlemen might dedicate their ornamental buildings to a great man or a great battle, Jones, in the words of Nicholson's *Cambrian Traveller's Guide* made his a "monument to domestic affection". With this ennobling and uplifting thought in mind, and heart, owner and traveller alike could pass on their way, refreshed and comforted like Mr Coxe.



Watercolours, dated 1808, by Barker of Bath, whose father lived at Pontypool.



Later History of Clytha Castle

Soon after William Coxe visited Clytha, an act was passed to make a new Turnpike road between Raglan and Abergavenny. It was built between 1800 and 1820, and roughly followed the line of an existing road which ran through the park at Clytha. However, where the old road had looped to the south, passing close to Ffynonau Farm at the foot of the Castle hill, the new road took a more direct route, through a cutting made in the rocky bluff nearer the house. Across this cutting the family built an iron bridge, to link the house with the castle. Eventually this became unsafe, and was finally removed by the County Council after gales in January 1976.

The garden designer J.C. Loudon also visited Clytha, perhaps while working at Llanarth Court in 1806. Unfortunately, he didn't think much of it: in *A Treatise on Forming, Improving and Managing Country Residences* (1806) he remarks how seldom Prospect Towers "are built in a suitable style of architecture". While such buildings "have a grand and imposing effect when judiciously placed on a woody eminence or on top of a rocky mountain", too often, "they are of most vulgar and common-place forms ... or gaudy and affectedly uncommon, as at Clytho, Shuckborough, and numberless other places". *The Cambrian Traveller's Guide* of about the same date, however, thought the pleasure grounds at Clytha to be "laid out with much taste and judgement".

No descriptions have been found of the Castle after the early 19th century. There is a tradition that the upper room was at one period used as a chapel. According to Mr Hanbury-Tenison of Clytha Park, the present sitting room was intended to be used by the men of the family and was painted dark red and white. Whilst upstairs the main bedroom was the ladies' room with plasterwork in the rococo style and painted light blue with white. The fact that they were the most important rooms is demonstrated on the exterior by the decorative string courses on the square tower and the stair turret.

At some date, the main tower was enlarged to make the Castle habitable as an estate cottage, with two rooms on each floor. Even these new rooms had elegant Gothic grates. It is unlikely that the tenants occupied the two main rooms, however, which

would have been kept for the owners' own use. By the end of the 19th century, that use was probably only very occasional: cousins of the Herberts who lived near Clytha before 1914, have told us that Reginald Herbert seldom went there.

It is possible that the whole castle was given over to tenants. The late C.V.O Evans, writing in 1953, said that at one time three families lived there. If so, the present empty tower must have been a separate dwelling. It had rooms on two floors, two of which had grates, and its own stair. The other tower could also have been self-contained, because it too had an upper floor. One tall window casement still existed when the Castle was photographed by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales in the 1960s.

George Williams, Miss Herbert's cousin, thinks that it was she who had the Castle "done up and put into regular use in the 1930s". He remembers that they often had picnics in it then, and can still picture "the very attractive chairs that had been made for it", probably that same "Gothic style furniture" ordered by William Jones from Ince and Mayhew. Mr Williams thinks the chairs were sold during the War.

According to Mrs Olwen Smith, who lived in the Castle as a child, it was only the sitting room that Miss Herbert kept for her own use. There was no door into it from the dining room (now the ground floor bedroom) at that time. She also remembers it being very simply furnished, with just a big octagonal table in the centre of the room and a cane rocking chair. There was a big picture above the fireplace of Elizabeth Jones, in whose memory the Castle had been erected; she was dressed in grey and she had a hawk.

Living in Clytha Castle

Mrs Smith described for us what it was like to live in this most extraordinary cottage. Her father was gamekeeper to the Herberts, and he moved into the Castle with his wife and six children in 1936. Before that, a family called Shipway had lived there.

At that time the drive up to the Castle was closed and completely overgrown, so to get to it you had to walk up through the field from the road at the bottom of the hill. The coal lorry used an old track that came slightly nearer to the back of the Castle and dumped the coal there, then they carried it. By the empty tower, there was a pretty shrubbery and beyond the courtyard there was a kitchen garden.

Inside, the Castle was very little different from now. The family lived in the central part. The round tower at the back was a wash house, with coppers and a chimney where the bed head is now. The other one was empty, but still had a wall and the remains of a staircase. Mr and Mrs Price used the present ground floor bedroom as their sitting room, partly because it was handy to the kitchen (now the en-suite bathroom), but also because the big front room was kept for Miss Herbert. She used to go for long walks with her two little spaniels and whenever she ended up near the Castle, she would walk straight in, just calling out to tell Mrs. Price of her arrival and then sit for perhaps an hour. Sometimes, she would ask one of the children to sing to her.

It may seem surprising to us now that Miss Herbert should have gone on using the Castle as a summer-house, even though the Price family was living there, but it was not such an unusual arrangement. Many of the larger decorative buildings scattered around the parks and gardens of Britain combined a useful purpose as a dwelling with the more pleasurable and social functions for which they had been designed. The first floor room at the Swiss Cottage at Endsleigh in Devon, for example (another Landmark), was used until the 1950s by the Dukes of Bedford for shooting lunches, and by visitors for picnics, while a gardener and his wife lived on the ground and top floors. However, the task of keeping the big room perpetually tidy against Miss Herbert's arrival, must have been a worry for Mrs Price!

The Harrington family at Clytha Castle. Sarah Harrington stands on the left in the top photo; Gerald feeds the cat at the rear of the Castle, who also features in the picture of Enid, looking perhaps as though it is her first day at big school. The Castle is clearly already dilapidated.

Mrs. Smith described life in the Castle as a mixture of the inconvenient and the romantic. The worst inconvenience was that there was no running water in the Castle at all. There was a tap outside the house, by the present downstairs W.C., and it was there that the children washed and from there all the water was carried into the house.

But if there was a dry spell in the summer the spring that fed the tap dried up and then the water had to be carried all the way from the road below the house. There were two earth closets to the left of the round tower which is now a bedroom.
On the other hand the winding staircase and the cupboards and recesses in the walls provided marvellous starting points for stories of hidden treasure.

The Prices left in 1947, and were succeeded at the Castle from 1948 by Sarah Harrington, and her two children, Gerald and Enid. The Harringtons were evacuated to Snook's Corner, a cottage on the estate, in 1941 to escape the wartime bombing of Cardiff. By now, the estate and all the buildings had been requisitioned by the War Department. Enid Harrington remembered that the British troops had little respect for the interiors of Clytha House, chopping wood inside on the fine marble fireplace.

Sarah worked for Miss Herbert at Clytha House, and Gerald helped maintain the flower beds round the lake and also the kitchen garden, which had become a market garden in support of the war effort as well as supplying the house with produce. Gerald became well known to the British troops stationed there, cycling up the drive and letting himself in at the side gate. In 1944, they were joined by American troops ahead of the D Day landings, who insisted on issuing him with a pass for the grounds. The Americans were billeted all around Clytha, and the officers had their mess in the big house, treating it with more respect than the British.

Enid Harrington remembered the Americans were good to the locals, handing out nylon stockings, pencils and chewing gum. Despite the wartime deprivations it was a happy childhood. She started school in Bettws Newydd in 1943 when she was six, walking the two miles and back again each day. She loved reading, and the local farmer would cut out the Rupert the Bear comic strip for her from the newspaper.

A happy childhood: Enid Harrington camping in front of the Castle and doing her homework in the big chestnut tree at the front.

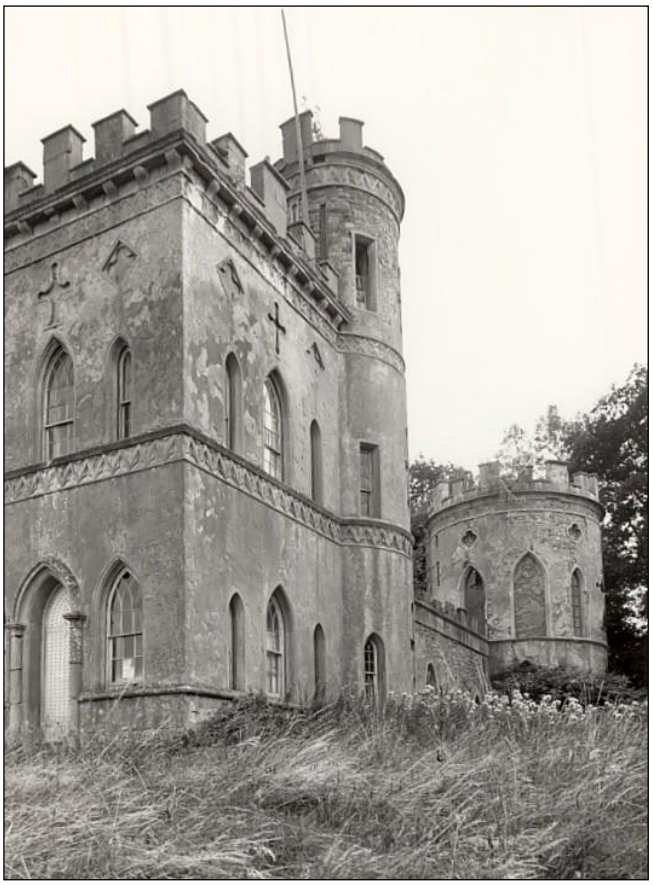
When peace was declared, Miss Herbert declared that the Union flag must fly from the Castle, and a huge one was taken out of a drawer, perhaps the same one that can be seen in Coxe's picture. It was in tatters, but they all helped to mend it and it flew from the day the war ended till it finally fell to bits.When Gerald was demobbed in 1948 the family moved into the Castle. When Mrs Harrington left for Cornwall in 1958, Miss Herbert gave her a silver plated tray in appreciation of her service, and also gave Gerald a reference when he joined the Monmouthshire Police Force. Enid emigrated to Australia in 1966, where she named her home ‘Clytha.’

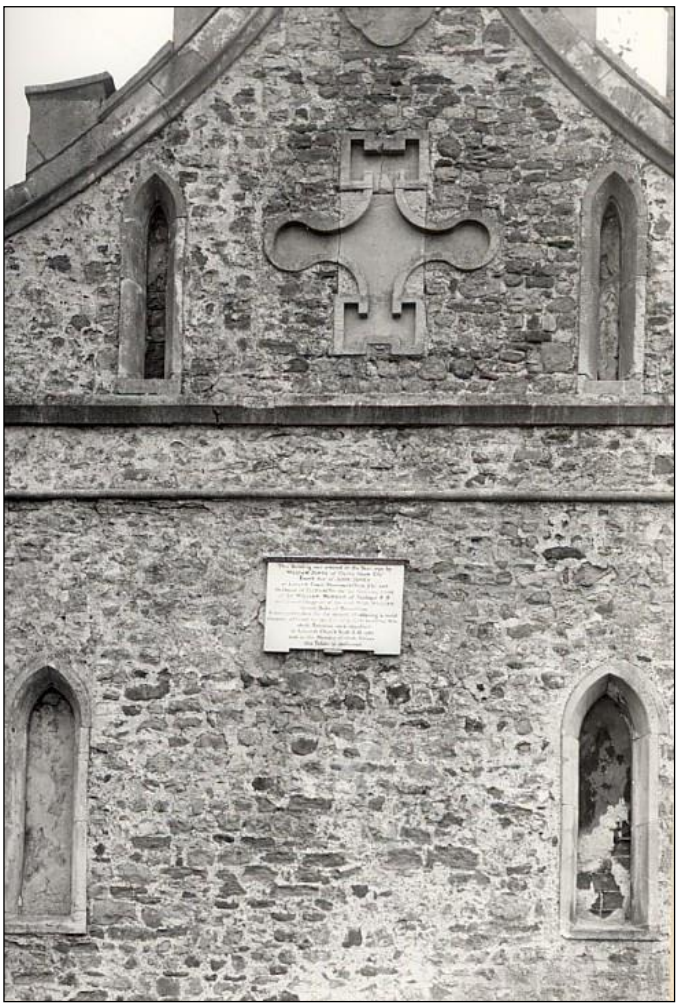
‘Off on a jaunt’: Enid Harrington at the gates of Clytha House.

After the Harringtons left, the Castle was left empty and abandoned, its lack of water and electricity too much of an an impediment to its continued occupation. By the time Landmark took it on from the National Trust in 1973, a great deal needed to be done. It was still possible to see what colours the rooms had been, however, and after restoration Mrs. Smith said that the repainted rooms were almost exactly the colours that she remembered them being as a child.

Photographs taken by Donald Insall about 1970

Photographs taken by the Royal Commission on Ancient & Historical Monuments in Wales in the 1960s.





The Landmark Trust's Restoration

In 1971, the National Trust suggested that the Landmark Trust might take a long lease on the Castle. By the time this had been discussed fully, and plans drawn up by the architect, Alan Miles of Newport, a year or two had passed, but work finally started in 1973, and the first visitors stayed at the Castle in 1974. The builders to begin with were Chappell and Sabin, but the firm closed down during the work, and W. Branch of Abersychan took over. Grants for the work were given by the Welsh Office and Monmouth County Council.

The possibility was considered of making two Landmarks at the Castle, but in the end it was decided to have just one, keeping the round tower at the front empty. The other round tower, meanwhile, would provide an extra bedroom. There is in fact evidence in William Jones's building accounts that this was how the castle was originally arranged. In December, 1791, John Jones was paid £1.11s.1d for "paving stones for the long passage". This implies that the south tower could always be reached under cover from the main rooms, but this does not seem to have been the case with the north-east tower.

Work began by repairing the track up to the castle from Fynonau, and the clearing of overgrowth at the back, to provide a clear working area. In the north-east tower the derelict wall dividing it was removed, a hard floor laid and the windows unblocked or tidied up as necessary. The walls themselves needed a lot of repair and repointing.

