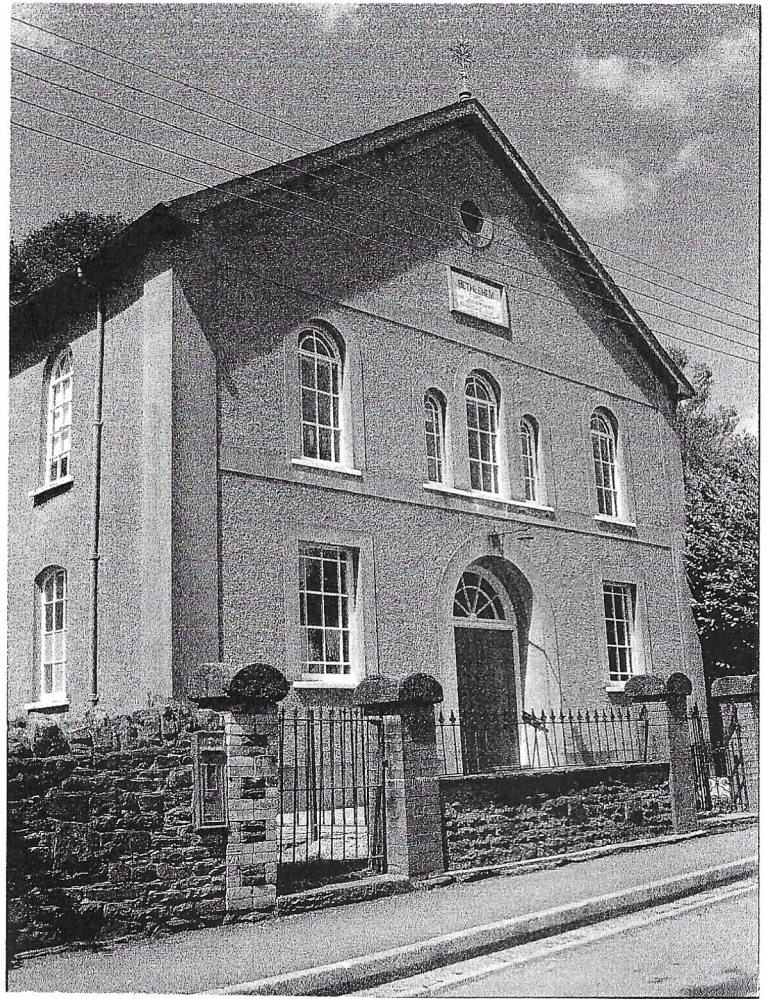
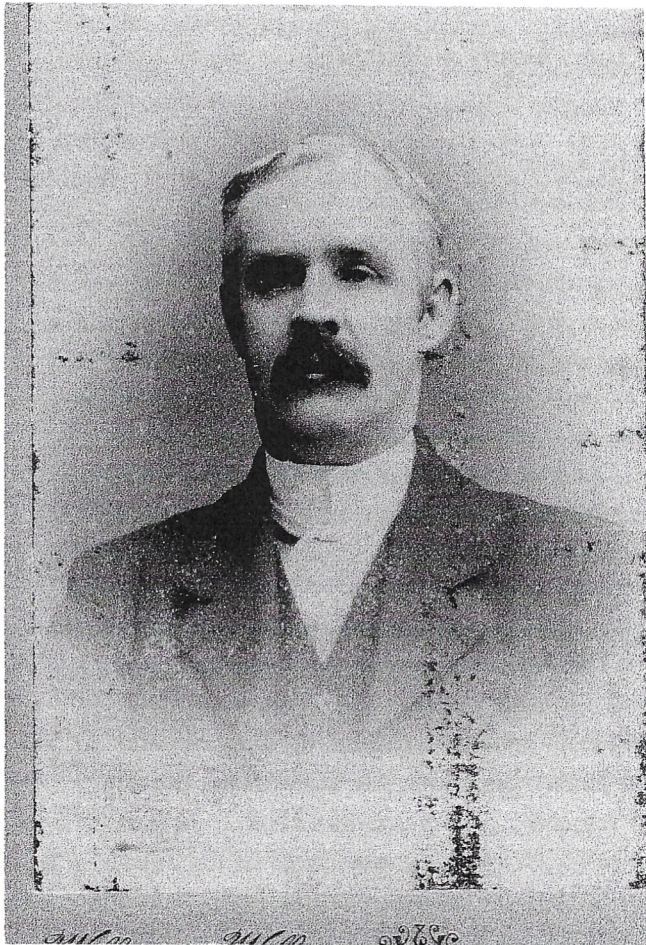




Rev R.G. Berry



Bethlehem Chapel



Sam Thomas ('Eos y Garth')



T.W. Thomas ('Ab Eos')

brother of Noah Jones. Another sister, Ann, married Samuel Thomas who was a powerful overman in a local colliery. Sam, a legendary local tenor was well-known by his bardic name 'Eos y Garth' (The Garth Nightingale). They lived at Myrtle House and their son, the gentlemanly Thomas William Thomas (TWT) who was a founder member of our history society passed away in 1999 aged 98.

