



LLANCAIACH FAWR MANOR
MAENORDY LLANCAIACH FAWR

Teachers' Notes

Llancaiach Fawr Manor, a Brief History



Llancaiach Fawr Manor was built in the 1530s on the foundations of an earlier, mediaeval dwelling. The name is a corruption of the old description "Glankayach" meaning "the big house on the banks of the Caiach". The Caiach is the brook running alongside the Manor.

The house was constructed for the Prichard (ap Richard) family, one of the ancient Welsh gentry families of Glamorgan. The owner of the new house was David ap Richard (died c. 1560), variously described in contemporary documents as "*gentleman*" and "*esquire*". Following the Act of Union between Wales and England in 1536 and further legislation in the years up to 1543, which cemented the Tudor settlement, many Welsh gentry became increasingly anglicised and David ap Richard was often styled David Prichard.

At this time there were many violent feuds between local landowners in the parish of Gelligaer. Llancaiach Fawr was therefore built as a fortified Manor House with only one entrance to make it easier to defend in case of attack. Many of the feuds were between the Prichards and the Lewis family of the Van, near Caerphilly, to whom they were related by both marriage and blood. David's son, Edward (d. 1612) married Ann Lewis in 1578 and their marriage settlement referred to "a capital mansion house called Glankayach."

By the 1620s, many of the feuds had died down as the landowners became more gentrified and prosperous. Edward's son, also called David, felt secure enough to alter the structure of the house by adding a grand staircase on one side and oak panelling in the principle rooms on the first floor. Following David Prichard's death in 1630, Llancaiach Fawr Manor was inherited by his son, Edward, who later married Mary Mansell of Briton Ferry.

The outbreak of Civil War in August, 1642 between King Charles I and Parliament, significantly affected Edward Prichard and Llancaiach Fawr Manor.

Initially giving his allegiance to King Charles and the Royalist cause, Colonel Prichard, as he became, found his loyalty wavering in the summer of 1645. King Charles I travelled through South Wales during this time, no doubt attempting to bolster allegiance. He is even reported in a



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contemporary account to have stopped at Llancaiach Fawr en route to Brecon, dining there with Edward Prichard:

*August 5th 1645. Tuesday. Glancayach. Mr Prichard's. Dinner.
At Brecknock, the Governor. Supper.ⁱ*

However, the King's visit to Llancaiach did not prevent Colonel Prichard from changing sides and by the autumn of 1645, he was a committed Parliamentarian, becoming Governor of Cardiff Castle. With his brother-in-law, Bussy Mansell, Colonel Prichard became an important Parliamentary figure in South Wales. He died in 1655.

Llancaiach Fawr was owned by many different families over the ensuing centuries until it was bought by Rhymney Valley District Council in 1979. Following an extensive period of restoration, it was opened as a visitor attraction in 1991.

Today, visitors can experience life in Llancaiach Fawr Manor as it would have been in the year 1645, when it was lived in by Colonel Edward Prichard and his family.



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The Prichard family tree 1521-1655

Lewis ap Richard Gwyn **m** 1. a daughter of Lewis ap
 Rosser of Merthyr Tydfil
 of Pont Rhun
 & Merthyr Tydfil
 (d 1521)

2. Gwladys, daughter of Evan ap John of
 Pencellyn

Richard ap Lewis 12 other children
 Edward ap Lewis

David ap Richard / Prichard, first owner of Llancaiach Fawr
 Lewis family of the Van
 (d. 1560)

Edward Prichard of "Glancayach" **m** 1. Mary,
 daughter of John Carne of Nash
 (d.1612)

2. Ann, daughter of Thomas Lewis
 of the Van

(c 1578)

3. Mary, daughter of Edmund
 Morgan

David Prichard of Llancaiach **m** 1. a
 daughter of Sir George Herbert of Nash
 (d.1630)

2. Mary, daughter of William
 Carne of Nash

William Elizabeth Thomas John

Edward, Colonel Prichard **m** Mary
 Mansell, daughter of Arthur Mansell of (born c.1615)
 Briton Ferry (born c. 1610)

Briton Ferry d 1655 (1634)
 d 1649

Thomas (died young) (born c. 1642)
 Lewis (died young)
 Jane
 Mary (born c. 1638)