In the south tower the wash house that stood inside it was taken down, and a new roof constructed at ceiling height. The large windows were unblocked and new Gothic casements fitted, matching one that had survived, in a very decayed state, in one of the upper windows. The existing flagstones on the floor were relaid on a new concrete base.

The roof of the long passage was renewed, in slate as before. An outside door at its northern end was blocked up, the other doors repaired and the windows renewed. Inside, a new vaulted ceiling was made, and the flagstones relaid, as in the bedroom.

The addition to the main tower was also reroofed, with asphalt instead of corrugated iron. Its parapet was made to run at an even height, which meant lowering the section over the bedroom and bathroom, and raising and crenellating it where it wraps round the stair turret. The chimney on its east side was taken down at the same time, so it didn't show above the curtain wall from the front. The square tower itself was given a new flat roof.

The walls were carefully checked, and thoroughly repaired, before they were rendered, as they had been originally. A pink Herefordshire sand was used to give the render the right warm colour. All the coping stones on the parapets were checked over, and renewed or rebedded where they were allowing water into the walls, and so causing damage. The cornices and string courses were also repaired where necessary.

Luckily, much of the joinery was in reasonable condition. On the main north elevation, the front door and the sash windows were mostly repaired, rather than renewed, as were those on the west side. Many of the windows in the stair turret and at the back of the building were renewed, however, the old ones having been replaced by a variety of different designs.

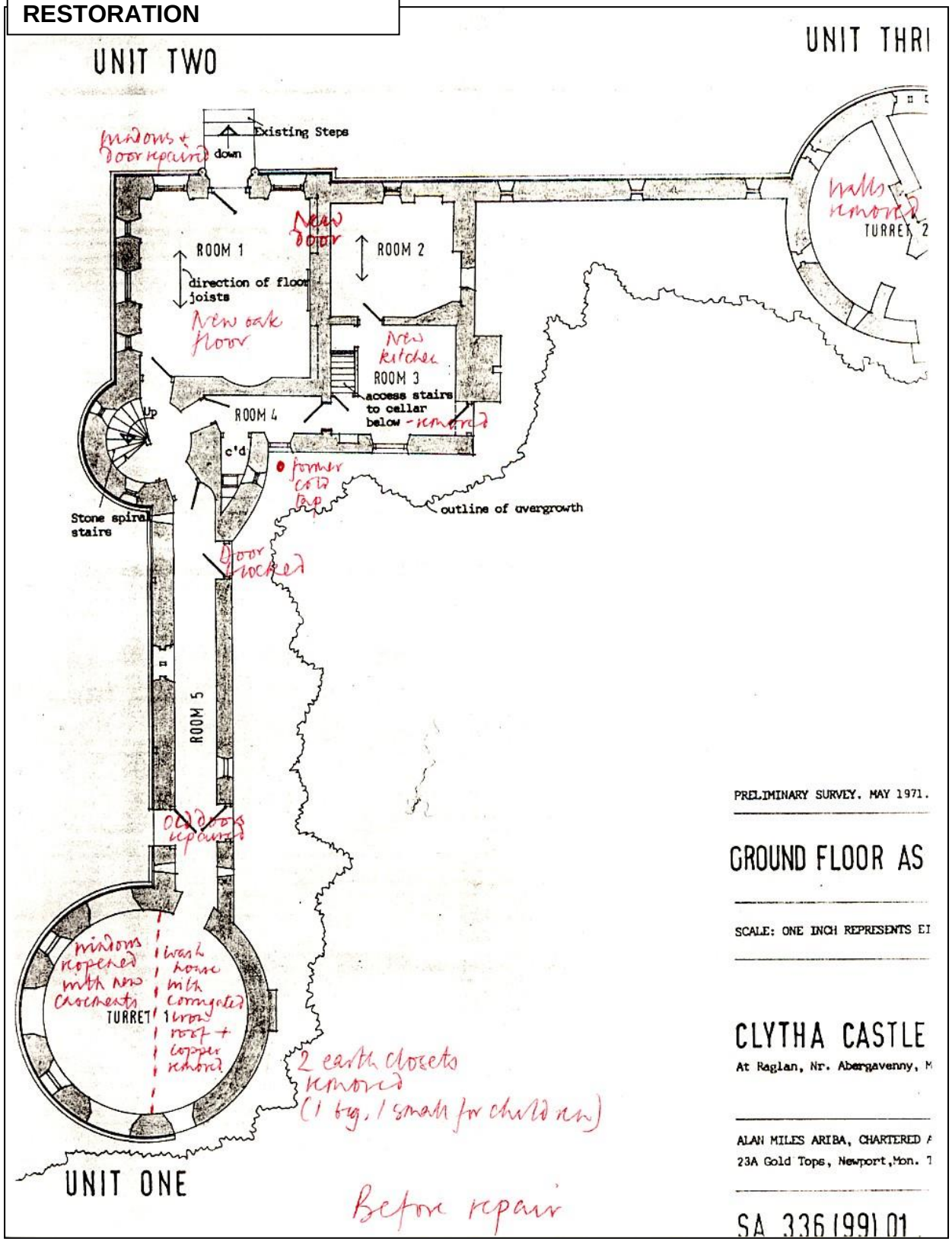
An original window in the south wall of the main bedroom, which would now be partly covered by the bathroom passage, was blocked up completely. In the cupboard at the end of this passage was a blocked square window. A new glazed quatrefoil was fitted inside this existing opening.

Inside the Castle decayed floor joists were renewed, and new floor boards laid. Those in the two main rooms are oak, with pine in the other rooms. The rest of the joinery - doors, dado rails, shutters and window surrounds - only needed minor repair and repainting. A new white marble hearth was provided for the sitting room fireplace. To link this room to the dining room, a new door was made, copying the Georgian ones.

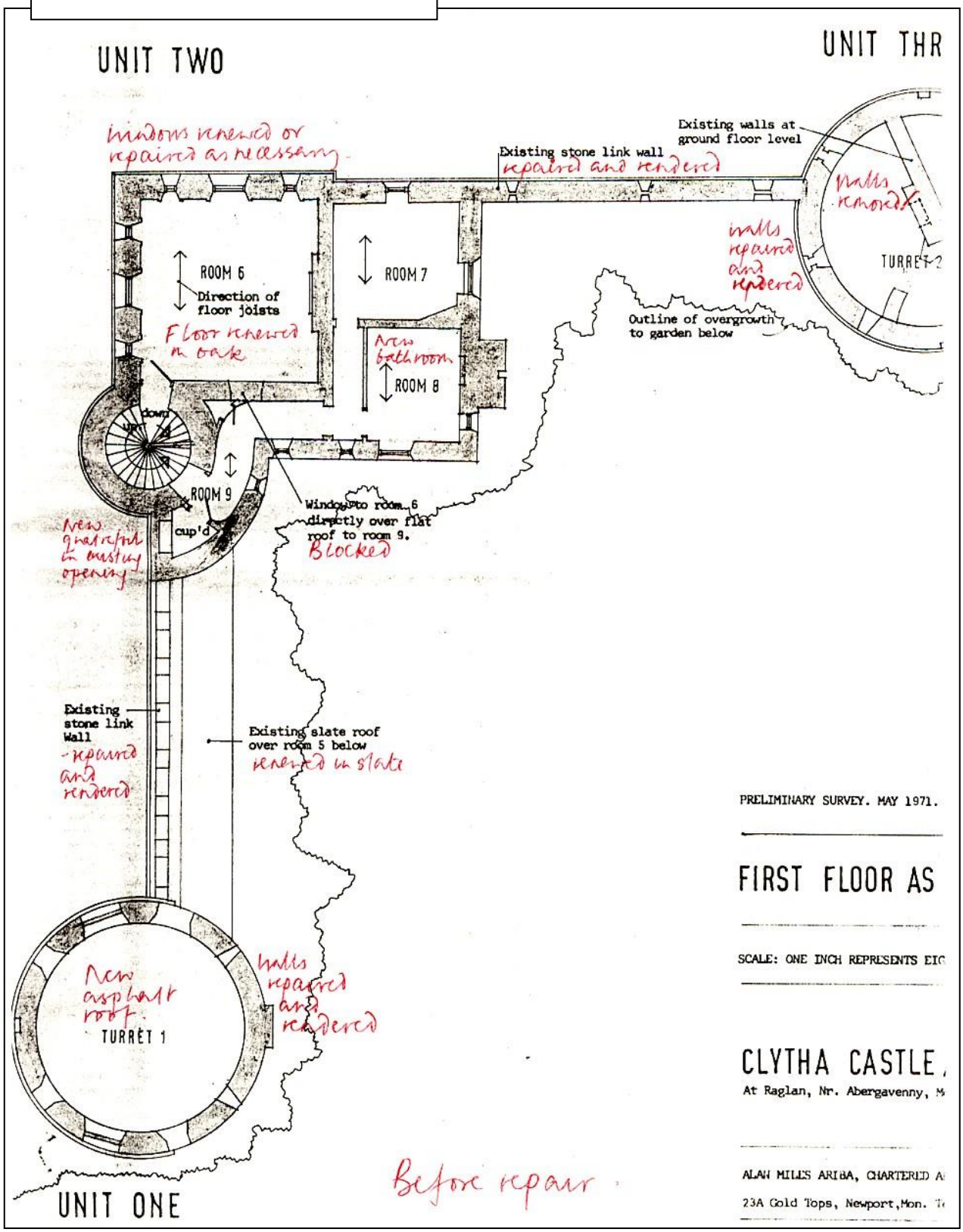
The ceilings in both main rooms were renewed. In the bedroom, the plaster frieze of the cornice had been cut away, probably when the roof had been repaired or renewed earlier in the century. A new frieze was made, therefore, copying that in the sitting room. The walls of both rooms were painted to match the old colours as closely as possible.

The bathroom and downstairs loo were of course new, as indeed were running water and electricity. In the kitchen a stair leading to a cellar was removed and the opening floored over, with a new trap for access. New kitchen units and a new dresser were then fitted, to complete the initial restoration.

1974 SCHEME & RESTORATION



1974 SCHEME & RESTORATION



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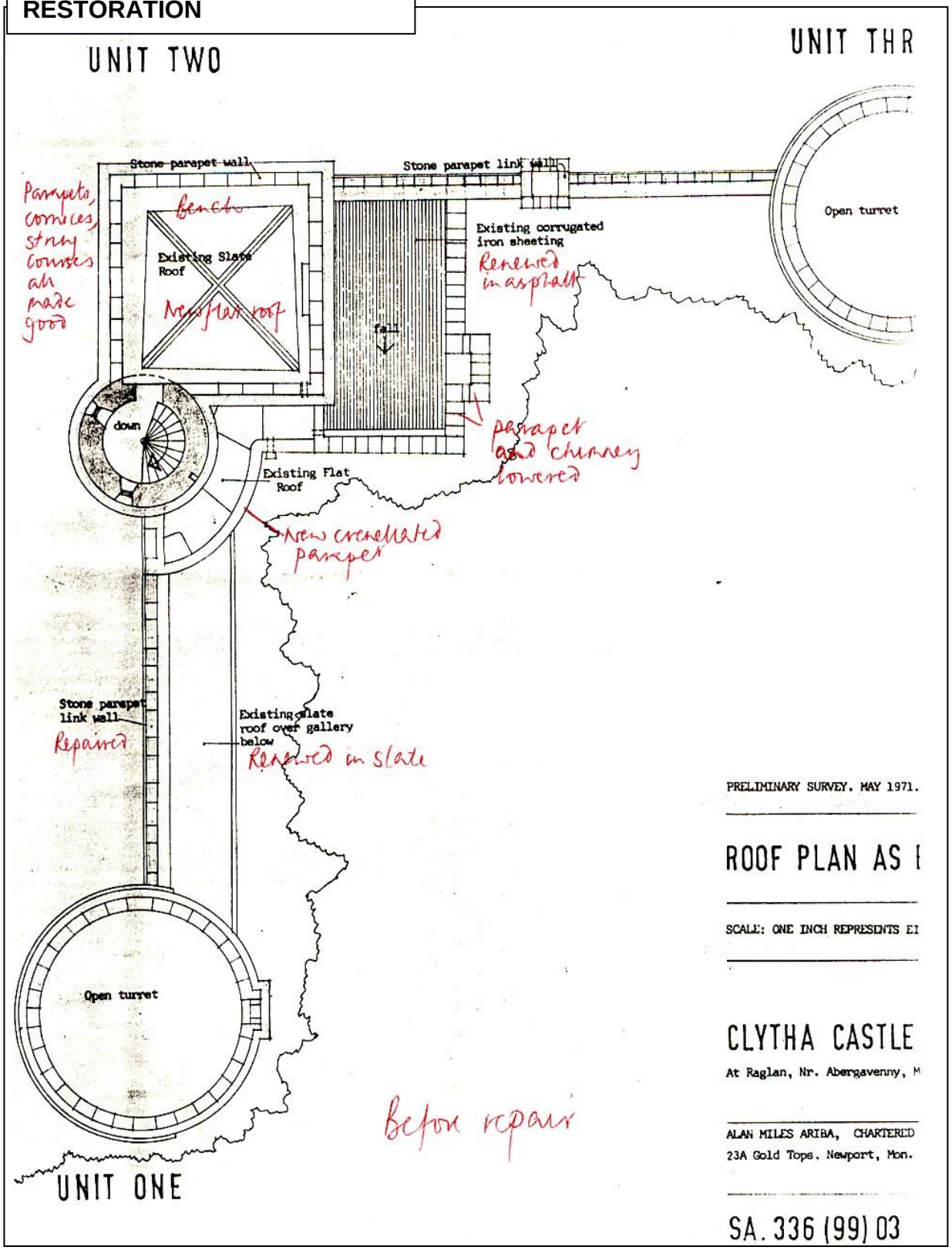