TWT lived for a period from the 1950s at Greenhurst, Pentyrch, the former home of his solicitor uncle Horatio Thomas. He was a faithful member of Bethlehem Chapel, Gwaelodygarth and a life-long Liberal. He had been awarded the MBE in 1942 in recognition of his work on various committees during the war. TWT had left Gwaelod School at 14 to start work with Cory Bros in Cardiff Docks earning 3s 6d per week (17.5 p). He joined Spillers the big Milling Combine and soon became their Carmarthen representative. Later, based in Cardiff, he was Sales Manager for South Wales. In 1948 he was Managing Director of the old established firm Noah Rees and Griffin and soon became chairman of the company. He joined the Gorsedd in 1930 – taking the name of 'Ab Eos' and was afterwards for a number of years, chairman of the National Eisteddfod Court. His first marriage was to May Jenkins of Ynysgau who sadly died rather young. His second wife was Edwina Thomas who had been an English mistress at Howells School. Thomas William was a Governor of the University College of Cardiff; he was on the board of Brecon Memorial College, also of the National Museum. He was an ex-President of the Cardiff Publicity Club and of the Incorporated Association of Sales Managers; a member of the Glamorgan Standing Joint Committee; a Commissioner of Taxes and Chairman of Whitchurch Bench of Magistrates; President of *Clwb Cinio Caerdydd* (The Cardiff Welsh Dining Club) and a member of the Cambrian Archeological Association. A superb tape-recording of Mr Thomas made with Robin Gwyndaf is available from the Museum at St Fagans.

Olwen Lewis, known as 'Olwen Ty Gwyn' was a granddaughter of Abraham's brother William. During the war years her home was a designated air-raid shelter for the schoolchildren who were unable to get home in the event of an raid. Some of the older residents of the village can recall sheltering beneath the solid oak table in her dining room until the sounding of the All-clear.

Evan James Phillips married Joan Lloyd who was the daughter of Thomas Lloyd who later kept the Post Office, Gwaelodygarth. They lived next door to Sam and Ann Thomas. Their dwelling, Rose Cottage, would remain as the family home until the 1980s. Their eldest daughter Beatrice married Thomas Anthony and kept a grocery shop in Taff's Well. They had two children, Herbert and Nan. Their daughter, Nan, married Arthur Mason. Evan and Joan's son Alun married Rebecca Howells (as aforementioned). Their daughter, Ann married Gordon Beech of Taff's Well. Arthur Glyn Phillips married Dolly Jenkins of Ynysgau, whose sister May married T.W.Thomas. Arthur Glyn and Dolly lived in the bungalow opposite Bethlehem. Trevor, who married Mabel Griffiths has a daughter Mair who married Graham Lewis and lives in Rhiwbina. Eunice married John Charles Davies who for years was the organist at Bethlehem and also a Sunday School teacher of great influence on his charges. He was a founder member of the Garth Cricket Club.

Many will remember John Phillips (1873-1953) of Ty Newydd, the house situated at the foot of Heol Goch just above the turning to Gwaelodygarth, which became the family home for over a century. For various reasons he seemed to epitomise the Phillipiaid way of things. In 1901 John married Ann (Nan) Watkins, daughter of the estimable Evan Watkins the former manager of the Pentyrch Ironworks and for a time a local colliery owner who became the first chairman of the Parish Council. John was both secretary and a deacon of Bethlehem Chapel, and also a governor of the school at Gwaelodygarth and of Howell's School, Llandaff. A man of stature, both physically and intellectually, John Phillips commanded a high level of respect in the area, becoming a magistrate and

a Justice of the Peace. A staunch supporter of all village matters, he was prominent in the foundation of and the activities of various sporting organisations – also the Garth Glee male choir and the drama groups in Gwaelodygarth. In an Eisteddfod in Treorchy in 1920 he won an individual gold medal for his performance. He was successful in business. After 48 successful years as manager in Cardiff of The North British and British Insurance Company he was made 'Local Director' on his retirement. He was also very active in local affairs, enjoying twenty five years as a member of the Cardiff District Council and eventually as its chairman in which office he instituted several life-improving projects. One of the most outstanding of these is the bridge that crosses the Taff between Glan y Llyn and Gwaelodygarth and bears the good man's name: 'Pont Siôn Philip'. The bridge was opened by John Phillips himself in 1926 in a ceremony which attracted a massive crowd.

John and Nan had two sons, Philip and Arthur and a daughter Nest. Philip Evan, born at Garth Villas in 1902 married Violet Husband of Radyr. He became a solicitor in partnership with his uncle Horatio in Cardiff. Later the firm was Phillips and Buck. The family was closely involved in broadcasting from the BBC studios in Cardiff and Philip will be remembered for some memorable performances as 'Little Willie' in the highly successful series 'Welsh Rarebit' which was transmitted throughout the British Isles. The other son, Arthur Watkin, who was born at Ty Newydd in 1907 married Hilda Wilson. He was an accountant in the firm of Phillips and Trump. Both brothers were educated locally and at Monmouth School.

