

These extracts are taken from The Gower Church Magazine.

Reynoldston Quoit Club. Believing strongly as we do in the benefit to every parish of plenty of outdoor amusements, we are glad to be able to chronicle the good start made by the Reynoldston Quoit Club. The village is largely indebted to the forethought and energy of Mr. T. Brown, to whose initiative the foundation of the club is due. The club's second match was played, and second victory won, on Saturday evening 15th June, on Higher Green. The match was a return with the Old Walls Club. and both clubs must be congratulated on the good play shown. Although the result was very decidedly in favour of the Reynoldston club, most of the games were keenly contested, and in two, those won respectively by T.H. Tucker of Reynoldston and W. Williams of Old Walls, the excitement was sustained until the last quoit was thrown. **(1901)**

Here is a report from **September 1902**

On Saturday evening, August 9th, as the Rev. S.R. N. Rees was driving from Swansea to Reynoldston, where he is spending a holiday with his wife and children, the horse became frightened at a motorcar. The reverend gentleman got out and attempted to lead the horse, but the animal reared, and dashed him against the wall with considerable force. Mr Rees was cut rather badly about the head and otherwise bruised. He was conveyed home as soon as possible and medical aid was summoned. We are glad to say he is progressing favourably. Fortunately Mrs Rees and one of the boys, who accompanied him, had got out to walk, for the horse rushed down the hill and the trap was smashed.

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War Reports

The Gower Church Magazine in the early 1900s makes frequent reference to the fact that the country was conducting a war against the Boers, in South Africa. Despite being written over one hundred years ago, there are so many echoes of more recent conflicts.

Concert - On February 22nd a Concert was given by Reynoldston people, assisted by friends, at Knelston Board School, in aid of the Gower Bed at the Imperial Yeomanry Hospital in Capetown. The keen interest shown by everyone, and the crowded room, showed how warmly Gower people are feeling for our soldiers in South Africa. The concert may be considered a success from every point of view: and after clearing all expenses we were pleased to send a sum of £8.15s to the Fund. Reynoldston is indeed sharing in the National anxiety. Eight of those near and dear to us have now joined the force fighting for our Queen and country. It was with the greatest grief that we heard of the death of Captain R. Benson at Wynberg Hospital, near Capetown on February 19th, and we would express our deep sympathy with Colonel and Mrs Benson in their bereavement.

Lantern Entertainment. Our first Lantern entertainment, on November 6th, was a great success. Perhaps it was the subject, "The Boer War" that secured a good house. The slides were exceptionally good, but of course the most popular of all were the portraits of Lord Roberts and General Baden Powell. The second lecture will be given on Tuesday Dec 4th, on "China and the Chinese".

The Vicar of Llangenydd published this letter, received by Mr Skillen from his son, Mr Fred Skillen, now serving in South Africa.

Elands River Bridge, Near Harrismith, Dec 27th 1901. Dear Father, I know you will be anxious to hear that I came through that awful affair which happened on Christmas morning uninjured but I am sorry to say that there are very few of my company who did. How I managed to get away I do not know. The bullets were falling like hail. There were men and horses dead and dying lying about everywhere. I saw most of my own Company either killed or wounded. There were 23 of my own Company alone, beside what were killed belonging to other Companies. Amongst them being our captain, one lieutenant, the sergeant major, and three sergeants and my officer were wounded. We buried 63 on the day of the fight and there have been a lot of dead of their wounds since, bringing the number killed up to nearly 100, beside a great number wounded. It is the worst disaster that has happened for a long time and how the Boers came to get so close to us, without the alarm being given I do not know. I shall only be too glad to get into Harrismith to get a little rest and a new kit, as all I have now is what I stand in.

Your loving son, Fred

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The Wyndham Connection

Many readers will be familiar with the books of John Wyndham. Certainly those of us who enjoyed reading science fiction writing in the 1950s and 1960s would have ***The Day***

of the Triffids, The Chrysalids', and ***The Trouble with Lichen*** as top of our lists. ***The Midwich Cuckoos*** was filmed in 1960 as ***The Village of the Damned***.

John Wyndham was born in 1903 and until 1911 lived in Birmingham and then in many parts of England. Careers he tried included farming, law, commercial art and advertising, then writing from 1925. Wyndham died in 1969.

And the Gower connection?

Wyndham's full name was John Wyndham Parkes Lucas Beynon Harris and he was the grandson of Evan and Ruth Harris. This couple came from Porteynon where Evan taught at a school before they moved to Reynoldston. Evan then taught for some years at the National School in Reynoldston. In 1869 Evan and Ruth opened a shop and Post office on the Lower Green. Evan Harris became very involved with the arguments over the future of education in the area. His ability to argue a case was inherited by his son (John Wyndham's father), who became a barrister.

Wyndham published his works of science fiction using his first two Christian names. He used selections of his other names when writing short stories and when writing stories for publication in America.

The name Wyndham has puzzled some biographers. Evan and Ruth gave the name to one of their sons. They and John Wyndham's father seem to have attached an exaggerated importance to real or imagined family connections. (The inscription on Ruth's tombstone in St George's Church, behind the North transept window emphasises a Lucas link). There was a remote and doubtful connection with the

Wyndhams, Earls of Dunraven, and this may well be where the name comes from.

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Some more extracts from the Gower Church Magazine of **1900.**

Reynoldston and Knelston Board School. Extract from H.M. Inspector's Report.

This is a pleasantly conducted country school. The instruction is very industrious and conscientious. The children are clean and orderly. The attendance is most irregular and the School Board should take immediate steps to improve this.

The following prizes were gained at the West Gower Horticultural Show: - **Handwriting- Boys-** 1st Prize, David Moffat: 2nd Prize, Robert Richards: 3rd Prize, Robert Rolfe. **Handwriting- Girls-** 1st Prize, Marion Evans: 2nd Prize, Kate Moffat: 3rd Prize, Gladys Evans. **Marking-** 1st Prize, Annie Bydder: 2nd Prize, Bessie Tucker. **Maps-** 1st Prize, Cecil Walters: 2nd Prize, John Gordon. **Print Patching-** 3rd Prize, Lizzie Gordon. **Darning-** 2nd Prize, Gladys Evans. **Knitting-** 1st Prize, Marion Evans.

Mrs Lewis is to be congratulated on the continued success of the school.

And nothing changes!

Lantern Entertainment. We were sorry to cause

disappointment to many in not being able to obtain the Chinese slides for December as promised. We have secured them for January when the title of the lecture will be: *China, the Land of the Yellow Jacket*. We had an enjoyable evening on Dec 4th, when the bill of fare included *Ten Days in the Lake District*' and Longfellow's *Excelsior*'. We regret that complaint had to be made by some of the audience of misbehaviour amongst the boys, and unless the behaviour improves, the Lectures will be discontinued forthwith.