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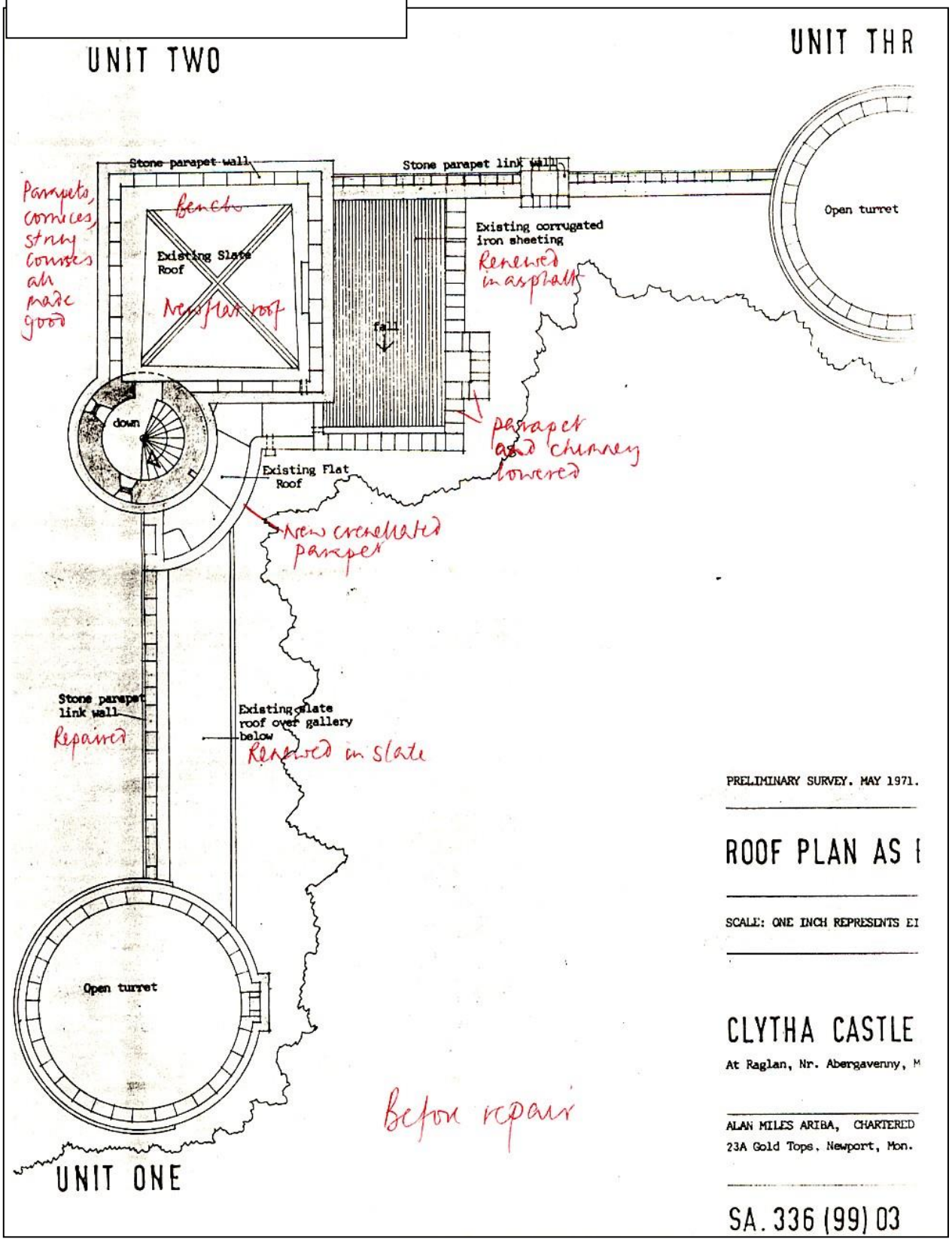

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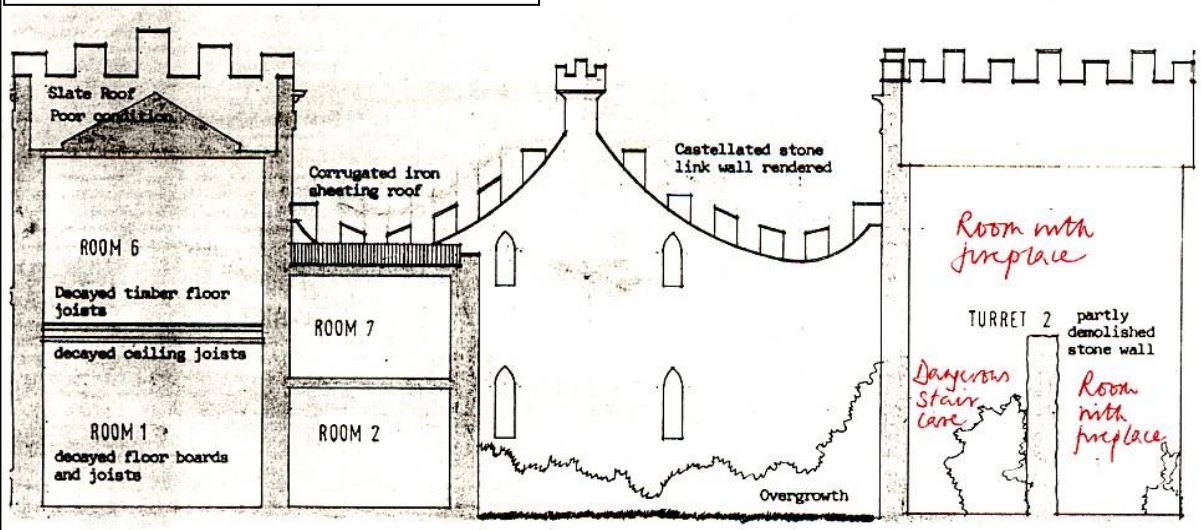


UNIT TWO

UNIT THREE

Before repair.

PRELIMINARY SURWEY MAY 1971.

SECTION AS EXISTING

SCALE: ONE INCH REPRESENTS EIGHT FEET

CLYTHA CASTLE/FOLLY

At Raglan, Nr.Abergavenny, Mon.

ALAN MILES ARIBA, CHARTERED ARCHITECT

23A Gold Tops, Newport, Mon. Tel.54711.

Further work, 1992-3

After the 1974 restoration, a number of problems emerged, which made the castle difficult to maintain. It gets more than its fair share of the weather, and the 1970s repairs to the parapets were not enough to stop water seeping into the walls, causing visible staining and invisible damage. The benefits of using lime, rather than cement, in mortars and renders had not been fully realised. Cement render traps the wet and causes further problems, whereas lime mortar draws moisture out of the walls and allows it to evaporate.

Little by little, this problem has been dealt with. In 1992, the top stage of the stair turret was stripped and re-rendered in a lime and sand mix. The parapet was taken down and properly rebuilt at the same time. Architect Andrew Thomas commented that the original masonry was not of high quality, with a lot of poor, and porous, stone being used. At the same time the cornice round the square tower was repaired, and dressed with lead to shed the water more effectively.

In 1993, the replacement of cement render with lime plaster continued on the lower stages of the stair turret and on the parapet of the addition, along with stonework repairs to the curtain wall and round towers. Bath stone has been used where any replacement is needed.

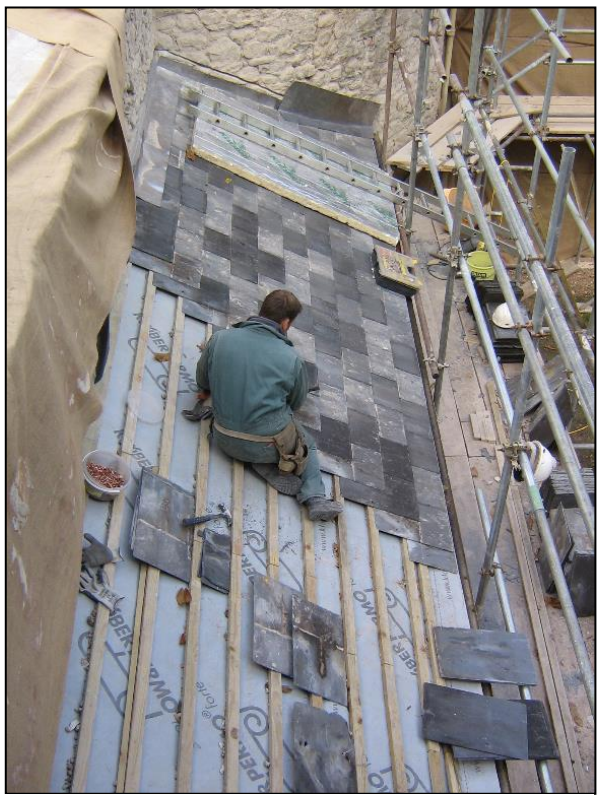
At the same time the remaining cement render on the back of the building was painted with a thin coat of Keim, a porous mineral paint from Germany, designed for cement buildings and cement renders. William Jones and his architect did not give the same attention to the back of the castle as they did to its more visible front. As a result it had always look a little forbidding, but is hopefully, now rather less so.

Further work, 2007

A further maintenance campaign was undertaken in 2007. The cement render was replaced on the northern curtain wall and on that part of the building containing the new bedroom and bathroom (with the same on the floor above). With the exception of the main block (which, being dry lined, has suffered less from the damp than elsewhere) this means all the cement render has now been renewed in hydraulic lime This latest batch is from Ty Mawr and is 'self-coloured' – its pinky-brown colour (which is a good match to earlier phases of repair) comes from the choice of aggregate (sand) used in the mix. There are no plans to paint the render.

Replacing the old cement render along the curtain wall with permeable hydraulic lime in 2007. The pinkish colour comes from the aggregate used to bulk out the lime putty.

Finishing the render for a smooth finish.



Re-slating the corridor.

The concrete ringbeam above the kitchen, introduced to prevent this tower spreading.

Piecing in a stone repair.

In addition, merlons (the high sections of crenellations) have been re-bedded; lead flashings renewed, and the roof over the link corridor re-slated. The kitchen tower had signs of spreading and so a new reinforced concrete ring beam has been installed just above the roof level of the kitchen below.

Several areas of damaged stonework (for example around the sitting room and corridor external doors) had new pieces carefully matched in. Rotten cills or jambs in many of the windows were repaired and redecorated. The internal shutters to the windows of the sitting room and bedroom above were all overhauled for a better fit, and several of the windows that had ceased to open were also completely overhauled with new sash pulleys and cords.

Window repairs

Many of the stone treads to the spiral staircase had been crudely repaired in the past with dark cement. These patches have been cut out and replaced with a closely matching Bath stone. The rope handrail was replaced with a blacksmith-made metal rail. The stairs can now be seen in their full spiralling glory.

Over the years, we had also begun to feel that the spaces in the Castle could be better utilised. The dining room was always rather small for six people and worse still if you had two guests. The occupants of the ground floor bedroom in the round tower had to travel a long way and upstairs to the only bathroom. Equally, it may have been the most romantic of bedrooms, but it was also only enjoyed by two of those staying in the Landmark. The 2007 refurbishment therefore also aimed to address some of these issues.

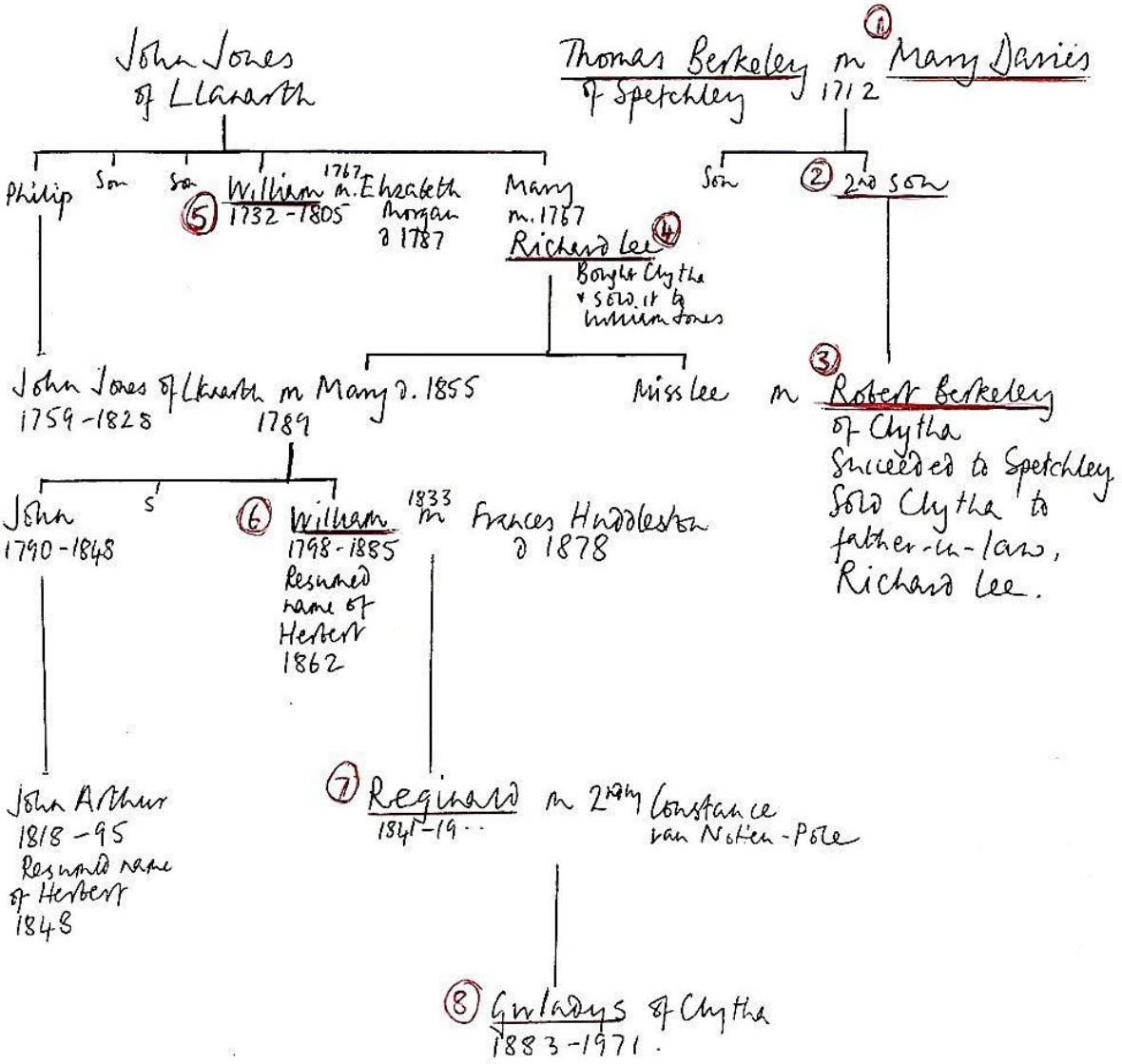
In 2007, the ground floor bedroom in the round tower was moved into the former dining room in the main block. The doorway into the sitting room (which was a Landmark insertion as part of the original restoration) was blocked up on the bedroom side, but left as a shallow cupboard on the sitting room side. This doorway had to be blocked to create space for the bed against this wall. The north wall of this room suffered badly from damp, and so was dry lined.