Philip had no issue but Arthur had a son John Wilson born 1934, a daughter Jane in 1936, and a son Berry sometime later. John who had a business career in engineering lives at an early 18th century mansion in the Vale of Glamorgan. He won a state scholarship to Cambridge where he graduated in engineering and Law. At one time he was Deputy Head of the Wales CBI and in the 1990s was awarded the CBE. Berry followed a business career in the United States.

Jane has had an illustrious career in puppetry. In 1966 she was appointed Director of The Caricature Theatre Ltd., a non-profit puppet theatre company located in Cardiff. Her work will be well-remembered for such classics as 'Torchy the Battery Boy' (1960), 'Sarah and Hoppity (1961) and The Telegoons (1963).

John's daughter Nest became the wife of Tudor Jeremy who had a grocery store in Pontypridd and at one time in Tongwynlais. The name of Nest Jeremy was prominent for years in the current affairs of the area. An outstanding speaker and forthright in debate she campaigned energetically in the interests of improving life in the locality. After several years of devoted service on the Pentyrch Parish Council, she was made chairperson of the Cardiff Rural District Council, an office she held with distinction. Nest and Tudor had a daughter Ann who married Mike Gray of Creigiau.

The performing skills of the Phillipiaid and those connected with them had been honed in earlier times by their involvement in the local stage group led by the extraordinary minister of Bethlehem, R.G. Berry, who was a leading Welsh dramatist. Two years after John Phillips married Nan Watkins, Mr Berry tied the knot with her sister Hannah.

Noting a reference to a William Phillips who was born at Rhydyrhelig Inn (Willowford), I was reminded of what I knew about his offspring. Firstly Evan Rhys, known to us as 'Ianto Phillips the Huntsman'. He took over at the Pentyrch from *Jac yr Helwr* (Jack the Huntsman) in the 1930s. His sister May married a Walter Banwell and they had a son Glyn. In edition no. 36 of The Garth

Domain, Len Harkin tells us about Glyn Banwell who was, apparently, a law unto himself. In Len's words:

'Yes, yes, he was belonging to the Phillipses you know. He was the only boy. He had three sisters, Gwyneth, Myfanwy and Dilys. May his mother was one of the Phillipses and was a sister to Ianto Phillips the Pentyrch Huntsman. Oh yes, Glyn Banwell was related to the Phillipses alright. Glyn lived in the middle house. Now the Phillipses were a wealthy family see ... and they had Nantgarw china. Unfortunately Glyn had one of them hundred round repeater pellet guns and had hundreds of ornaments he'd won at fairgrounds. When he came home in a bad mood he'd shoot everything off the mantelpiece including the priceless Nantgarw china! He even fed the cat from Nantgarw china!'

What cannot be denied is that the coming together of so many blood lines, the vast majority of which were already well-known for their worldly successes would inevitably produce what can be best described as an intellectual powerhouse. Thus, any admiration of the accomplishments of the Phillipses can equally apply to fifty and more other families in the period under scrutiny. Among these are the Watkinses, Howells, Israels, Millwards, Thomases, Jenkinses, Davieses, Morgans, Williamses, Gregorys, and the Champions – and several others. It is recommended that anyone doubting the high level of educational achievements of the lineage should peruse 'Cronicl y Phillipiaid' and pertinent examples will leap from the pages. We see such as:

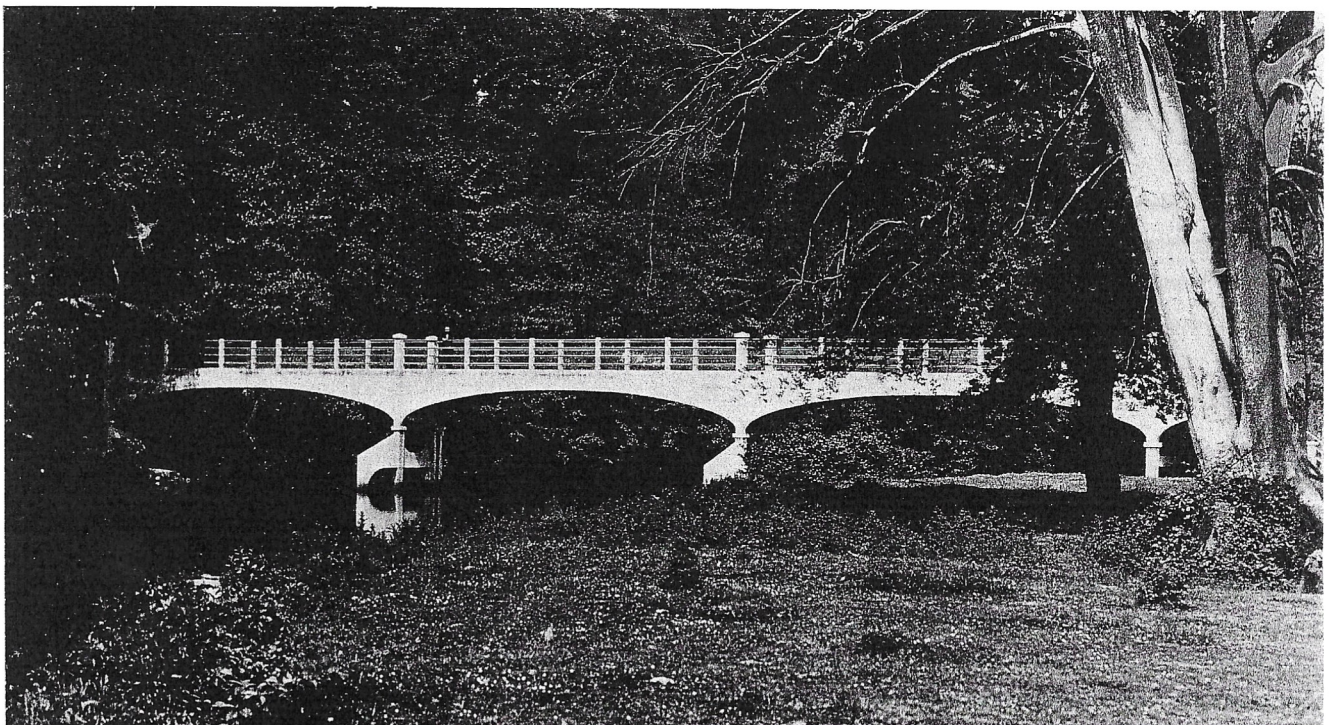
... Herbert Wright - educated at Pontypridd County School and University College, Swansea ... Extra 1st Class Certificate at Board of Trade Examination for Marine Engineers. Miss Jones, Howells School, Llandaff, Aberdeen University ... Gwenllian Nesta, Howells School, University College Cardiff, Fellowship of UOW, obtained MA with distinction ... married Dewi Emrys Evans, MA., B.Litt., Prof. Of Classics, Vice Chancellor University of Wales ... Sarah Beryl Evans, 1st Class Honours Philosophy ... D.R. Jones M.A. ... Eiry Mair married E F Gale, B.A., B.Sc., Ph.D. ... David Geraint, B.A. (1941) Honours in German, Finals in French and Philosophy ... Mari Yvonne passed Matriculation Examination of the University of London ... Evan Griffith – passed the senior Cambridge Examination with honours ... William Phillips, Pentyrch Works Board School then University of Cardiff – Honours in Greek and Honours in Latin ... M.A. degree for thesis on 'The Native Italian Elements in Roman Religion'. Author of 'Theory and Practice of Teaching Welsh' ... Benjamin Howell, University of Wales Honours (History) ... D.E. Jones L.D. educated at Queens, Cambridge and Ridley Hall, Cambridge ... Griffith Charles Jones M.A. (Oxon), Fellow of Jesus College ... Ieuan Thomas M.A. (Wales) ... Dorothy Phillips, educated at North London Collegiate School, obtained B.A. in Latin and Greek ...

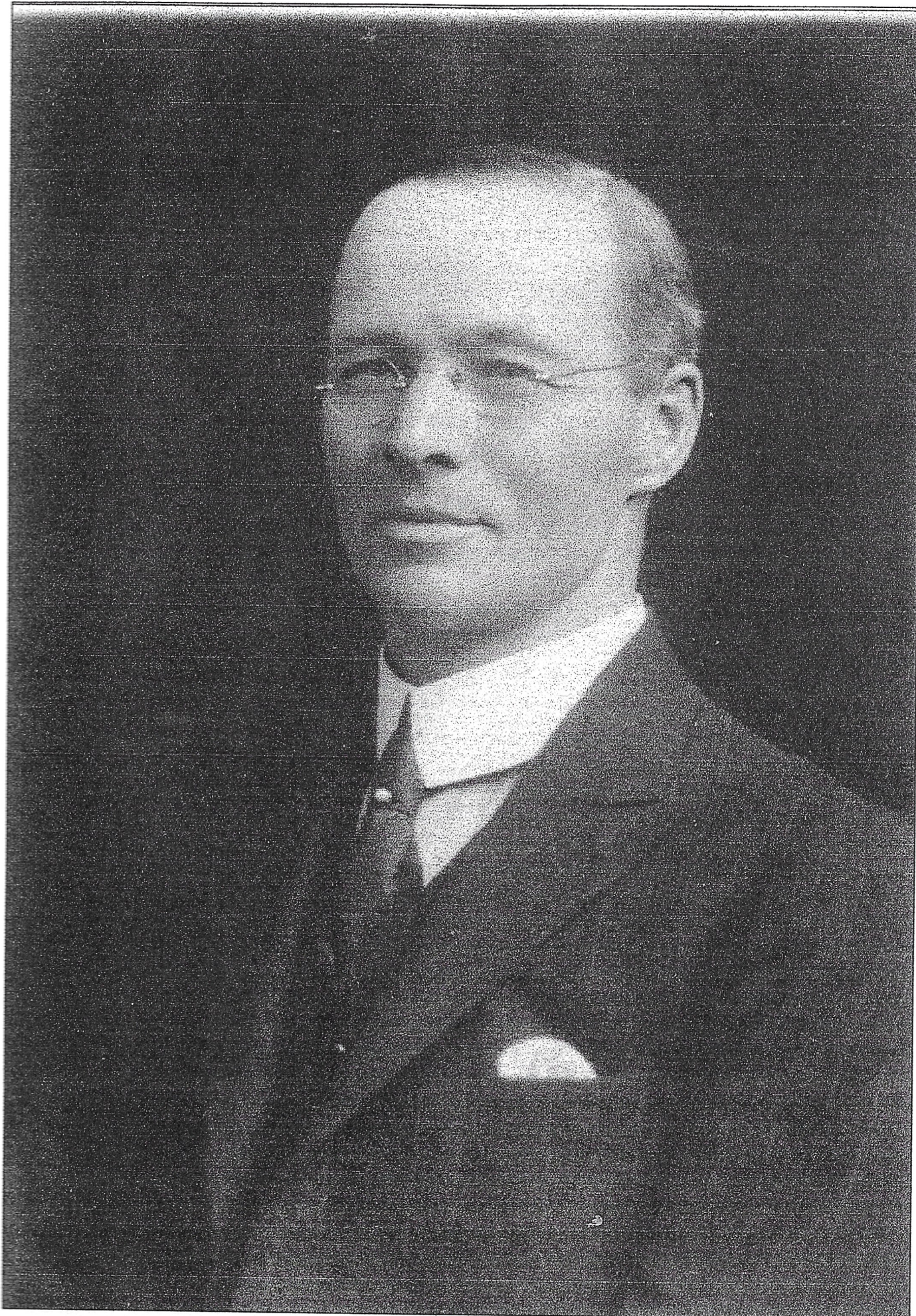
And so this catalogue of brilliance goes on.

