

We started this walk at Clyro filling station which meant that the walk was just under three miles, going through Clyro, up to Llowes Common, and back down a pretty lane taking us down past Clyro School. There are lovely views across to Hay and Llanigon and the Black Mountains.

WALK 1: ON FOOT ROUND LLOWES COMMON (About 2 miles)

Take the PAINSCASTLE road out of CLYRO. The house on the right, at the foot of the hill facing the road, was the POST OFFICE kept by MISS MORGAN (*Mona's lodgings with Kate Powell*), and LEWIS the POLICEMAN lived in the adjacent house facing the Church. Between these two houses was the VILLAGE WELL (*no sign of the well now*).

The first lane on the left as you leave the village led to CAEMAWR, and the old cottage at its mouth is SACRED COTTAGE where Kilvert visited ESTHER ROGERS (Vol 1 238 etc.). The large house further up the hill on the right is PENTWYN, the erstwhile home of MISS BYNON (many refs.). Then the house had two storeys instead of the present three.

On the bank behind and to the right of PENTWYN is PARADISE (Vol I 158 etc.), where the WILLIAMS family lived in Diary times. The first gate on the right immediately past PENTWYN led to CAEBONT DINGLE (Vol I 92) and JACOB'S LADDER (Vol I 84 etc.), which was a steep path leading up to the LOINEYS (LLAINAWS in Diary).

Here, on the banks by JACOB'S LADDER, grows the early purple orchid side by side with the cowslip, and in the woods bordering the field the grasshopper-warbler can often be heard.

Before you reach, in about ¼ mile, the place where the road forks, you will see on your left the PARKEY (Vol 1 36 etc.) (*Parcau Farm*) in the fields, and across the fields ahead, in the angle formed by the roads, the white gable-end and chimneys of WHITEASH. In the 1871 census this was called ASH HOUSE, where the young conscientious farmer, JOHN MEREDITH, lived with his "handsome dark-eyed rosy" wife ANN (Vol II 80-81, 161). Somewhere close at hand was the cottage where old SARAH PROBERT and HANNAH JONES lived, both agricultural labourers' widows (Vol I 32, 63 etc.). ASH HOUSE is now called FFOREST CWM, and the cottage has gone.

Bear left at the junction taking the PAINSCASTLE road, and climb the hill, passing on your left the lane to the PARKEY, and further on your right the entrance to FFOREST CWM and its caravan site.

When you reach the sharp right-hand comer at the top of the hill, proceed straight ahead past the farm on the left for about 100 yards, and turn left down on to LLOWES COMMON (Vol III 279, 285, 421), from where, on a clear day. You will have a wonderful view of the BLACK MOUNTAINS and BRECON BEACONS.

You will see a sign for Lletty Catti Farm; we understand Lletty means household or accommodation and Catti was a family name.

Carry on down over the common and down the pretty lane beyond. After rounding a couple of bends you will pass a green lane on your right which leads to CWM SIRWY (CWM SIR HUGH in the Diary, Vol II 28, 72, 87 etc.).

Kilvert records visiting CWM SIR HUGH, just over the small brook that separated the parishes of CLYRO and LLOWES and tinkled down the cwm to WHIRLEY GATE. He passed the “ruinous old kennels” to reach the house, where he found MRS. DAVIES with her face swollen with mumps, lamenting bitterly that her cottage was the wrong side of the brook and that there were “no ‘gifts’ and no clothing-club in LLOWES”. Later Kilvert “wandered down the beautiful path through the woods that fringe the cwm” to the LLOWES road.

Evidently new kennels were built at the keeper’s cottage, since the ones there now are in good condition, though not used, of course, for the same purpose. The beautiful path through the woods is no longer there, neither is WHIRLEY GATE, where the 1871 census tells us, Elizabeth Jones “a labouring woman”, lived with her daughter also called Elizabeth.

As you continue down the lane, you may see, in the right season, the spotted-leafed orchid, which grows on the left-hand verge.

The next house below the road on the right is BELLE VIEW (Vol I 131) where PALMER the mason lived, and just below, on the left, a drive leads over a cattle-grid to OLD FOREST (Vol II 245-246 etc.).

Further down the lane on the right is a modern bungalow built on the site of WELL COTTAGE (Vol II 156, 245) where “an old spinning wheel stood in the window”.

As you near the end of the lane you will pass the new PRIMARY SCHOOL on the right (*this new primary school was replaced with yet another new school in June 2018*) which is built in the CHERRY ORCHARD (Vol II 156), and the drive to CLYRO COURT is just beyond.

When the Estate was sold CLYRO COURT was bought by the Local Education Authority and opened as a Secondary Modern School, which specialised in the teaching of Agriculture. Later, when the number of pupils dropped dramatically, it was sold, and was later opened as a Health Farm. This was closed in 1978, and the place is, at the moment, empty. (*Clyro Court Hotel is now called Baskerville Hall Hotel and is thriving.*)

As you emerge from the lane on to the main road you will see directly opposite the remains of the old buildings at CLYRO COURT Farm (Vol II 191, 335 etc.) which were once part of a Monastic Grange.

Turn left for the village, and the white house of CAEMAWR (many refs.) is up on the left hand bank opposite the OLD SCHOOL which was closed in 1977. Beyond CAEMAWR drive is the old VICARAGE, where the VENABLES lived. Two small bungalows now occupy part of the old Vicarage lawn and the present-day Vicarage is opposite. (*The Vicarage was sold in 1987, and is now a private house.*)