The former kitchen (by now judged rather small and poorly arranged by today's standards) became an additional (en-suite) bathroom to this new ground floor bedroom. The eastern part of the bathroom has been divided off to form much needed storage for both Landmarkers and the Housekeepers (and to separate the incoming mains electrics from the bathroom). We kept the existing stone floor and repointed it.

The former bedroom in the southerly round tower was made instead into a combined kitchen and dining room. Landmark's joiner Mark Smitten made the new curved kitchen which turned out to be quite a challenge, but was good practice for a similar kitchen for Clavell Tower, whose restoration was also nearing completion in these months. The stone floor was also repointed. New water, drainage and electricity supplies were laid under the courtyard to the kitchen. Quite a lot of rewiring was also necessary throughout the building but especially in the new kitchen and bathroom areas. A new wireless fire alarm system was installed and the entire property was redecorated internally, and the softwood timber floors were re-treated. All the night storage heaters were replaced, and some new ones added.

The front door used to open straight into the old kitchen. This door is now blocked internally (in the new storage cupboard) but is retained externally, though its door furniture, threshold and external light were removed. The existing door, newly repaired, at the southern end of the link corridor to the new kitchen became the new front door, with a simple path laid through the lawn to reach it. Thus long-standing ambitions have been reached, both to maintain Clytha Castle's fabric and, we hope, allow it the better to function as a Landmark.

Family Tree Showing Owners of Clytha



Owners of Clytha are underlined in red

The Jones and the Herberts

The Jones of Clytha were descended from Henry FitzHerbert, Chamberlain to Henry I and common ancestor of the family of Herbert. One of this family, Howel, son of the Lord of Wernddu, was seated at Treowen, near Monmouth, and his son David was killed in the War of the Roses, following the standard of his cousin, William Herbert, the 1st Earl of Pembroke, at the Battle of Banbury in 1469. His descendant William ap John (son of John) first adopted the English custom of assuming a fixed surname, in 1553, when John was softened to Jones. His great-grandson, Sir Philip Jones, supported the Royalist cause in the Civil War. He was Lt. Colonel of the Monmouth troops and was engaged in the defence of Raglan Castle before it surrendered to General Fairfax.

Soon after the Restoration, William, son of Sir Philip Jones, moved his home from Treowen to Llanarth Court, originally known as Hendre-obaith and for many years the principal seat of the family. Some years later the Squire of Llanarth was John Jones, whose fourth son was William, born in 1732. It was this William who later bought the estate at Clytha from his brother-in-law, Richard Lee, and built the Castle in 1790.

William married Elizabeth Morgan of Tredegar on 6th July, 1767. She was the last surviving child of Sir William Morgan, K.B., one of the richest men in South Wales. Her mother was Lady Rachel Cavendish, daughter of the 2nd Duke of Devonshire. Sir William died aged only 31 in 1731. His epitaph states that "Though he came when young to the possession of Power, Honour, an high Alliance, and a great estate; Yet they neither made him forget himself nor his father's friends". Elizabeth's brother, another William, died unmarried in 1763, when the Tredegar estate went to his uncle.

Considerable wealth was also settled on Elizabeth. In the words of the Cambrian Traveller's Guide of 1805 she was "a woman of uncommon excellence, the heiress of the house of Tredegar, who, with her hand, bestowed upon the present proprietor a very splendid fortune". Their married life seems to have been very happy; he was clearly devastated when she died in 1787, aged 58.

Her funeral must have been a sumptuous affair: his account book records that it cost £328.8s.9d altogether. Furthermore, in September, 1789, he had her coffin raised and "entered into a new vault" in the churchyard at Llanarth, according to her wish "that she might not be buried in any Church". Despite the fact that he was a Catholic, he chose to be buried with his wife at Llanarth. Their tomb, which is on the edge of the churchyard nearest Clytha (and from which the Castle may be seen) is simplicity itself: a stone slab engraved with their names and dates, surrounded by railings.

This is in marked contrast to the "Inscription written by her most afflicted and most grateful husband, as a feeble Effort to do some Justice to the Memory of the best of Wives, and faintly to express that sense of her Goodness so indelibly engraven on his Heart" that embellishes her monument inside the church. This was erected in the Spring of 1790 by Robert Tombling, possibly the same mason employed by Lord Methuen at Corsham Court on various occasions between 1769 and 1786.

William died aged 73 on 14th April, 1805. He and Elizabeth had no children, so he left his estate to his great-nephew William Jones (a copy of whose portrait, with those of his father and great-uncle, hangs in the small north bedroom). This younger William was in fact a great-nephew twice over, his parents being each other's first cousin (see family tree). It was particularly appropriate that he should inherit Clytha since his maternal grandfather, Richard Lee, had originally sold it to William Jones the elder.

When he inherited, little William was only seven years old, and probably grew up at Llanarth, where his father lived. Clytha was perhaps let to a tenant, or left empty. William the elder had apparently concentrated his energies on beautifying his garden and park, and did little to the house itself, an early Georgian building which is supposed to have been very damp. His only addition to it seems to have been the

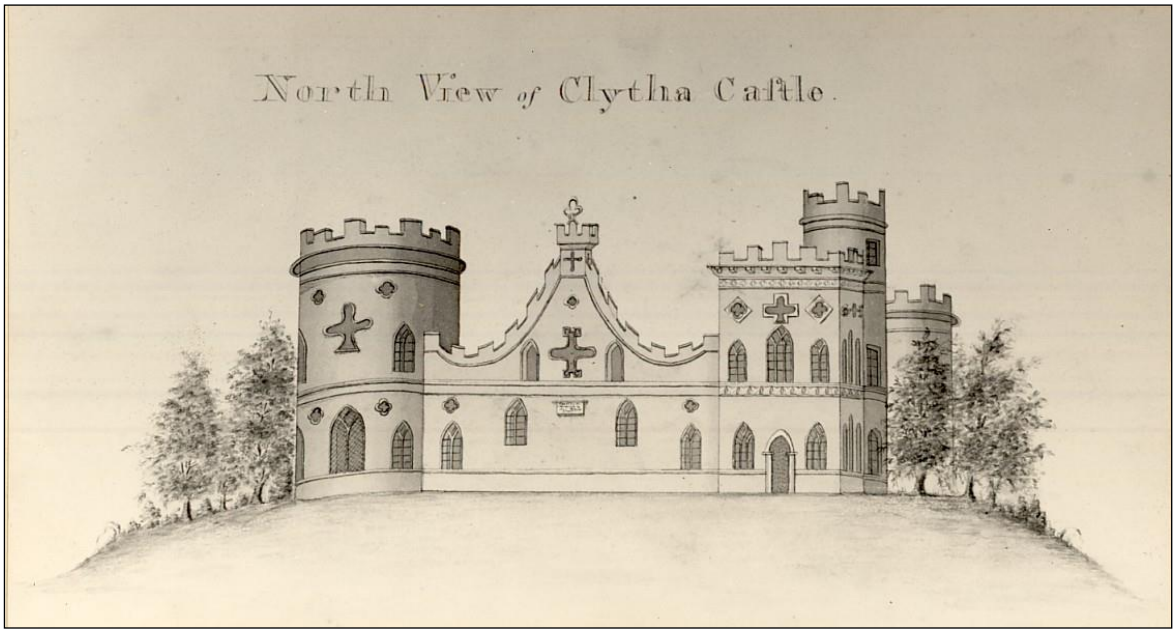
porch-cum-loggia which shows in a view of the house. This was embellished with four statues, one of which survives. It is of Coade stone, and is stamped Coade & Sealy, which dates it to after 1799, and therefore to the last years of William's life.

Soon after William the younger came of age, he started making plans for building an entirely new house to the designs of Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury, as described in Richard Haslam's *Country Life* article of 1977.

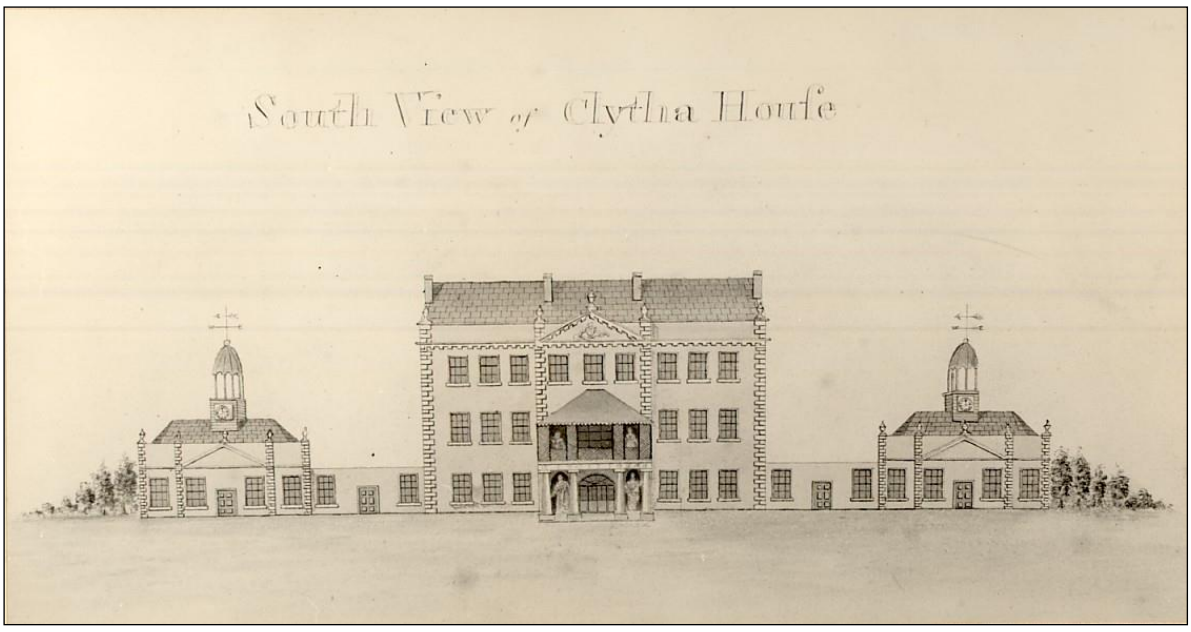
No. 10.—*Inscription in the Chancel of Lanarth Church* :—

Sacred
to the Memory of
ELIZABETH
Wife of WILLIAM JONES, Esquire,
of CLYTHA HOUSE in this PARISH,
who requesting that she might not be buried in any Church,
lies interred in the adjoining Church Yard.
She was the last surviving Issue and Heir at Law of
Sir William Morgan of Tredegar
in this County, K.B.
by the Right Honourable the Lady Rachel Cavendish,
eldest daughter to William Second Duke of Devonshire ;
Her Goodness and her Worth
were so eminently conspicuous,
that the most finished monumental eulogy
would vainly endeavour to display them.
Yet as she always modestly shrunk from observation,
and studiously strove to conceal her various Endowments ;
Justice to her Memory requires,
that some, tho' a very imperfect, sketch
of her Character be here attempted :
She was blest with every hereditary Virtue
of the most illustrious House of Cavendish :
meek, humble, patient,
generous, friendly, noble ;
Happily adorn'd with a most extensive Genius,
her Knowledge was vast and uncommon :
In Poetry, Music, Botany, and all the polite Arts,
She excell'd ;
as her Manuscripts abundantly testify :
To enumerate her Virtues were impossible ;
She was, in short,
Purity and Innocence itself :
for if ever those Virtues were personified,
they were in her.
An utter Stranger to every species of Detraction,
She never spoke of her neighbour, but with praise and commendation.
With a Heart ever bleeding at the Distresses of others,
the great business and delight of her Life was
"To do good, and to distribute."
Being too good to continue any longer in this World.
She receiv'd with Resignation, her Summons from its Miseries,
to the Reward of a Glorious Immortality,
on the 14th day of January, 1787,
in the 58th Year of her Age.
This Marble was erected,
and this Inscription written
by her most afflicted and most grateful Husband,
as a feeble Effort to do some Justice
to the Memory of the best of Wives,
and faintly to express that sense of her Goodness
so indelibly engraven
on his Heart.

Dear honored Shade ! If Angels e'er bestow
A thought on what is acted here below :
With pitying eye this weak attempt survey,
The last sad tribute which thy Friend can pay.
Thou best of Women ! once my greatest pride,
Dearer to me than all the World beside ;
If various Knowledge ever claim'd regard,
If meek-eyed Patience ever met reward,
If e'er the milder Virtues were approv'd,
If spotless Honor ever was belov'd,
If mortals may departed Worth revere,
Still let thy Husband shed the silent tear ;
Still let him hug thy Image to his heart,
From which it never, never shall depart.
Yet, yet awhile, and then 'twill be my lot,
To join thy dust in yon sequester'd spot.
Mean time, as flowers spontaneous round it bloom,
May white-robed Innocence bedeck thy tomb ;
May solemn requiems float upon the air,
For ever sweet to listening sorrow's ear ;
While I, observant of thy virtues, strive
Like thee to suffer and like thee to live.