It must be said also that the locality had a further number of cultured families with no tentacles linking them to the Phillipses. No wonder the village of Gwaelodygarth had a reputation for being an enlightened community.

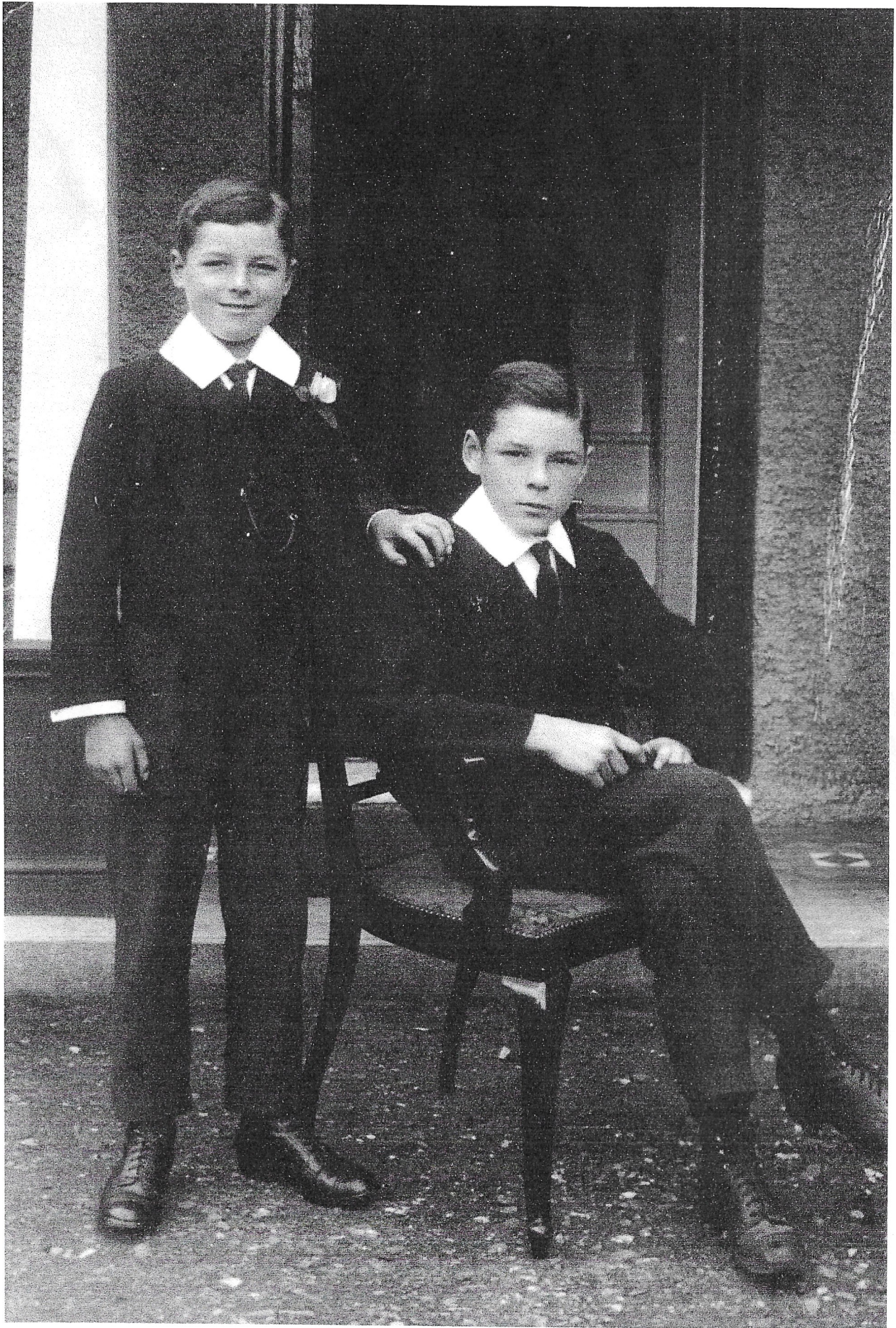


A lasting memorial to the good works of John Phillips of Ty Newydd is the bridge for which he campaigned and which was named after him. It was he who opened Pont Shôn Philip in 1926. It is still used as a convenient crossing from Taff's Well to Gwaelodygarth.





John Phillips of Ty Newydd – a man of many parts. Among other things he was a highly respected Justice of the Peace, devoted deacon at Bethlehem, successful businessman, prize-winning actor, school governor and chairman of the District Council.



