

CÆR WENT HISTORIC TRVST

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“WOE UNTO ME IF I PREACH NOT THE GOSPEL” Part III

Walter Cradock

The act of many of the Llanvaches congregation finally splitting away from the established church in 1639 to found an independent “conventicle” can be seen in the context of the social, political and theological upheaval of the time. The storm clouds of the Civil War were gathering and in 1642 Parliament was at war with the King.

Although he had predicted it, Wroth did not live to see the beginning of the war. The fledgling congregation at Llanvaches was now led by Walter Cradock, who had assisted the elderly Wroth in founding the church. Cradock was born at Trevela, Llangwm, circa 1606 and was curate of St. Mary’s Cardiff under the infamous “schismatic” preacher, its Vicar, William Erbury.

At the outbreak of War much of Wales and Monmouthshire supported the established, Royalist, cause. The Nonconformist Llanvaches congregation and Walter Cradock sought refuge in Bristol and were taken in by the Church at Broadmead. They remained there until Bristol was taken by Parliamentary forces in 1643, causing them to flee to London where they joined the congregation of All Hallows. As a revered puritan preacher at All Hallows, Cradock was chosen to conduct, and preach at, a Service of Thanksgiving for Parliament in 1646, to celebrate the Royalist defeat and surrender at Oxford. His sermon on that occasion “*The Saints fulnesse of joy in their fellowship with God*” was one of a number that were published. Others include “*Glad tydings from heaven to the worst sinners on earth*” in 1648 and “*Divine drops distilled from the fountain of Holy Scriptures*” in 1650. When Cromwell died in 1658, Cradock received an invitation to his funeral.

After the Civil War, Walter Cradock embarked on a missionary tour of Wales for Parliament. Nonconformist congregations used the parish churches for their services. Cradock returned to Llangwm on becoming its Vicar in 1655. He died at his home, Trevela, on Christmas Day, 1659. He is buried near to Richard Creed, the husband of his daughter Lois, in the Chancel of Llangwm Uchaf Church. Only a memorial to Richard Creed, naming his “*wife Lois, the daughter of Walter Cradock*”, survives at Llangwm to allude to this connection. In Latin it reads

HIC IVXTA IACET RICARDUS CREED
QUI ADMIRALLO BLAKE COMITQUE DE SANDWICH FUIT A SECRETIS
UXOREM LOISIAM WALTERI CRADOCK FILIAM NATV MAXIMAM
DUXIT REPENTINA MORS E VIVIS
SEPTUAGENARIUM SUSTULIT
NONO CALENDAR’ AVGVSTI A.D. 1690

Mark Lewis

Visit to Llanthony Secunda

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we are planning a **small group** visit to Llanthony Secunda, formerly Church Farm. Please contact Jennifer Powell (see above) if you are interested.

Annual General Meeting

The Trustees have decided to postpone the Annual General Meeting of the Trust until January 2008. We will give notice of the date and venue in due course.