

## KELLY'S DIRECTORY OF MONMOUTHSHIRE

# 1901

## CAERWENT

### Kelly's Directory for Monmouthshire, 1901

The proprietors trust that the present Edition of Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire may be found at least equal in accuracy to the previous ones. Every place in Monmouthshire, and every parish will again be found to be included in the book. The Letters M.O.O. and S.B. are abbreviations adopted by H.M. Post Office to represent Money Order Office and Savings Bank.

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## CAERWENT

**including**  
**CRICK, LLANMELIN and PENHEIN**

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CAERWENT is a parish situated in the supposed exhausted basin of a pre-historic estuary on the Nedern and traversed by the high road from Newport to Chepstow, surrounded by hills in the form of a horse shoe, and is 3 miles north-west from Portskewett station on the Severn Tunnel junction and Chepstow section of the Great Western railway, and 5½ west-south-west from Chepstow, in the Southern division of the county, hundred of Caldicot, petty sessional division, union and county court district of Chepstow, and in the rural deanery of Netherwent, archdeaconry of Monmouth, and diocese of Llandaff.

Caerwent, now an ordinary village, with nothing to distinguish it beyond the remains of the ancient walls, was originally the site of the Roman station Venta Silurum, where the second legion fixed itself on the north-west side of the Severn, with the view of penetrating further into the country of South Wales. It is extra-ordinarily rich in Roman remains, and everywhere throughout the village and on the grounds of the Great House farm, within the walls (considerable parts of which still stand), Roman coins are found in great numbers, and numerous patches of tessellated pavement, formed of the ordinary cubes about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, coloured and worked into various designs, show where the baths and villas stood.

Most of the Roman pavements and other remains have been destroyed, but a part has been removed to the museum at Caerleon, and a room, as it originally existed, has been re-constructed there, as nearly as the materials would admit: the remains of one pavement are still "in situ," and vestiges of several of the Roman buildings may yet be seen. The whole of the walls of the Roman city may be distinctly traced, and on the south side they are in a remarkably perfect condition.

An encampment or fortification at Sudbrook is supposed by some to have been constructed by them, or, at all events, to have been utilised by them as a protection for the landing of soldiers, whilst other authorities maintain that the camp at Sudbrook is altogether subsequent to the Roman period. It is certain that the whole of Caldicot level and the country around it has been the scene of important historical events in early periods, and much of the evidence is patent to an ordinary intelligent observer.

The Roman city formed a parallelogram, 505 yards in length on the north and south sides, and 395

on the east and west, and the villas and baths covered an area of upwards of 50 acres. It is said that Caerwent was once a seaport and that rings were to be seen in the walls on the south side of the ancient city to which the ships were fastened. That ships could ever have come up to the walls is very doubtful, but it is not improbable that there may once have been a navigable creek running up from the Channel along the valley where the Nedern flows, and it is said that the village of Crick derived its name from this circumstance.

In the time of Agricola, Caerwent seems to have been at the height of its fame, and was famous for its temples, baths and theatres. Roger says that there was at this place the first academy, or university, in Britain, and that it was noted as the seat of learning and refinement.

The neighbouring town of Chepstow probably came into repute as Caer-Gwent (the ancient city of Gwent) declined in importance. During the building of some cottages 100 yards west of the church, the floor of a Roman villa and some rich mosaic work were discovered by R. Milverston Duke esq. architect. A Roman pavement was also found during the restoration of the chancel in 1893 on the south side and apparently running underneath the chancel.

The church of St. Stephen is an ancient edifice of stone, dating from the 13th century, and consisting of chancel, nave, south porch and an embattled western tower containing one bell. The chancel is Early English and has a very peculiar triple arcade on the south side, now built up. The nave is Perpendicular, to which period the fine porch also belongs. In the church is a fine old pulpit of carved oak with the date 1632 and the arms of Lord Tredegar and of the late Sir Charles Williams, of Llangibby, whose family owned this manor for many years. The chancel was restored in 1893 at a cost of about £700 and the restoration of the nave is now (1901) in progress. There are 250 sittings.

The register of baptisms and burials dates from the year 1567.

The living is a discharged vicarage, annexed in 1885 to Llanvair Discoed, joint net yearly value £300, with 5 acres of glebe and residence, in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Llandaff, and held since 1895 by the Rev. William Andrews Downing, M.A., of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

There is a chapel for Baptists.

Charles Edward Lewis esq., of St. Pierre, near Chepstow (who is lord of the manor), John Cropper esq., John Pollard Micklethwait esq. JP, Col. Burton, Major W F Bell and the trustees of John Lysaght esq. are the principal landowners.

The soil is loam, subsoil, gravel. The chief crops are wheat, barley and roots. The area is 1,999 acres of land and 3 of water, rateable value, £2,559. The population in 1891 was 348.

**Parish Clerk:** Richard George Wheeler.

**Post Office:** Mrs. Ann Church, sub-postmistress. Letters arrive from Chepstow at 8.40 a.m.; dispatched at 5.40 p.m. Postal orders are issued here, but not paid. The nearest money order & telegraph office is at Caldicot, 2 miles distant.

Pillar Letter Box in the hamlet of Crick cleared at 5.50 p.m.; Sundays, 9.50 p.m.

National School, built in 1856, & enlarged in 1893, for 130 children. Average attendance, 108

John E. Hardwick, master.

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## **PRIVATE & COMMERCIAL RESIDENTS**

### **CAERWENT**

**Berryman** Rev. James (Baptist), Caerwent house

**Downing** Rev. William Andrews M.A.

**Till**, Mrs., Great House

**Waterhouse**, Mrs.

**Bailey** James, grocer

**Barrett** Geo., Old Ship inn & boot maker

**Burrows** Albert, shopkeeper

**Burrows** Henry, threshing machine proprietor

**Burrows** Maria (Mrs.), shopkeeper

**Jones** Edwin, plasterer

**Knight** Edward, farmer, Slough farm

**Morgan** Charles A. coach maker & wheelwright & shopkeeper

**Pritchard** George, mason

**Rowlands** Thomas, Coach & Horses P.H.

**Till** Thomas, farmer, Great House farm

**Wheeler** Richard George, boot maker & parish clerk

**Woodland**, Thomas, baker, Green Lane.

### **CRICK**

**Bell** Major W. Francis, Crick house

**Cropper** John, M.A., M.B. & B.C. (Camb.), Mount Ballan

**Cropper** John, M.A., M.B., & B.C.(Camb.), physician & surgeon, Mount Ballan.

**Davis**, Isaac, mason, Crick

**Edmonds**, Sarah (Mrs) shopkeeper, Crick

**Horner**, Henry, Farmer, Crick..

**Langley** Clara (Miss), farmer, Crick

### **LLANMELIN & PENHEIN**

(Marked thus \* receive their letters through Shire Newton)

**Micklethwait**, John Pollard, JP, Penhein

\***Anstey** Geo., farmer, Lower Llanmellin

\***Burridge** Robert. farmer. Gt. Llanmellin