Arthur Phillips on left and, seated, his brother Philip, who was two years his senior. They are about to begin their time away at boarding school.



Solicitor Philip and accountant Arthur were well-known part-time actors on the wireless – broadcasting from the BBC studios in Park Place, Cardiff. Apart from their roles in many radio drama productions, they were keen readers of poetry on-air and regulars on children's programmes.



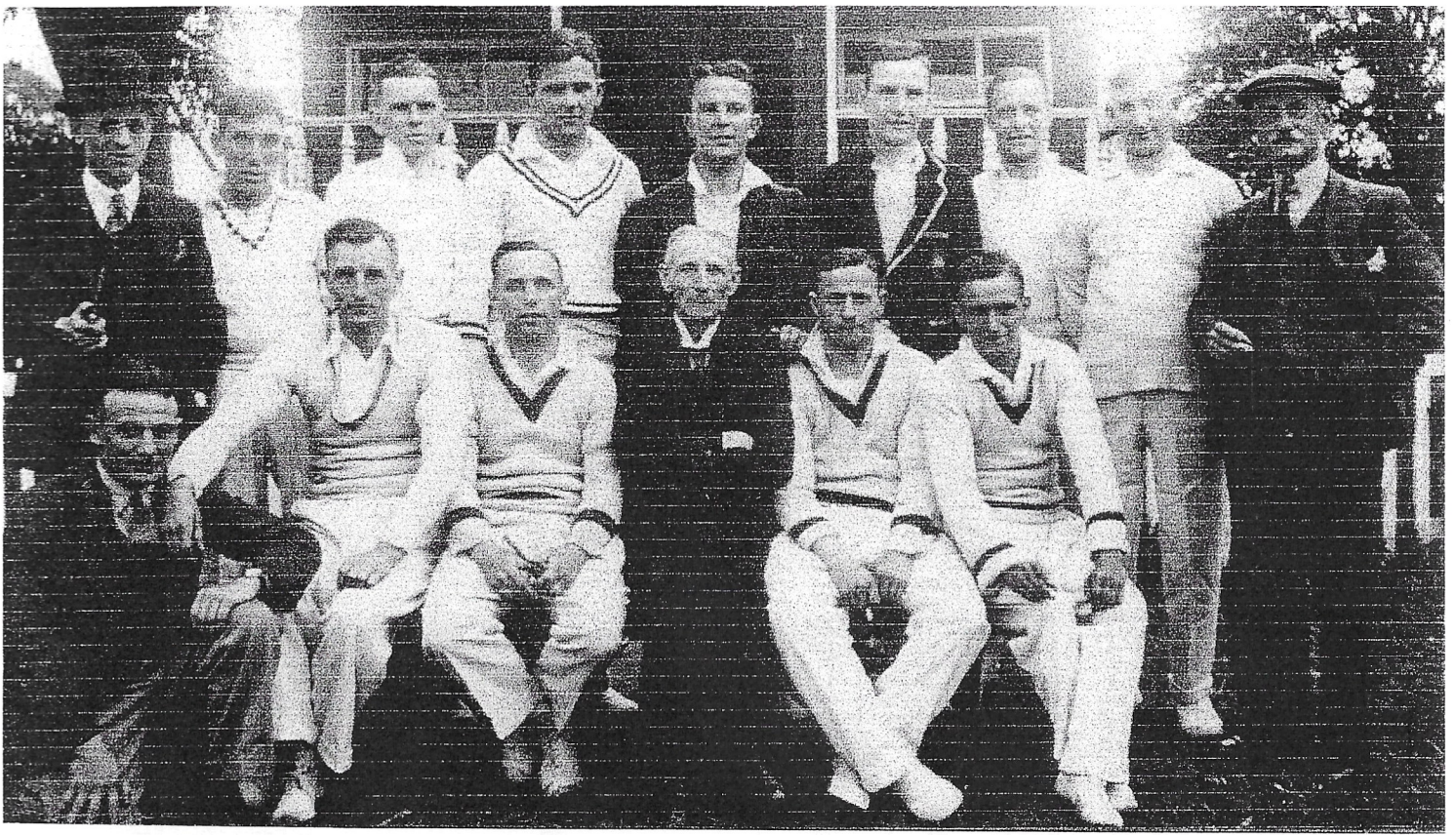
Philip will be ever-remembered by listeners to 'Welsh Rarebit' – the networked mixture of comedy and culture that went out weekly from the studio. His performance as the squeaky-voiced character, 'Little Willie' was masterly.