Undated sketch, probably of about 1800, belonging to the Hanbury Tenisons of Clytha Park. The artist has drawn sashes in the windows of the curtain wall, giving the impression of rooms behind, but there is no evidence that there ever were any; indeed these windows appear always to have been blank.



Sketch by the same artist of old Clytha House. The two-storey porch, with its four statues by Coade & Sealy, seems to have been added by William Jones between 1799 and his death in 1805.

Work began in 1821, and a year or two later the old house was demolished. It is said that William had lived in the old house with his mother, but this seems unlikely, since his father only died in 1828.

In 1833, William married Frances Huddleston at St. Mary's, Marylebone. In 1862 he changed his name to Herbert after a long and acrimonious debate. His nephew, John Arthur Jones of Llanarth Court, had started the ball rolling. In 1848, he obtained a Royal Licence for himself, his siblings, and all their children, to resume the name of Herbert, used by other descendants of the Lords of Wernddu, of whom the Llanarth Jones were now the senior line. Presumably, William considered that what applied to his nephew applied also to him, but the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Llanover (also John Arthur's father-in-law), thought otherwise. He declared that no licence had been obtained for the Clytha family, and blocked the claim for some time before his objection was overuled.

What the Llanarth Herberts thought about their uncle's claim is not recorded, nor do we know the opinion of the Earl of Pembroke, the most illustrious of the Herberts. A story is told that John Arthur Jones had in fact asked Lord Pembroke if he minded him taking the name in 1848. The earl replied that he didn't, provided that, if there were more such requests, he might be allowed to change his own name to Jones! The addition of the Clytha family does not seem to have tipped the balance, however.

William the Younger died in 1885, leaving Clytha to his son Reginald. Reggie Herbert was a well known sporting and racing figure, and a famous Master of Foxhounds for Monmouthshire from 1885 until 1903, when he retired to the great regret of all his friends. His own memoirs, *When Diamonds Were Trumps* are full of stories about his sporting triumphs and other exploits. One of these reminiscences concerned a toll-gate at Clytha.

The road through the park at Clytha (until recently the A40), was the main Turnpike or toll road from Raglan to Abergavenny. In 1872 a new toll-gate was put up by the Clytha Arms, half a mile from the gates to the house. It was strenuously opposed by

the local people, particularly the farmers, who bitterly resented the charges they would now have to pay.

When feeling was at its height, Reggie Herbert gave a house party for the local races; among his guests was the great sportsman, Q, the Marquess of Queensbury. On their way back from the races they decided that the toll-gate was intolerable, so they charged their four-in-hand straight through it.

That night, Reggie Herbert, Q, and the rest of his friends dressed themselves up in white nightshirts and blackened their faces like the Rebecca Rioters of thirty years before, when the farmers of South Wales had waged war against the Turnpikes. They mounted their horses and in the dark charged down on the toll-gate shouting: "Rebecca Rides! Rebecca Rides!" The inhabitants of the Clytha Arms hid under their bedclothes while the gate and the toll house were demolished and thrown into the river. The toll-gate was never re-opened.

Reggie Herbert's second wife was Constance van Notten-Pole, whom he married at the Servite Catholic Church on the Fulham Road in London in 1882. Their daughter Gwladys, who never married, lived at Clytha until she handed it over to the Welsh Office in the 1950s. She died in 1971.

Early inhabitants of Clytha

> ‘Clytha the giant in the parish of Bettws Newydd, his dwelling was in the place called the Trenches of Clytha Fortress. And his land is today called the land of Clytha in the parish of Llanarth ... Crov the giant, his residence was in the place which is still called the land of Crov in the parish of Bettws Newydd. These were the sons of Buch the giant of the country of Gwent’.

This is from an account of Welsh giants in the Peniarth MSS in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth, written at the end of the 16th century.

Clytha Fortress is the Iron Age hill fort called Coed-y-bonedd, a mile south of the Castle, on Clytha Hill. It was probably built by the Celtic people who sailed up the Severn about 150 A.D. They are thought to have come from the north of Spain, and lived in fortified places like this until about 500 A.D. Coed-y-Bonedd means the wood of the gentry. It now belongs to the National Trust. Crov was probably the earthwork on Tump farm, west of the road from the old A40 to Bettws Newydd.

In the 12th century, Aeddan ap Gwaethfoed was Lord of Clytha and Grosmont. He founded the churches of Bettws Newydd and Bryngwyn and also a chapel at Clytha. This is marked on larger scale maps as Capel Aeddan (remains of), half a mile west of Clytha Park. Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Itinerary of Wales* describes how he and Archbishop Baldwin met this nobleman on the road from Usk to Abergavenny in 1188, and conversed:

> ‘Being questioned whether he (Aeddan) would take the Cross, he replied: "That could not be done without the advice of his friends". The Archbishop then asked him, "Are you going to ask your wife?" He modestly answered with a downcast look, "When the work of a man is to be done the counsel of a woman ought not to be asked", and instantly received the Cross from the Archbishop.’

In the 17th century Clytha belonged to the Davies family. Mary, the daughter of Robert Davies, married in 1712 Thomas Berkeley of Spetchley in Worcestershire. In 1715 they were living at Clytha. Thomas was a Catholic and his estate was valued at £181.10s per annum. Clytha passed to their second son, and then to his son Robert. When Robert succeeded to Spetchley, he sold Clytha to his father-in-law, Richard Lee. This Mr Lee, described in a pedigree as being of Clytha and Llanfoist in Monmouthshire, and Great Delce in Kent, had married Mary Jones, daughter of John Jones of Llanarth and the sister of William, to whom he sold the Clytha estate. William Jones thus acquired the Georgian house built by one of the Berkeleys.

CLYTHA PARK, GWENT—I

THE HOME OF MR AND MRS RICHARD HANBURY TENISON

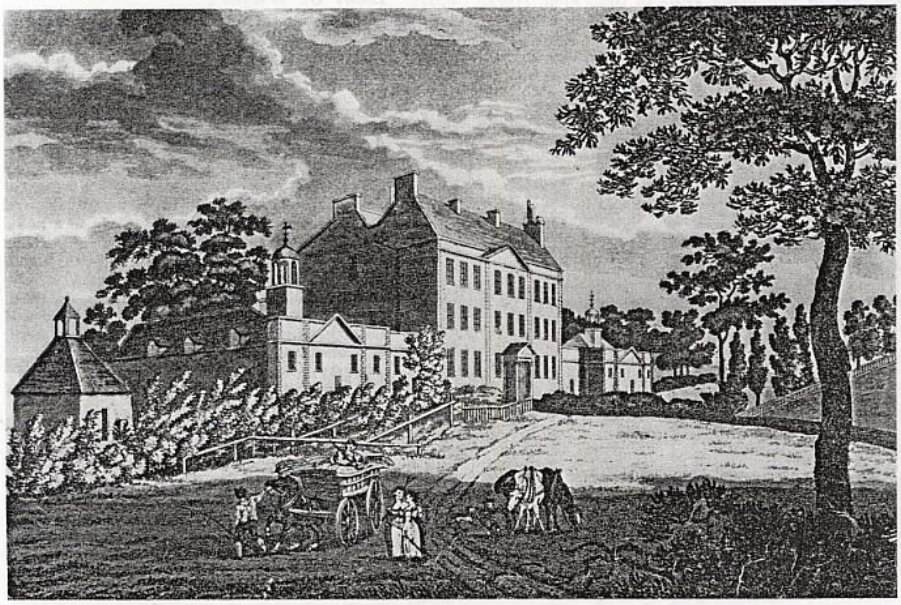
By RICHARD HASLAM

William Jones of Clytha was the first to move there from Llanarth, an ancient seat of the Herbert family nearby. This article describes his 18th-century Gothic garden buildings, and the rebuilding of the house itself by his great-nephew, another William Jones.

1—CLYTHA SEEN FROM THE NORTH. It was rebuilt for William Jones the younger by Edward Haycock, of Shrewsbury, between 1821 and 1828

GENERATIONS of travellers on the turnpike that has become the A40 must have been captivated when, leaving the high ground dominated by the ruins of Raglan Castle, they pass through a deep rock cutting to emerge into a small piece of arcadia. The falling ground permits splendid distant views to the cleft of the Usk between Blorenge and the Sugar Loaf, to the Little Skirrid and the hills of north Monmouthshire. The flattish middle ground—the valley floor of the Usk—is covered by the parks of Llansantffraed House and Llanarth Court. Immediately round about is the parkland created by William Jones of Clytha, with a glimpse of the Castle, his Georgian hilltop folly, on the left, and his Gothic gateway lower down on the right.

It would surely please him that the present state of affairs is a happy one, for he spent his years as a widower in building a personal landscape rather as Thomas Johnes was to do at Hafod in West Wales, and he took great care to pass it on safely. In this article an attempt will be made to elucidate his branch of the large and ancient Herbert family and the buildings erected by him and his great-nephew; the second article will deal with the Hanburys, the other Monmouthshire family into which the Clytha estate has passed, and describe the recent restorations and also the Hanbury houses that have thereby become connected. It is curious—and confusing—how the fates of one of these houses, Coldbrook, and of Clytha have become intertwined with these two families. Whereas Clytha was a Herbert house between the time of William Jones the elder and recently, when it became a National Trust and Hanbury one, Coldbrook was from the Middle Ages until about 1730 and from 1889 a Herbert house, but in the meantime was a Hanbury one.



2—THE GEORGIAN HOUSE AT CLYTHA, BUILT FOR A BRANCH OF THE BERKELEY FAMILY. An engraving from David Williams's *History of Monmouthshire* (1796)

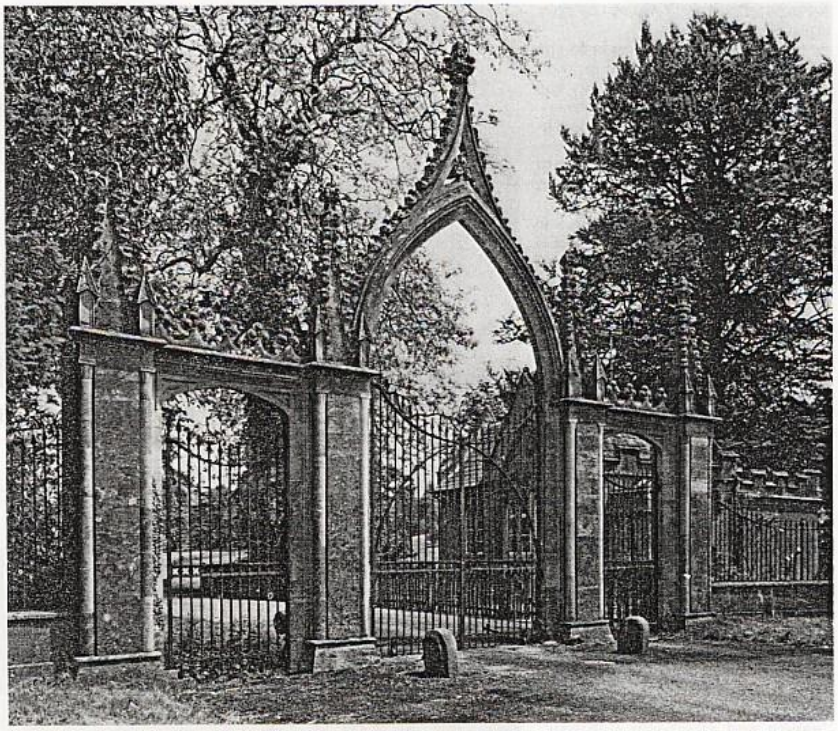
The connections between the Herbert family and the Llanarth estate go back a very long way. Besides Clytha there are in Llanarth parish two ancient manors, Llanarth and Hendre obaith. Alice Wallis, Sir Joseph Bradney states in his monumenta

History of Monmouthshire, as heiress of the Norman family who held Llanarth, brought this by marriage to Thomas Huntley of Treowen (near Monmouth). One of their granddaughters, Margaret, brought Treowen and a moiety of Llanarth to her husband David ap Jenkin ap Howel; he was lord of Hendre-obaith by his descent from the patriarchal (Herbert) family of Wernddu, near Abergavenny. He died at the battle of Banbury in 1469, fighting for his kinsman William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke. His grandson William was the first to adopt, in the Welsh manner, the surname Jones, the first of many such complexities in this complicated family.

Phillipp Jones, one of his sons, became a wealthy London merchant, and when he died in 1602 he left Hendre-obaith to the son of his brother John Jones of Treowen, named William Jones. It was this William Jones who rebuilt Treowen (COUNTRY LIFE October 27, 1960). His grandson went to live at Hendre-obaith, which he duly renamed Llanarth Court. Several generations later this Llanarth family consisted of two sons, Philip Jones of Llanarth and William Jones of Clytha. He is the first Clytha builder to be considered here. He left the property, by entail, to his great nephew William Jones in 1805. This William Jones the younger was grandson of William the elder's elder brother Philip, and is the second builder —he erected the present house. To confound confusion, the Llanarth family changed their surname to Herbert in 1848, and William Jones the younger did likewise in 1862—the excellent reason being that their line by then was the senior in descent from the Wernddu family.

To conclude the story of the Herberts of Clytha before returning to William the elder, William the younger was succeeded by his son Reginald Herbert, a celebrated sportsman, who was Master of the Monmouthshire Foxhounds from 1885 to 1903, and who on his retirement wrote up a lifetime's stories in *When Diamonds were Trumps*. He had no son; but his daughter lived there and eventually transferred the house to the Welsh Office in the 1950s.

