



Llangwm (Galilee)

An excerpt from
Baptist Historical Sketches in Pembrokeshire
by Reverend R. C. Roberts (1907)

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Despite the unfavourable statements made by certain historians and penny liners of the idiosyncrasies of the inhabitants of this little village in bygone years, they present to many a fashionable town and village an object-lesson of hard plodding, patient endurance, and the denial of many earthly comforts, in order to gain an honest livelihood. Their little cottages, although crudely constructed, and some of squatty appearance, are characteristically clean and homely, and there is often more real happiness in some such dwellings, with straw-thatched roofs and earthen floors, than in many a luxurious mansion. Above all, these people are devotedly religious. They are strongly attached to their respective places of worship, and always ready to give and to collect money in support of any of their religious organisations. What heartiness also characterises their worship! It can seldom be said of their singing that "their hosannas languish on their tongues." They "sing with the spirit," and we trust with "the understanding also."

Baptists have worshipped here since the beginning of the thirties of the last century. The Rev. Henry Evans, when pastor of Sardis Baptist Church, inaugurated the cause. This honoured servant of God, to whom we have made frequent references in these sketches, preached in this little village with encouraging tokens of success, and his memory is still fragrant to some of the older people in the vicinity. A Baptist Chapel was built, and opened April 1st, 1831, to which was given the appropriate name Galilee.

This infant cause remained under the supervision of Sardis Church until 1833, when it was formed into a separate Church, and Rev. Henry Evans was recognised its first pastor. Some of the first deacons were Messrs. John Hughes, John Warlow and James Edmonds of Hook Quay. These honoured brethren remained loyal to the cause in the face of little opposition in its incipient stage.

Mr. Evans was succeeded in the pastorate by Rev. Benjamin Davies, and subsequently by Rev. John Lewis. Unfortunately, we have not been supplied with the dates of the settlements and resignations of these brethren.

In 1877, the Rev. David Hussey, who was educated at Haverfordwest College, commenced his ministry here, and no pastor could have been more in the affection of his church, than Mr Hussey was in the hearts of his people. To their great regret, however, he resigned in 1880 to become the pastor of North Road, Baptist Church, Milford. He resigned in 1882, and accepted the pastorate of an important Baptist Church in Rochdale, which he has efficiently held now for the last twenty-four years.

In January, 1883, the present pastor [Rev. William Davies], commenced his ministry here, a ministry that has been happy and successful, and highly appreciated by a zealous and loyal people. Mr. Davies had the experience of former important pastorates when he entered upon his present sphere of labour. For some time there was a deep felt need of a new and more commodious sanctuary for Divine worship. A fund was established, and a creditable sum in course of years was raised by different methods, and they felt justified at last in launching out on their great enterprise. A most generous friend and supporter was found in F. Lort Phillips, Esq., Lawrenny Castle, who made a deed of gift of the eligible site on which the present chapel stands, and has also rendered substantial pecuniary help. The new sanctuary, containing

sittings for 300 persons, and which cost £1,600, was opened for divine worship September 14th, 1904. Through the hearty co-operation and self-denial of this people, they have succeeded in raising £1,200 towards this object leaving at present a debt of £400.

The present deacons of the church are:- Messrs. William Adulph, Thomas Owen, John Thomas, John Childs, Thomas Stephens, George Benjamin, and William Esmond. Mr. George Thomas, who for many years was a faithful and zealous deacon of the church, and whose christian life has been uniformly attractive, has now for some years, to the regret of the church and pastor, been unable through affliction to meet and take part in the services of the sanctuary.

The church has been the means through which the Divine Spirit of raising for the Christian ministry Rev. Edmund C. Davies, who is to-day the successful pastor of an important London Baptist Church. Mr Davies is the son of the respected minister.