The Garth Dramatic Society, inspired by the involvement of the Rev R.G. Berry won several prizes in competitions. Many members of The Phillips line were ardent members of the group.

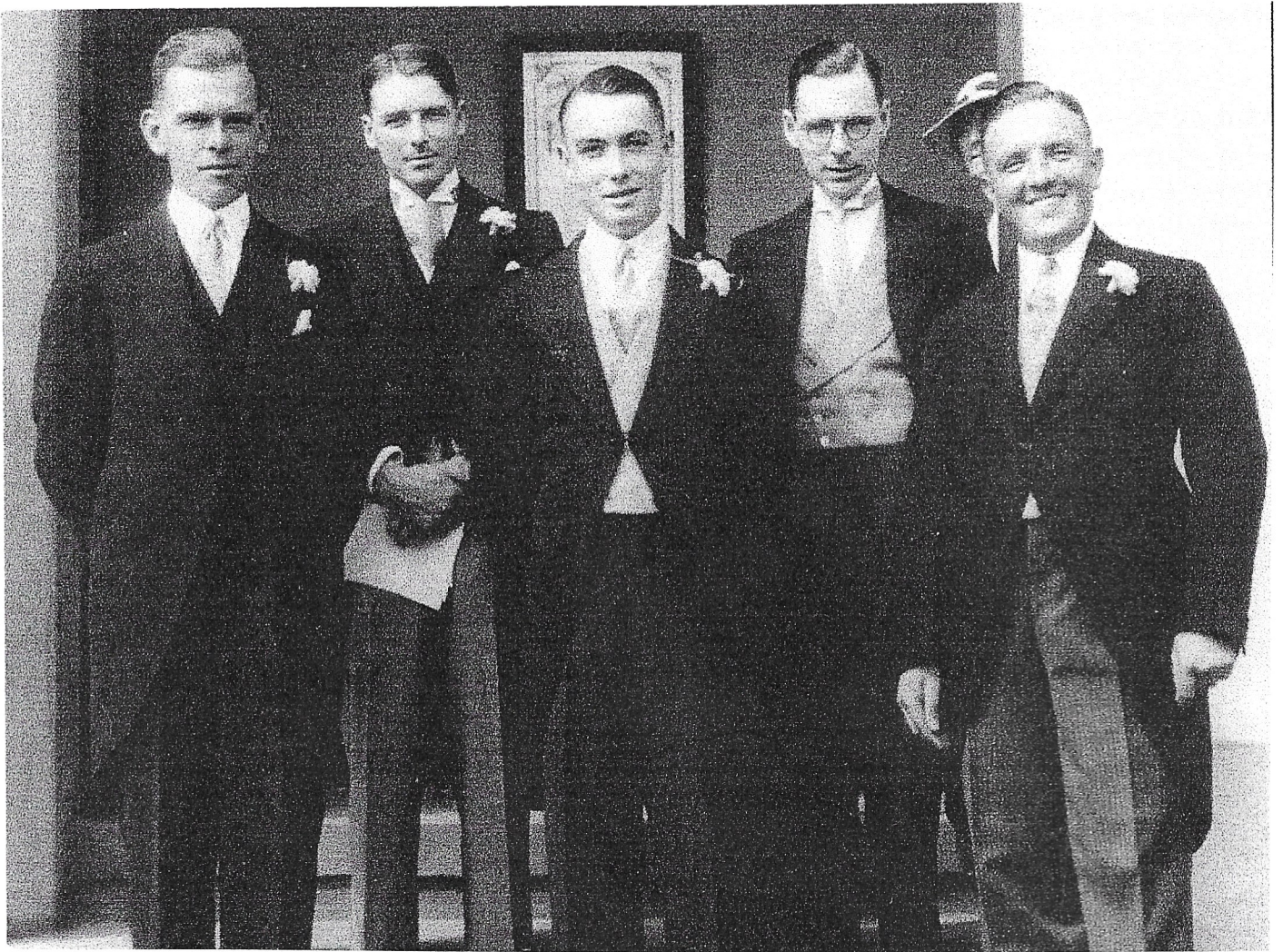


The successful Garth Glee party under its conductor Will George, also had its share of 'Phillipaid' ... John Phillips who was its patron and president can be seen (in the light suit) standing at the back.