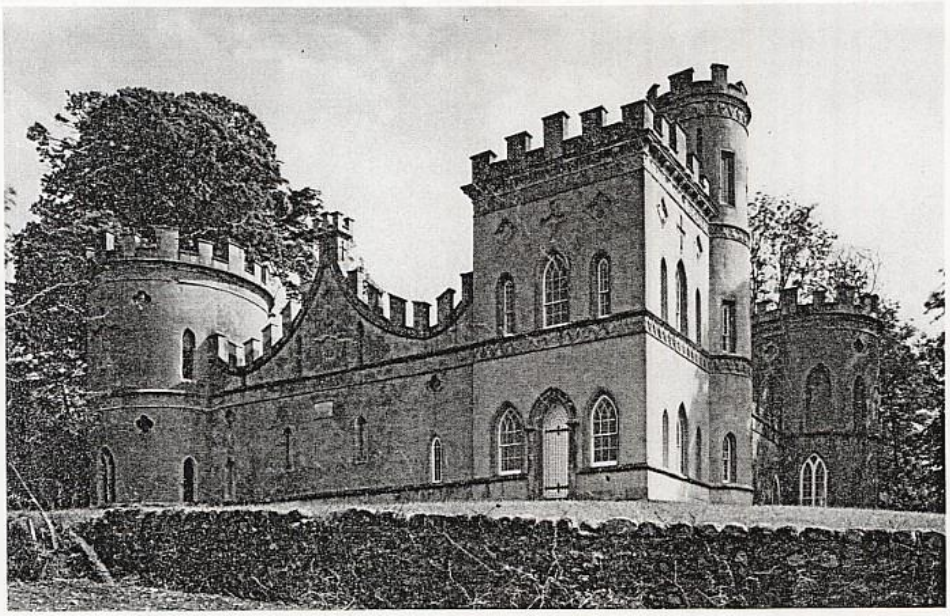
William Jones the elder lived in the old Clytha House, the only representation of which, from David Williams's *History of Monmouthshire*, 1796, is reproduced in Figure 2. It had been built by a branch of the Berkeley family of Spetchley. The brick house was a good size, a double-pile plan with an early-Georgian front of nine bays and three storeys, and flanked by twin single-storey wings each with a small pediment echoing the one on the main block. William married Elizabeth, the daughter of the wealthy Sir William Morgan, of Tredegar Park, near Newport, and a granddaughter of the second Duke of Devonshire. It was her early death in 1787 that prompted her widower to embellish Clytha.



3—THE GOTHICK GATEWAY, BUILT FOR WILLIAM JONES THE ELDER. "The soaring central arch is a *tour-de-force*"

The Herbert family remained Catholics at the Reformation and although one can usefully go to Llanarth church for the funerary inscription of Elizabeth Jones, who stayed an Anglican on her marriage, one must look elsewhere for William. The Clytha Herberts are buried in the small Roman Catholic cemetery in the village of The Pit; and at Llanarth, which is now a boarding school, the family built in the 1790s an interesting separate chapel which survives little altered. The quite plain tablet in Llanarth church gives rather more personal detail than one would expect, and states disarmingly that even "the most finished monumental eulogy" would fail to do her justice.

Perhaps it was to the gates (Fig 3) that William, then in his mid '50s, first turned his attention. They copy the triumphal arch pattern in 18th-century Gothic, and the soaring central arch is a *tour-de-force*. There is something of Sanderson Miller and Batty Langley in the piers, each with its angle colonnettes and tiny pinnacles, and in the leafy crocketted outlines of the pinnacles capping the piers and of the graceful open ogee in the middle. Above the footpath doorways rows of shamrocks are silhouetted, which could be seen as reflecting Elizabeth Jones's botanical interests. The gates themselves have the simplest of ironwork, but their outline above the transom bars echoes that of the arches.



4—CLYTHA CASTLE, A PICTURESQUE HILL-TOP FOLLY NOW RESTORED BY THE LANDMARK TRUST. It was built in 1790 by William Jones the elder in memory of his wife. The commemorative tablet is shown in Figure 9

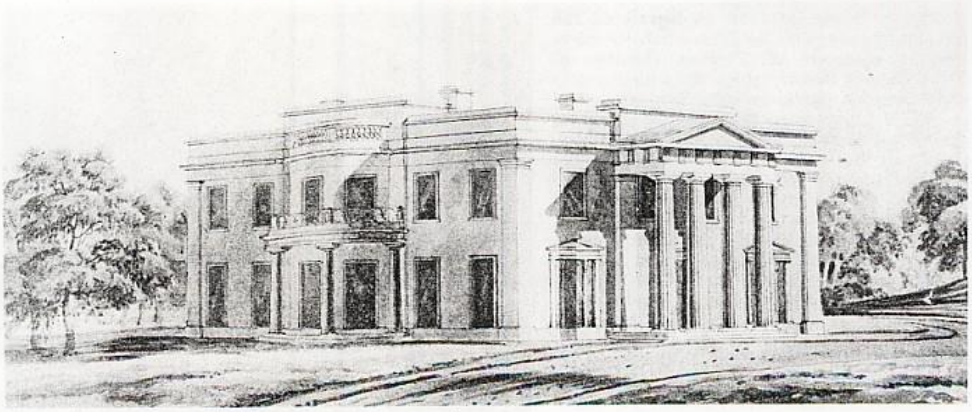
It may seem surprising that no features of a garden earlier than the 1790s are discernible. The D plan walled kitchen garden has doorways with pointed arches, apparently of this time. William Jones's main activity in the last decade of the century was to form what he repeatedly called in his will in 1802 "the pleasure grounds". The northwesterly slopes were planted with beech trees which, having as in so many parks reached maturity, were badly affected by the drought of 1976. Replacements are already in the ground, another reminder that parklands will be needing attentive management to make good recent damage. The 19th-century plantings include Spanish and horse chestnut and lime, all

fortunately proof against the grey squirrel when replaced.

On the top of an angle in the hills is the Castle in which he took such pride (Fig 4). It faces the finest of the views to the west—like the new house in the north-east, but turning away from it—a deliberate eyecatcher and again in Gothick. The inscription on the front reads (Fig 9): "This Building was erected in the Year 1790 by WILLIAM JONES of Clytha House Esq . . . Husband of Elizabeth the last surviving Child of Sir WILLIAM MORGAN of Tredegar K.B. . . . It was undertaken for the purpose of relieving a mind sincerely afflicted by the loss of a most excellent Wife whose Remains were deposited in Llanarth Church Yard AD 1787 and to the Memory of whose Virtues this Tablet is dedicated." The idea seems analogous to the temple of 18th-century sensibility, dedicated to a great man, but adopted here in the form of a picturesque folly castle. The style is dissimilar to that of the gates, and the authorship of both designs remains a mystery. If they are unlikely to be Jones's, the likeliest source is perhaps a Bristol or Bath architect. Loudon rules himself out as a possibility with the remark that the Castle is "gaudy and affectedly common" in his Treatise on Country Residences.

There is a strong element of the picturesque in the loose grouping of its square and round towers on an L plan. The Gothic detail is freely and amusingly handled—the merlons in the battlements are here of alternate heights, there build up to an apex, and on the main link wall they follow the concave-sided gable up to a crow's nest. The richest portion with its Georgian lancet windows, bands of cusped stonework and recessed arrowslits, is the square tower, which has a three-storey stair turret half enclosed at one angle. Apart from the right-hand tower, this was the main habitable section, with Gothic grates and formerly some plasterwork; in the 19th century the upper room was used as a chapel. Now restored for the Landmark Trust by Mr Alan Miles, the stucco is painted a warm buff. Its new use for holiday parties seems particularly appropriate, and it is situated within easy reach of Glamorgan and South Breconshire as well as all of Gwent.

William Jones the elder died in 1805, when William the younger, his great-nephew, was only seven. The younger William lived in the old house with his mother, rebuilt it well before his marriage in 1833, and lived on till 1885. The Georgian Clytha is said to have been extremely damp, since it faced north and was apparently close to the hill on the south. It presumably remained standing for practical



5—HAYCOCK'S PERSPECTIVE FOR CLYTHA. (*Below*) 6—THE HOUSE AS BUILT. "Why the order of the portico should have been changed to Ionic is an unanswered problem"

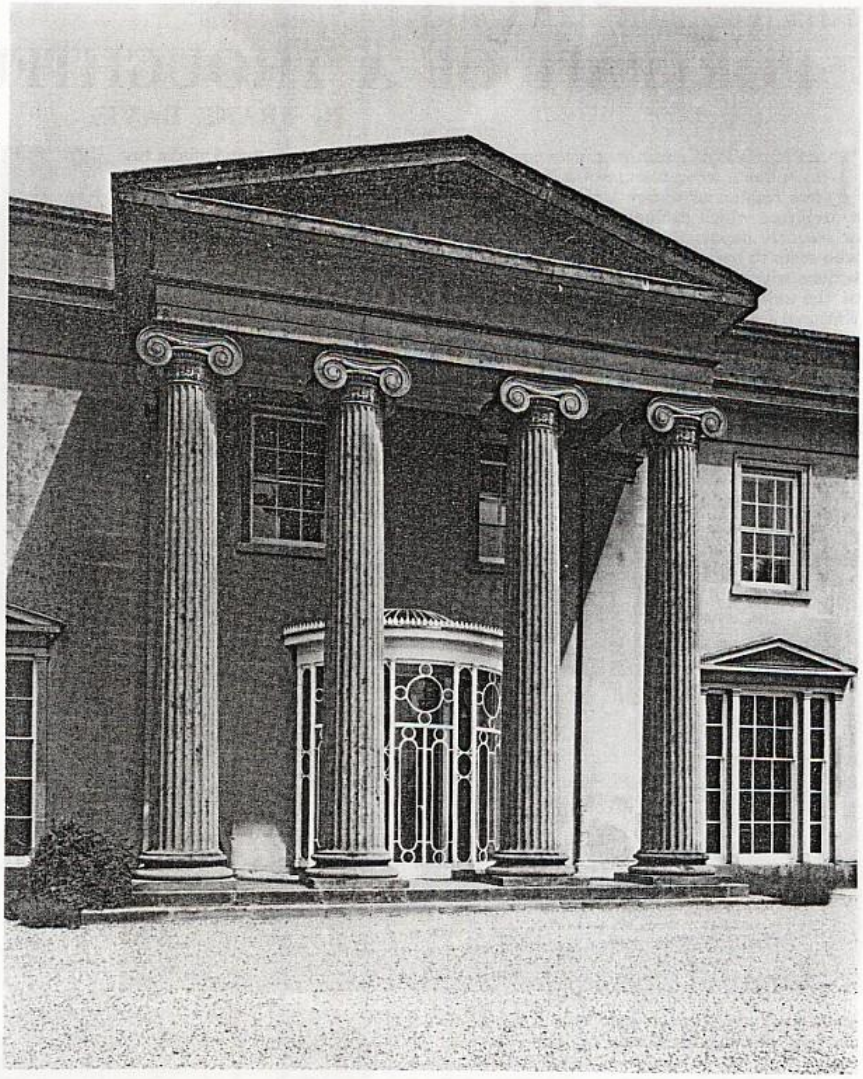
reasons, and window tax was paid on it in 1822, while work on a new site had commenced in 1821. This operation consisted in providing the new house (Fig 1) with an artificial mound to raise it out of the wet ground. The extent of the earthmoving is distinct in the photograph as a contrast with the hay field. The cellars were built first and then filled round so as to be totally concealed (Fig 7), work which continued till 1824 and which resulted in the lake being formed from the excavation. Like the kitchen garden and the layout designed by H. Avray Tipping this is some distance from the new house. In 1824 also is the first mention in the estate accounts of Edward Haycock, the architect of the new house.

Unfortunately the building accounts do not survive for what is Haycock's first complete house. How a Shrewsbury architect came to be involved here and in 1829 at Monmouth Shire Hall is not yet clear. About 1820 he made plans for a new entrance wing to the Wingfield family's Onslow Hall, in Shropshire, now demolished. This shows him already the master of a severe Greek Doric style, which he employed again in the perspective for Clytha (Fig 5). Why the order of the portico should have been changed to Ionic (Fig 6), leaving the other elevations with Doric columns as in the verandah wrapped round the segmental bow facing north, is another unanswered problem. But the change has some significance in relation to his subsequent treatment of Millichope (COUNTRY LIFE, February 10, 1977), where Doric appears at the basement entrance and Ionic in the more ample main order.

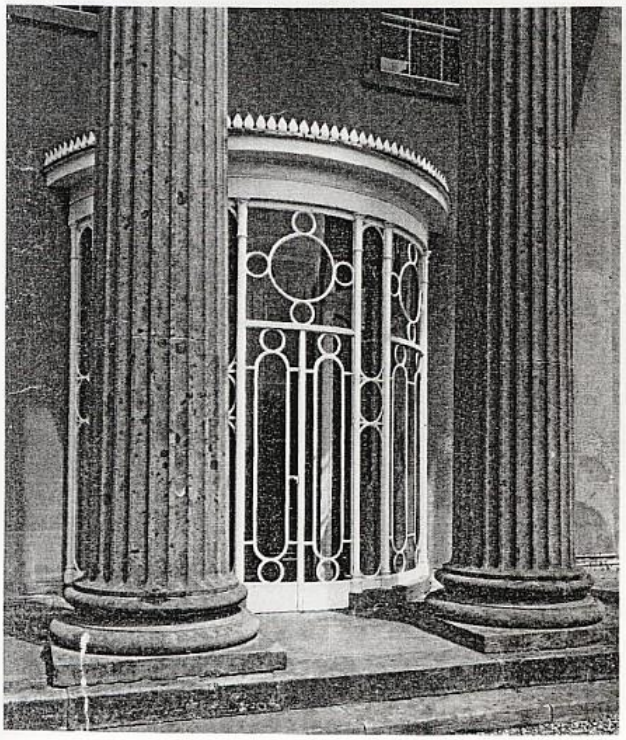
Clytha Park's grandest aspect is that facing southwest towards the Castle, where a beautifully proportioned tetrastyle portico of giant fluted Ionic columns stands out in bold relief (Fig 8). The precision of the cutting of the capitals is set off against smooth Bath stone walls. The central feature of the northwest side with its segmental balustrade placed against an attic is rather less pure. Originally the front was not wholly symmetrical, but the small-scale orangery on the right has now been removed. The charming weather porch (Fig 10) seems to be an afterthought; it has curved glass panels in an iron frame, patterned with circles and a roof which is an inversion of the hall's.

