

TURNER, WILLIAM (1766-1853), a pioneer of the North Wales slate industry, etc.,

Name: William Turner
Date of birth: 1766
Date of death: 1853
Spouse: Jane Turner (née Williams)
Child: Llewelyn Turner
Parent: Jane Turner
Parent: Henry Turner
Gender: Male
Occupation: pioneer of the North Wales slate industry
Area of activity: Business and Industry
Author: William Llewelyn Davies

sixth child of Henry and Jane Turner who lived on a small landed estate called Low Mosshouse, Seathwaite, near Broughton-in-Furness, north Lancashire (he was christened 23 March 1766); his father was lessor of the Walmascar slate quarries. He was educated under the Rev. Robert Walker, 'the wonderful Robert Walker,' incumbent of Seathwaite (and grandfather of Mrs. Thomas Casson, Blaenddôl, Ffestiniog). Hearing of beds of slate in Welsh hills he came, when he was quite young, on a walking tour of Snowdonia, entered into partnership with Williams, Pwlycrochan, Colwyn Bay, to work a quarry near Llanrwst (Llanrhychwyn?). Realising that this quarry would not pay he examined possibilities in the Ffestiniog district, hit upon a splendid vein at Diffwys, Blaenau Ffestiniog, and persuaded two Lancashire friends, Thomas Casson and William Casson, to join him in working the quarry. This was done, Hugh Jones, Hengwrt Ucha, Dolgelly, joining them in a company called 'William Turner and Co. '; for the subsequent history of the undertaking, see G. J. Williams, *Hanes Plwyf Ffestiniog*. His son, Sir Llewelyn Turner, in *The Memories of Sir Llewelyn Turner* (London, 1903), gives particulars of his father's success in marketing and exporting the slates produced at the Diffwys quarry and adds that because of this success he was offered a partnership by Thomas Assheton Smith (died 1828) in the Llanberis quarry, provided he came to reside in Parkia, near Caernarvon, which he did (before 1812). Later he was concerned with other slate quarries or mines in North Wales. As William Turner of Carreg-fawr, Croesor, he was high sheriff of Caernarvonshire, 1823-4, and of Merioneth, 1832-3. He died in November 1853.

TURNER (Sir) LLEWELYN (1823 - 1903);

Born 11 February 1823 at Parkia (and christened 26 February 1823 at Llanfairisgaer church), son of William Turner and his wife Jane (Williams), who was connected with the family of Griffith Williams (died 1672), bishop of Ossory, Ireland. In his *Memories*, published when he was 80 years of age, just before he died, he gives interesting reminiscences of his career and of his numerous friendships with lawyers, yachtsmen, etc. He was prominent in the municipal life of Caernarvon, was very active during the cholera epidemic of 1867 and claimed to have been instrumental in clearing away many slums in that town, of which he was mayor on two occasions; he was knighted in 1870. He was the founder (1846) of the Royal Welsh Yacht Club, deputy-constable of Caernarvon castle (and in that capacity did much to the fabric), and served as sheriff of Caernarvonshire, 1886-7. He was for many years a life-boat volunteer; he was also instrumental in inducing many men to join the Royal Naval Reserve. He married, 1878, Agnes, daughter of G. Bell. He died 18 September 1903.

Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

The Memories of Sir Llewelyn Turner (London 1903), 1903

Who's who?, 1903

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