The Phillipiaid were very prominent supporters of local sport and many were active participants. Evan J Phillips was the president when this photo was taken in the early 1930s. His relatives in the group include Bennie Howell, also seen below – on his wedding day.





A fine group.

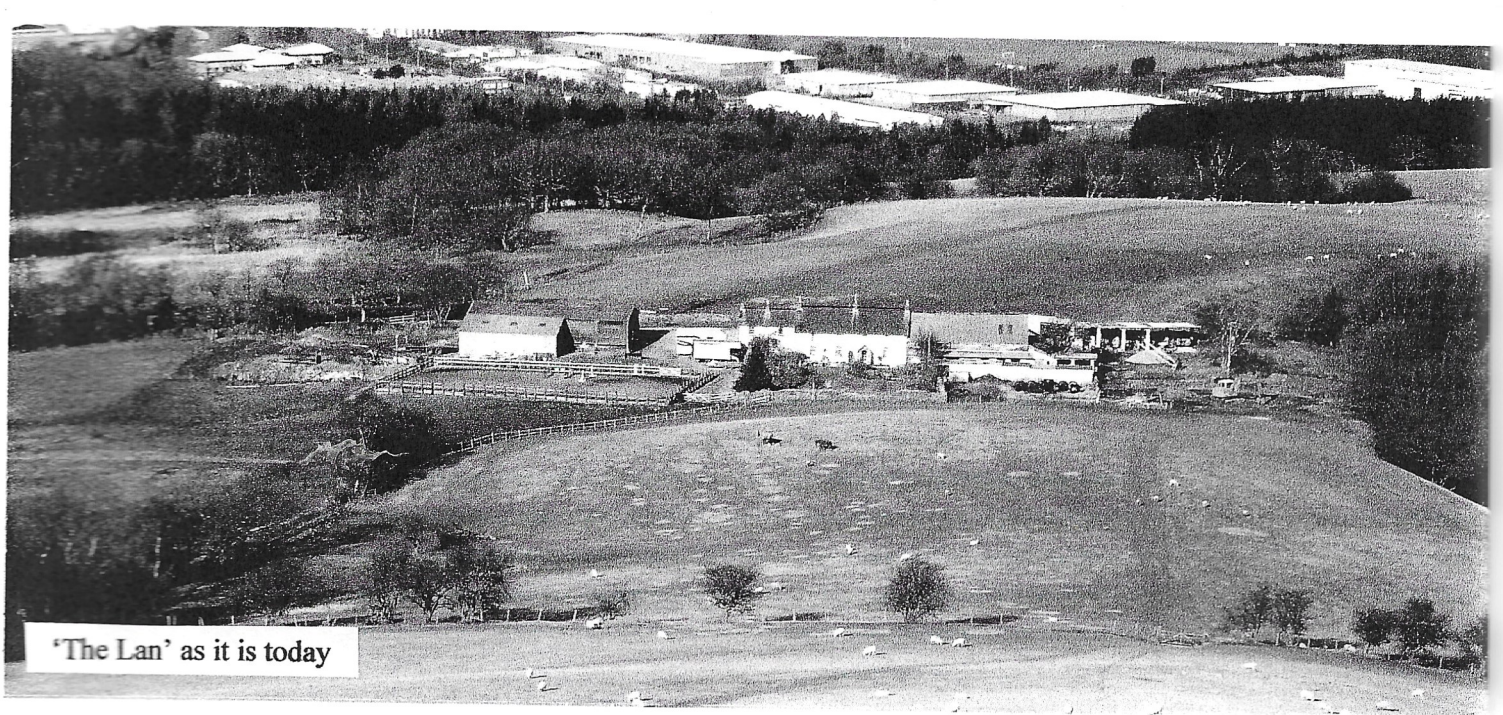
John William Howell, Arthur Phillips, Arthur Davies, Phil Phillips, John Charles Davies



This lovely picture shows Jinny the maid on the day of her wedding to Llew Davies of Pentyrch. J.P. J.P. is at the back second from left. Also in the group are Arthur Phillips, Nest, Dolly and Ron Lawson, Aeronwy, Myfanwy Davies and on the right (seated) is the colourful character, John Davies ('Shwni Caerwal', Llew's father)



Nest Jeremy, an accomplished lady who was for years a Parish Councillor, and like her father, occupied the chair of the District Council with distinction.



'The Lan' as it is today

The earlier Phillipiaid came from Beconsire to the Rhondda Fach; then Shôn Philip arrived at the northern slopes of the Garth in the parish of Llanilltyd Faerdref (Llantwit Fardre) taking up residence at Garth Isaf farmstead. His next move was due east to Lan Farm – still on the northern flank of the mountain but ever nearer to the Gwaelod which would become the 'spiritual' home of the Phillipiaid for a century and more.



Ty Newydd, where John Phillips resided, is the house, more than any other, that my contemporaries still connect in their minds with the family. We know though that earlier it had been the conveniently-situated home of his father-in-law, Evan Watkins who was the manager of the Ironworks just a couple of hundred yards away.