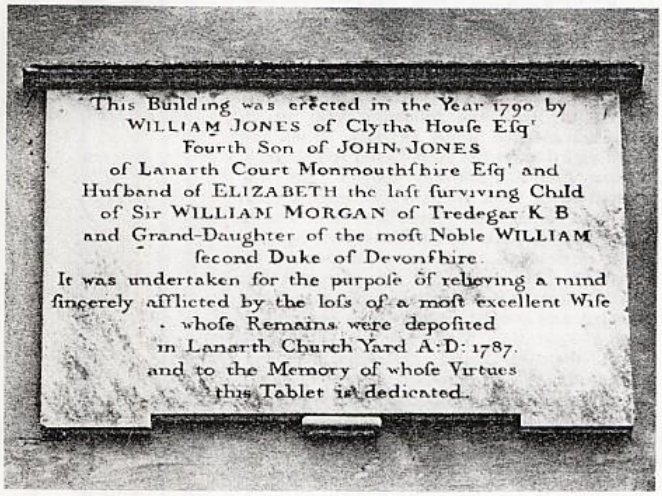
Illustrations: 1-4, 6-9, *Alex Starkey;* 5, *National Monuments Record.*

(*To be concluded*)



8—THE PORTICO





9—THE TABLET PLACED ON THE FRONT OF CLYTHA CASTLE (Figure 4) BY WILLIAM JONES THE ELDER

(*Left*) 10—A DETAIL OF THE IRON AND GLASS WEATHER PORCH. "This seems to be an afterthought; it has curved glass panels in an iron frame patterned with circles"

CLYTHA PARK, GWENT—II

THE HOME OF MR AND MRS RICHARD HANBURY TENISON

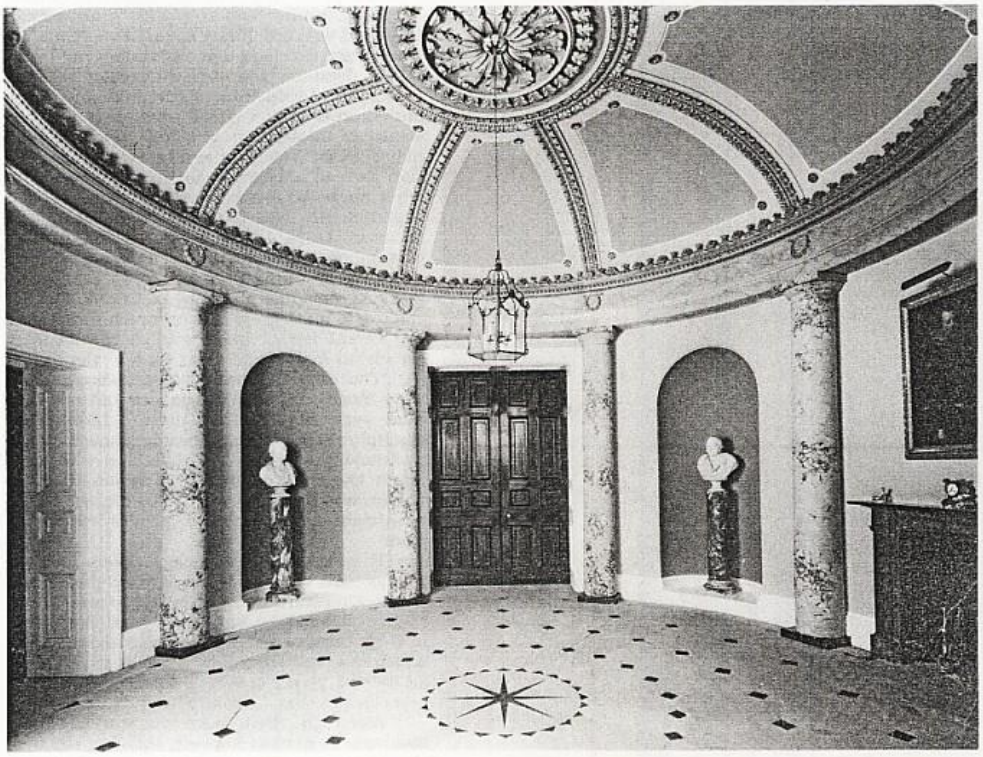
By RICHARD HASLAM

The neo-Classical interiors at Clytha, designed by Edward Haycock and completed about 1828, *have recently been restored, incorporating features from the Hanbury family's Pontypool Park, now a school, and Coldbrook, which was pulled down in* 1954.

WHEN William Jones the younger engaged Edward Haycock for his new house, the architect responded with what have remained among the most complete series of neo-Classical rooms in Wales. These have emerged from wartime dilapidation with their gradual restoration initially by the Welsh Office and since 1972 by Mr Hanbury Tenison, who holds the house on long lease from the National Trust. The incorporation of elements from other houses in Gwent with longer Hanbury connections has added to their interest.

Externally the house is compact and rather deeper than it is broad, the result of the measured handling of the circulation areas. The main entrance (Fig 1) leads directly into a circular hall with a low and shallow dome (Fig 2). This is an austere room, articulated with eight engaged Tuscan columns in yellow scagliola supporting a heavy entablature which is also marbled. The walls are of plaster, now grey-painted, in which four niches are hollowed, facing each other diagonally. Doorcases occupy three main axes, with a fireplace on the fourth. The plasterwork of the frieze, in which the Grecian leaf-forms stand free of the vault, is extremely fine. Decorative ribs link the columns visually to the central rose, a pattern echoed in the paving on the floor.

1—THE MAIN FRONT. The portico and circulation areas are the most elaborate parts of the House. The sequence of orders is Ionic, Tuscan and Doric



2—CIRCULAR ENTRANCE HALL. The walls are grey, with yellow scagliola columns and grey marbling on the entablature

This circular entrance hall recalls the vestibule at Oakly Park, in Shropshire, where Haycock would have known the work done by Cockerell in 1820. One of the characteristics of Haycock's domestic work as recently covered in COUNTRY LIFE at Aldenham (July 7, 1977) and at Millichope is his contriving strong spatial effects, and while there is no change of level as originally at Millichope, the succeeding staircase hall (Fig 3) makes its impact by being taller than it is long. At ground-floor level it unites the main rooms. The cantilevered stone staircase climbs in three flights to a gallery, the balusters being of elegant ironwork with more Grecian, gilded motifs. The stairwell in the days of the Jones held a tall white marble group of figures, a copy after Kessels which has now found a place most appropriately, in the 18th-century orangery at Margam, West Glamorgan, recently restored by the Historic Buildings Council. It seems likely that this piece was at Clytha from early days.

At its upper level the stairwell is somewhat comparable with the Shire Hall at Monmouth in its use of Greek Doric columns to screen landings leading to bedrooms (Fig 4). The plaster cresting above the entablature is of the highest quality and it is a pity that more is not known about

the craftsmen; the effect of the honeysuckle antefixes has been accentuated by painting the surfaces behind them a darker tone. Lighting is given solely by a big octagonal lantern, reminiscent of that at Aldenham, carried on squinches above an ornate square frame in the coved ceiling. The static, elegant decoration is in contrast with the much heavier, Roman treatment Haycock gave 20 years later to the stairwell at Stanage.

Haycock's fittings for the house, which seems to have been built between 1824 and 1826, are in fact lighter in style than the exterior, and perhaps just too slight for the scale of the rooms. The drawing-room chimneypiece (Fig 5), ordered in 1828, is a delightful interpretation of the caryatid form, the slender female figures being clothed in symmetrical drapes hanging clear of the feet. There are neo-Classical friezes there and in the dining room, which shares with Coedarhyglyon, near Cardiff, the motif of a recess in the end wall framed by pilasters. The window facing this was obscured in Victorian times by Danby's enormous canvas of *The Deluge*; this has now been reopened and the picture has gone to the Tate Gallery. The main stairs of the old house, rebuilt as the second stair in the new, and its shutter cases, lengthened and reused, contribute on the other hand a hint of the 18th century. This is reinforced by reminders of the Hanbury family's seat in Monmouthshire, Pontypool Park, and of Coldbrook, the demolished home of Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams.

The architectural history of these two nearby houses belongs to the century before the formation of Clytha, and while as so often with Welsh houses there is insufficient documentation, the physical evidence is intrinsically interesting. It also introduces one of the basic themes of Monmouthshire's history, the production of iron.

For the Hanburys of Pontypool the story begins with Richard Hanbury (1538–1608), of an old line in Worcestershire, who as a young man in London was a member of the Company of Mineral and Battery Works. This company was concerned from 1565 in the expansion of the ironworks formerly run by the monks of Tintern Abbey, and in 1570 Richard Hanbury and John Wheeler were appointed to manage the South Wales operations. Very soon, however, Hanbury was acquiring and founding ironworks for his own account as well as buying up large tracts of woodland to secure the necessary charcoal. His great-nephew Richard was able, following his marriage in 1650 to the widow of Sir Edward Morgan of Llantarnam, to add to the property; and from 1660 onwards, Richard's brother and heir, Capel, began to invest the growing profits of the works in widespread purchases of land. During this time the family lived in Gloucester, entrusting the management of the works to a younger branch.

3—THE STAIRCASE HALL

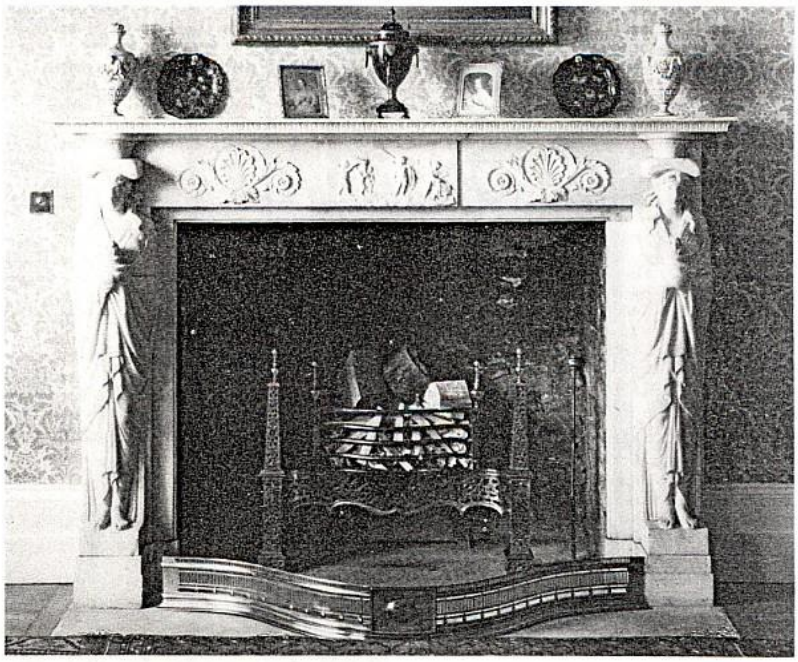
4—DORIC GALLERY WITH NEO-CLASSICAL PLASTERWORK IN THE LANTERN

It was Capel Hanbury's son, Major John Hanbury, born in 1664 and died in 1734, who built the family house at Pontypool, on some 200 acres acquired for the purpose in 1677 and 1689 and laid out as a park. The handsome marble bust (Fig 6) on his memorial in Trevethin church, the old parish church above Pontypool, shows him perhaps in his thirties with the flowing curled hair of the period, a bust not originally intended for funerary use but whose deployment on a monument is quite consistent with the Augustan age. Major Hanbury, as he was always known, has a secure position in the history of the iron industry. By the end of the 17th century the Pontypool works were among the most modern in Europe and perhaps foremost in the manufacture of tinplate. This was due largely to Hanbury's recruitment of brilliant mechanics like Thomas Cooke, and also Edward Allgood, the inventor of Pontypool Japan ware. The arrival of the Allgood family in Pontypool was significant for the arts since for 80 years from 1730 the Japan works produced an unending series of fine vases

trays and other utensils; with their late-Georgian designs in black enriched with gold, they form a counterpart in metal to the contemporary Wedgwood pottery.

One of the largest known pieces of undoubted Pontypool Japan ware is the coloured plaque reproduced in Figure 7. About 22 inches in length, it depicts Pontypool house in 1765, the year in which Major Hanbury's grandson John inherited. The house must date from some 70 years earlier, for there is a record of £4 worth of damage to the glass done by a hailstorm in 1694. A typical William and Mary design of nine windows with a recessed centre, the building shows signs of Georgian modernisation with the addition on the left of a taller, bowed wing containing the dining room. This much survives, recognisable in part despite 19th-century remodelling and its adaptation for use since 1920 by St Alban's school. The rest of the plaque, though naïvely drawn, has documentary value since, about 1810, parkland replaced the hedged lawn, the stables overlooking it, and the estate buildings and formal plantations beyond.

A 1719 survey describes the ensemble as "The Capital Messuage, Barn, Stable, Courts, Yard, Bowling Green, Gardens, Orchards and other appurtenances". No mention is made of the octagonal dovecote, nor of the hipped-roofed chapel behind it. The stables built by Major Hanbury were so much admired by Ralph Allen that in 1730 he asked permission to copy them for Prior Park.



