

# **GWENT COUNTY HISTORY ASSOCIATION**

**NEWSLETTER**

**SPRING 2017**

## **SAVED FOR THE COUNTY:**

### **RAGLAN PAPERS TO STAY AT GWENT ARCHIVES**

Local researchers and historians have welcomed the news that the papers passed to the government upon the death of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Raglan in 2010 are to remain permanently at Gwent Archives.

Lord Raglan was a good friend of the Gwent County History Association and allowed his home at Cefntilla to be used for annual supper meetings, often personally assisting in the catering.

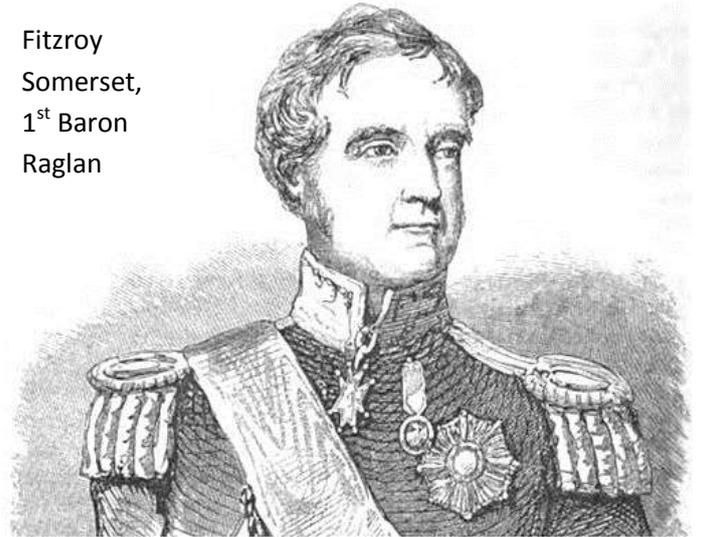
In 1993 he presented a first box of Raglan archives to Gwent Archives and expressed a wish that following his death the rest of the archive should remain in the county. As a result, the papers were initially retained in Gwent pending a decision on their permanent location.

The Raglan archive covers the period 1807-2010. The initial deposit from 1993 included military and personal correspondence from Fitzroy Somerset, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Raglan, commander of the British troops in the Crimea (1854-56), along with a number of letters written by the Duke of Wellington.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Raglan (1885-1964) played an important role in local affairs, serving as lord lieutenant of Monmouthshire, a member of Monmouthshire County Council and chair of Monmouthshire Archives Committee.

Tony Hopkins, County Archivist, commented, "the Raglan archive provides rich resources for local and regional history, especially farming. In this it complements other collections in Gwent Archives. We hold records of Raglan parish, schools and businesses as well as other landed estates in the area."

Fitzroy  
Somerset,  
1<sup>st</sup> Baron  
Raglan



#### **AGM AND ANNUAL LECTURE 2016**

Our 2017 AGM will be held on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2.30 pm. It will be preceded by a lecture by Dr Ann Benson on the Troy House estate. Dr Benson is a landscape historian and last year published a book on Troy House. She has also written a book on Coton Manor in Northamptonshire and its garden. For details of Dr Benson and her work see [www.annbenson.co.uk](http://www.annbenson.co.uk).

**CONTACT US:** Correspondence should be sent to:  
Kathleen Norton, Secretary GCHA, 2 Brunel Avenue, High Cross, Rogerstone, Newport, South Wales. NP10 0DN  
[kathleen.norton@ntlworld.com](mailto:kathleen.norton@ntlworld.com).

## 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CAERWENT HOUSE TO BE RESTORED

A derelict 17<sup>th</sup> Century grade II listed building in Caerwent is to be given a new lease of life by Monmouthshire County Council. Caerwent House, situated in the centre of the village, has recently been acquired by the council through a compulsory purchase order and will be restored to its former glory with the help of Cadw and the Spitalfields Historic Buildings Trust.

Work will begin on the site very soon to make the building safe and begin repairs. It marks the end of eight years of work which has involved negotiations and successful sourcing of funding from several bodies and included a complex 'back to back' legal arrangement finally resulting in the safeguarding of this rare historic house for future generations.

Ten years ago MCC worked with the Spitalfields Historic Buildings Trust to save Allt-y-Bela, a grade II listed building near Usk.

For more information contact MCC's Heritage Manager Amy Longford – [amylongford@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:amylongford@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

## WELSH BIBLES IN MONMOUTHSHIRE CHURCHES

“Much valuable light would be thrown upon the linguistic history of Monmouthshire if a list could be compiled of the old Welsh Bibles known to be existing, or to have lately existed, in the Parish Churches of the county. Last summer I saw the Welsh Bible (bound up with the Book of Common Prayer) in the church of Llangyfyw, or Llangeview, just east of the town of Usk. It was a nice copy, in good condition, though no Welsh service has been held there for many years, and no native Welsh-speaker survives in the parish. In 1831 a farmer died there, who was a native of *Gwernesney*, the next parish on the east. He was a fluent speaker of Welsh, but was almost, if not quite, the last. A friend of mine has acquired the Welsh Bibles of Penrose and Llansoy. About twelve years ago I saw the Welsh Bible (a fine old copy, with engraved frontispiece) rotting on a stone seat at the west end of Llanedern Church. There is valuable history in such notes as these, and it is a pity that someone does not record it before it be too late. JOHN HOBSON MATTHEWS.”

(*Weekly Mail* 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1902)

**“FATAL ACCIDENT.**-On Saturday night last, between 11 and 12 o'clock, an accident occurred to Mr. Nicholas Dixon, butcher, of Usk, who was driving his wife and son home from Pontypool market, which was unfortunately attended with loss of life. When near a farm called Pantypudding, not far from Little Mill, the light cart in which they were riding was driven near the side of the brook and upset, and the three passengers were thrown out with great violence. The husband was picked up senseless, and it was soon found that all hopes of recovery were at an end, as his back was broken. The wife had her arm and leg severely cut, and the son was slightly injured. This accident should act as a warning to others. The deceased was much addicted to drink, and it was a rare occurrence for him to return home sober. He has often been seen riding on horseback and on the tops of vehicles, in perilous positions, very much intoxicated, and many persons expected he would come to an untimely end. An inquest was held when a verdict of accidental death was returned.” (*Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald* 9<sup>th</sup> May 1857)

### HELP WANTED

GCHA is seeking fresh blood to join our committee. In particular we are seeking people to assist with secretarial duties (e.g. writing minutes). To coin a phrase, “no experience necessary as full training will be given”.

If you think you can help, get in touch.

### RECOMMEND A FRIEND

To keep on an even keel financially we need to increase our membership. Do you have a friend or colleague who might be interested in joining the Gwent County History Association and receiving the *Gwent Local History* journal?

If so please send us their name and address and we will send them a complimentary back issue of the journal with an invitation to join. Send details to Peter Strong, GCHA, 8 Deepweir, Caldicot, Mon NP26 5JG or [strong@btinternet.com](mailto:strong@btinternet.com).

