

The hidden history

of Cadoxton

your route





1 Victoria Park

Back in 1880 Cadoxton was a small village with 300 residents, three Chapels, a post office, shop, bakery, smithy, carpenters and wheelwrights shops, a couple of Inns and a school. At this time it was the largest of Barry's founder villages, alongside Merthyr Dyfan and Barry.

Soon huge changes took place with the construction of Barry Docks on the mudflats to the south of the railway line below the park. Within 10 years coal was being exported around the world, bringing Barry fame and fortune, prestigious buildings, such as the Dock Office, and pleasure parks, including Victoria Park, opened in 1909.



2 Pen-y-Bryn, Sea View Terrace

Home to Thomas Ewbank, appointed the first Schoolmaster of Cadoxton School from 1879 to 1921 when the rapid changes were taking place. He recorded these in a book entitled *Geography and History of Barry* intended for local children, but which is still highly valued by historians today.

No. 2 Sea View Terrace was home to Ewbank and then to Local Councillor, Tom Yeoman, who also represented Wales in Bowling.



3 St. Oswald's Road

Named Oswald Road after Oswald Evans, the ironmonger, who built the first house in the street. Mistakenly a Town Hall clerk made him a Saint!



4 Cadoxton Schools

Built over a decade as Cadoxton's population grew, the dates are recorded on the bell tower (1887) and the building to the right (1895).

Head down Church Road.



5

Church Road and Cadoxton Bricks

In the 1880s bricks were sourced by the colliery owners and from Bristol and Bridgewater. Then locally sourced bricks were produced in Cadoxton and stamped *Biglis*, *New Dock*, *Cadoxton* or *Globe*, and *Arkell* was apparently the hardest.

Welsh and English houses were built in Church Road in 1891. The Welsh houses have foliate decoration above doors and windows to keep evil spirits away. The English ones are brick with no decoration but some have boot scrapers for Arkell's workers' boots. Later they were used by the milkman to hold milk bottles.

Former Quarry at the bottom of Church Road.



6

Crystal Springs

This area contained the limekilns to burn the stone quarried in the area, and was later used as a depot to store bottled mineral water - *Crystal Springs*.

Low white house on the opposite side of the road.



7

Old School House

Built in 1847 as a Church School, its first headmistress was a Mrs Greatrex, wife of the local Butcher

Cross the road, turn right and left of the shop. Continue up the steps and onto the grassy hilltop.



8

Cassy Hill, formerly Castle Hill

The site of the earliest settlers of Cadoxton, *Double Cot* was actually two thatched cottages built in 1790, hence the name.

Drop back down onto the lane and walk past Church Terrace.



9

St Cadoc's Church

Cadoc the Wise was an important Celtic Saint born in the year 500AD. He founded the celebrated monastery at Llancarfan. Within the churchyard is the War Memorial, built on the foundations of a medieval cross, and the graves of Thomas Ewbank, and Barry's Wizard, William Jenkins, the son of Ann Jenkins, known as the Witch of Porthkerry.

Continue to follow Coldbrook Road West (signed as a cul de sac).



10

Hebbles House

Formerly the site of Evans blacksmith's shop. *Hebbles House* (1887) was a private girls' school, and *Golden Grove* was home of the wizard William Jenkins, and later Mr. Walker, builder of Barry Docks.



11

Coldbrook River

Also flows past Merthyr Dyfan and was used for baptisms.



12

Brock Street

The first census of 1841 shows Brock Street as the earliest recorded street name in Barry, after the Brock family who moved here from Somerset. The 19th Century farm house, *The Bowers*, has a raised kerb to enable ladies to raise their skirts above the muddy lane.

13

Knap House

On the right, at the top of Coldbrook Road West is the 18th century *Knap House*; sited opposite was the village paddock.



14

The Old Elm Tree (Now a mini roundabout)

The meeting place for villagers to hear news relayed from London. Christmas Evans, the most famous Welsh Non-Conformist and one-eyed preacher, used to preach at the tree.



15

Bridge Street

At one time this was Cadoxton's high street. Properties include Hillside, dated 1776, which became a public house. In 1778, William Jenkins had an argument here which led to him undertaking a public penance at St Cadoc's. King William IV Hotel Public House, built between 1830-1837, once held large dinners and celebrations. Philadelphia Baptist Chapel was built in 1813. Hillside Cottages, were once the village shop and Post Office, where in 1877 the daily post was delivered on foot from Cardiff, calling at Ely, Wenvoe, and Cadoxton before the postman returned the 12 miles back to Cardiff.

Other properties include *Caerlan*, another 19th century farm house (home to the Jordan family), and *Hatch Cottage* with adjoining Hatch Farm became the first butchers shop in Barry. It was demolished in 1932 to widen the road.

16

Opposite is Hatch Quarry

A spring, struck in 1911, flooded the area so bringing the quarrying to an end. In Cowbridge Street, Rock Cottage is the oldest cottage in Cadoxton, home to Evan Jenkins the village cobbler, and the explosive store for the quarry blasting.

17

Gas Vent Pipes

Built in 1890, the pipe had a light at the top fed by methane gas from the sewers. Also the site of a large stone slab where the bodies of people born outside the parish were placed before being moved to their parish of birth. Three paths, known as lych paths, led to churches at Merthyr Dyfan, Sully, and St Andrews. *Take an insignificant lane downhill, parallel to Church Road.*

This lane was the main road to Cadoxton leading to the Church and to Cadoxton's first Council School. *At the bottom of the lane reach Cowbridge Street.*



18

Sacred ground and The Old Parish Road

During the construction of Church Road in 1891, human remains and coffin nails were discovered so the open ground was left untouched as “sacred ground”.

Turn right, and at the bottom of Bastion Close, take a grassy lane uphill.



19

Ael-y-Bryn

At the top of the lane, to the right of an impressive flight of double steps, *Ael-y-Bryn* was home to Jimmy Wilde the first ever World Flyweight Boxing Champion unbeaten between 1916-1922, known as *The Mighty Atom* or *The Ghost with a Hammer in his hand*. He won 104 fights undefeated, the longest recorded in boxing history.



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