5—CHIMNEYPIECE IN THE DRAWING ROOM, PROBABLY DESIGNED BY HAYCOCK

(*Left*) 6—A BUST OF MAJOR HANBURY (1664–1734), IN TREVETHIN CHURCH. He was a leading figure in the iron industry, and built Pontypool House

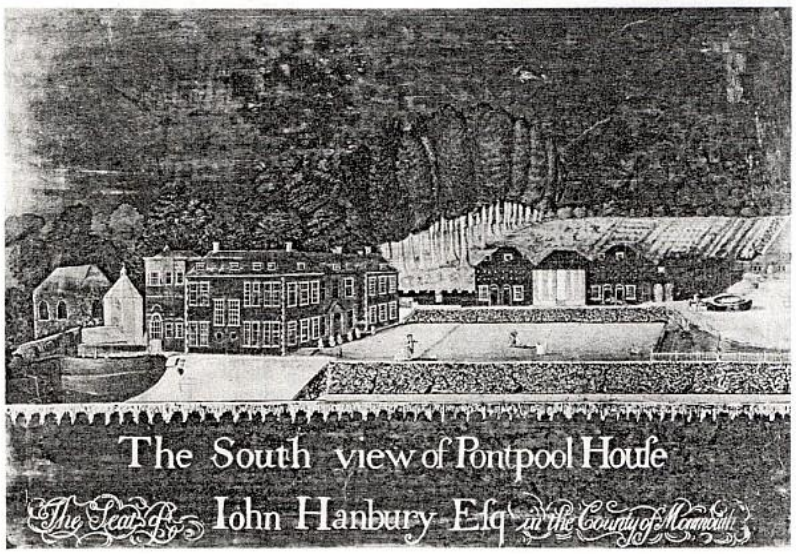
(*Below*) 7—PONTYPOOL HOUSE IN 1765. From a Japan ware plaque

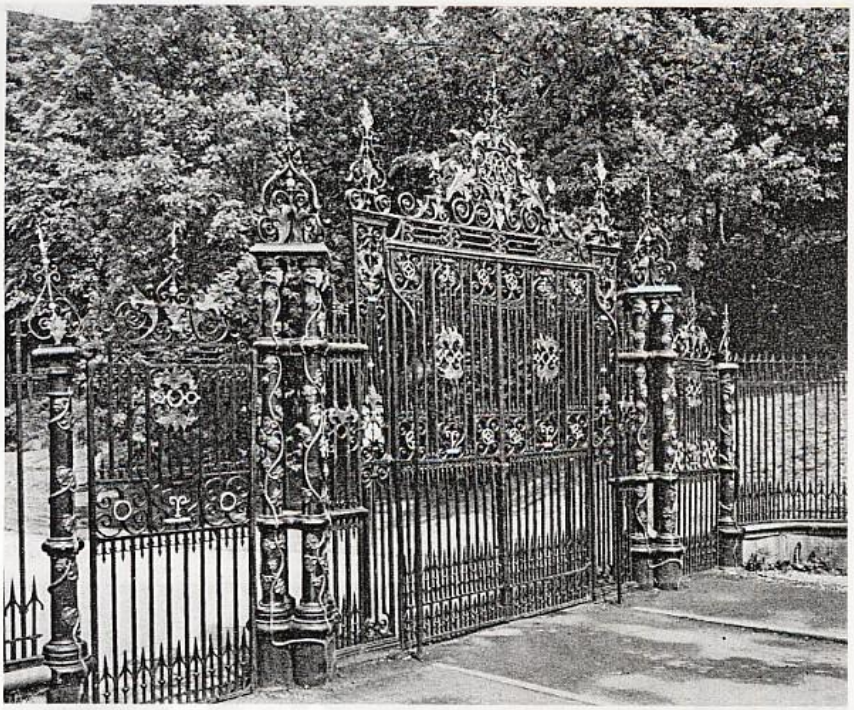
his elder brother Capel succeeded him; and Capel's son John was Knight of the Shire from 1765 until his death. Charles (1709–1759), Major Hanbury's third son, had the good fortune to have Charles Williams of Caerleon as godfather; on the latter's death in 1720 he inherited part of his Middle Eastern riches, with which he threw himself into London political and literary life. Subsequently as minister to Dresden (whence he sent examples of Nymphenbourg porcelain figures to serve as models for the new Chelsea factory), and later still as ambassador to Berlin and Petersburg, he served the state with distinction. The Coldbrook property had been bought for him in about 1730, when he also took his godfather's name. A Herbert property from the 15th century and again after 1887, Coldbook proved on demolition in 1954 to have 13th-century origins.

In intervals in his diplomatic career, Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams remodelled the house—"my coffin" he was to call it—and indeed he spent the last year of his short life there. On June 25, 1745, Hugh Walpole wrote to him, "I am impatient to see what you are

Apart from a shell grotto, and an octagonal folly tower (demolished to prevent its serving as a mark for bombers in the war), the other early-18th-century feature in the park is the gate at the end of the drive to Pontymoel (Fig 8). The legend of these wrought-iron gates, which there is no reason to doubt, was first printed by Archdeacon Coxe in 1801. They were a present from Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to thank Major John Hanbury for his work as executor of the 1st Duke of Marlborough's complicated will. The Duke died in 1722; if the gates were commissioned from a smith who worked at Blenheim, their maker might be Richard Thompson, who elsewhere used the quincunx pattern that repeats so often on the Pontymoel gates. The piers were originally of stone, but were replaced in 1830 when Thomas Deakin remade the gates to the old design. The substitute piers are in a less sophisticated manner, consisting of four juxtaposed twisted iron columns with naturalistic vines climbing up them.

Like other 18th-century industrial families, the Hanburys were deeply involved in politics. Major Hanbury represented Monmouthshire in parliament from 1720; his son Charles did so from 1734 to 1738, when





8—THE PONTYMOEL GATES. Given by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, they were remade by Thomas Deakin in 1830

about, or rather to see it finish'd, for I know you will never let me see sketches". Another letter a year later, in which Henry Harris writes to Henry Fox, "Ah! Sir, the good old house, which you liked so well, is now no more. We have one bold heap of rubbish", was proved an exaggeration when demolition revealed late medieval and Jacobean features as well. The north front, perhaps of 1746–47 and apparently faced in stucco (Fig 10), was chiefly distinguished by one-bay towers projecting from its end bays. It seems this was a deliberate archaism, for they turned out to be of brick, an extremely rare building material in the county before 1750. They recall the front of Tythegston, where only one was built. The engraving shows clearly how shut in the position was—by what appears to be an artificial mount in the foreground, and by the steep bank behind. The older structure was, in fact, dug into the hillside, making it possible for Ferdinand Hanbury-Williams as a child to jump directly onto it from the window of his top floor nursery.

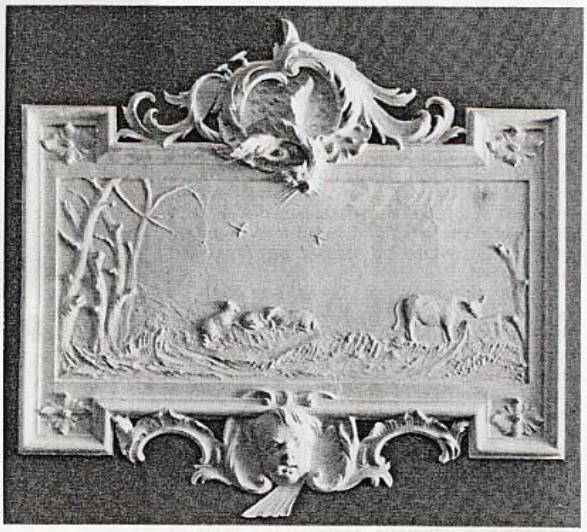
The hall contained plaster candle sconces, and four overdoors which have been saved. The one at Clytha (Fig 9), now set over a chimneypiece from Coldbrook in the nursery, like the others has superb Rococo cartouches on the frame of an unambitious rustic scene. The loss of Coldbrook, on top of other contemporary houses in Gwent, makes it all the more satisfactory that Clytha is once again a home. For classical houses are, perhaps, what Wales lacks most.

If one tries to take stock of Edward Haycock as an architect, one is as impressed by his ability to design houses which are not too large to be manageable today yet are both scholarly and inventive, as one is disappointed by the drabness of his many sub-Gothic churches. The position of Clytha Park in his early work is particularly interesting in relation to the unexecuted designs for Oakly, and also to the style of Lewis Wyatt. Haycock's surfaces are the more exigently clean, and his details the more sharply defined. The houses and the public buildings have two things in common, their invariable use of the more serious orders, never the Corinthian, and their monumental character. The Royal Salop Infirmary in Shrewsbury, which directly follows Clytha, repeats the Doric portico and it seems that his strength lay in this direction, where for all his provincial base he is as good as any of the second generation of Greek revivalists.

I am extremely grateful to Mr Hanbury Tenison for his help with these articles.

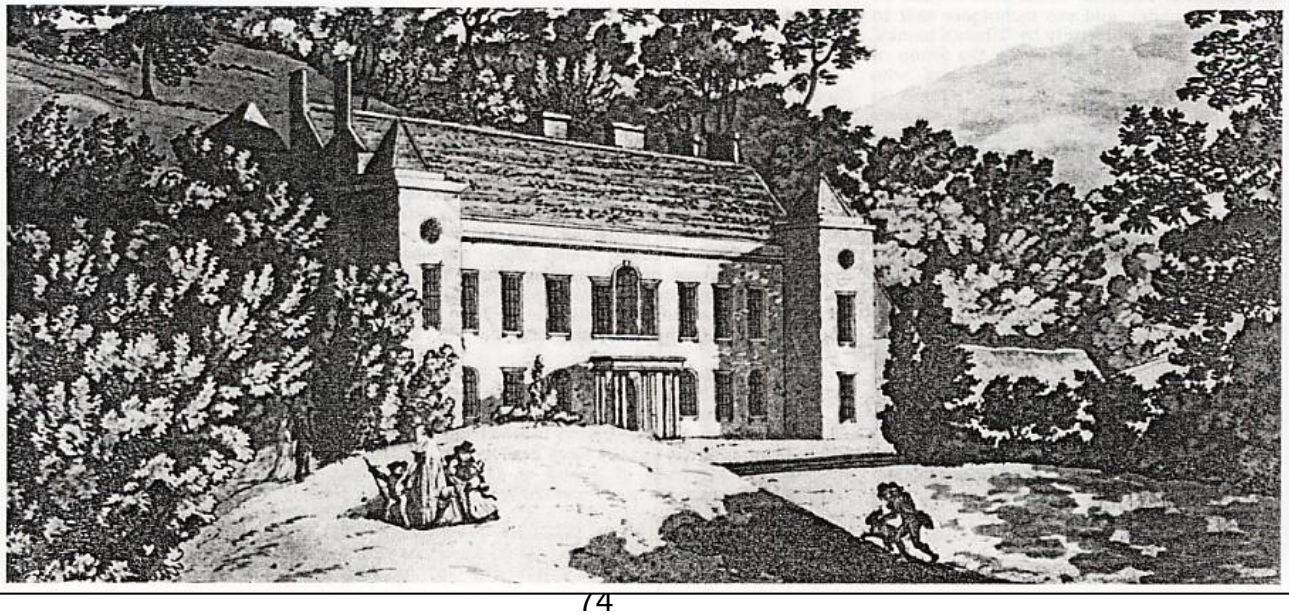
Illustrations: Alex Starkey.

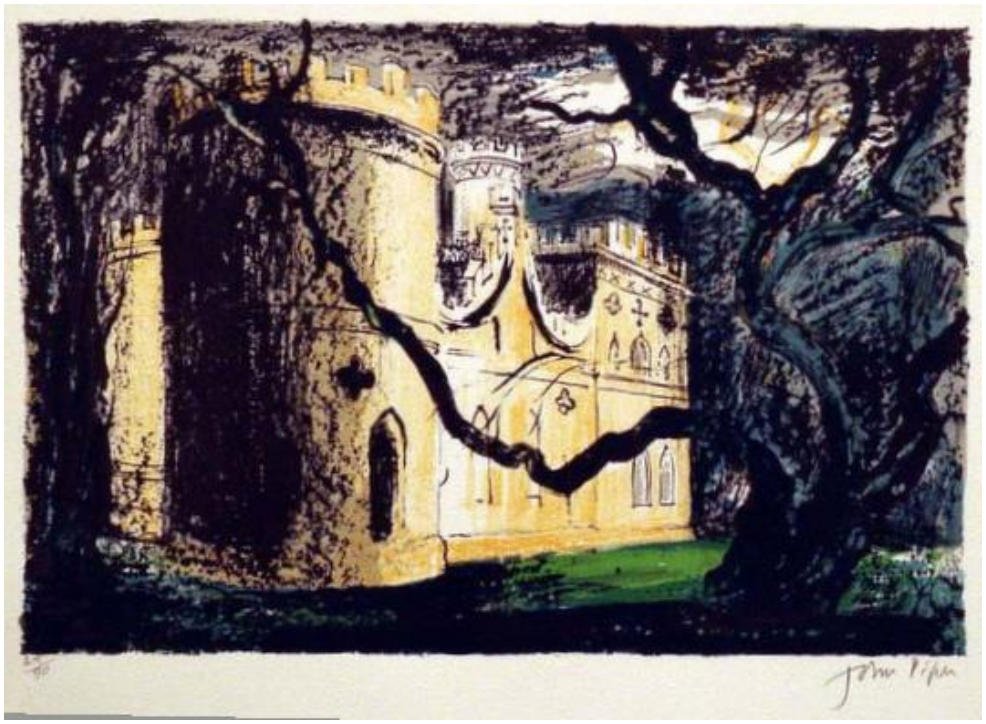
(*Concluded*)



(*Right*) 9—ONE OF THE OVERDOOR PANELS FROM COLDBROOK. This was reset at Clytha Park during the recent restoration

(*Below*)10—COLDBROOK HOUSE. The north front built for Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams in 1746–47, an engraving from David Williams's *History of Monmouthshire* (1796)





CLYTHA CASTLE
Lithograph by John Piper