



Deganwy in Victorian & Edwardian Times Researched by Fiona Richards 2011

Deganwy in the 1840's, 1850's & 1860's

Looking at the 1846 Tithe map and the censuses of 1841, 1851 and 1861 it would strike you that that much of the population lived around the area known as Tywyn where the parish road from Conwy turned uphill to Llandudno (Pentywyn Hill). Deganwy was still yet to develop into the area we know today. It would have been a sandy coastline with sand hills lining the coast to West Shore. The track along the coastline, for no roads ran this way, would lead to Tyddyn Dyganwy (sometimes referred to as Treganwy or Diganway, later part of the Deganwy Castle Hotel). The first postal directory to mention Deganwy as a village was in 1880, and the first one to list the residents was in 1886.

Nearby was the farm Glan-y-Mor (now site of Kyle House), set back from the shoreline. Here Robert Williams, a copper miner, lived; later Abel Davies farmed here. Further along the shoreline was Ffrith Gerrig, farmed by David Owens until about 1860s when his wife then lived there. Later John Owen farmed here and was also a gamekeeper Castell Tremlyd, inhabited by David Evans, a copper miner and farmer; later Robert Evans farmed here and was also a gamekeeper and coachman.

Neither of these buildings remain; Castle Tremlyd was more or less on the little headland, referred to as Tremlyd Point (called Cerriog Duon on the recent O.S. maps) whilst Frith Gerrig was a little way downhill to Castle Tremlyd (possibly there are remains of this on the Golf course). Now this area is part of the North Wales Golf course. Further over towards Llandudno were the farms Maes Du (now part of the Maes Du Golf course opened in 1915) and Cwm Howard. Uphill towards Llanrhos were the farms, Bryn Gosol and Maes Dolau.

At the Lodge between Deganwy House and Deganwy Station (shown on a map from the sale catalogue of 1871 for Deganwy House) lived Robert Lloyd, a gardener, and his wife Dorothy although their house was termed a 'poor cottage' (in the Tithe survey of 1846) rented from Peers Williams of Marle Hall. Later the Poor Rate Book of 1857 shows Dreganway [sic] Lodge was occupied by Robert Lloyd and owned by the Conway Corporation Company. The Lloyds were Non conformists and prayer meetings were sometimes held in Robert and Dolly Llwyd's [sic] house in Deganwy (*Ref: Williams, B. & J. Tudno, 1926. Methodistiad Dosbarth Llandudno*).

Going back towards Tywyn there was Tydden Nesa (now part of Rathbone Terrace) and somewhere nearby or adjacent was Cil Owen. Both were probably

Deganwy Castle Hotel



small holdings The three fields between these houses and Deganwy Lodge were owned by Peers Williams and referred to as Tyddyn Nesa. The Mostyns held the rest of the pasture on the Vardre; fields referred to as Fatw.

John Lloyd Jones, esquire, and his family lived at Tydden Dyganwy (sometimes referred to as Treganwy, later part of the Deganwy Castle Hotel) and had a substantial estate. The land from Pentywyn Hill along Ty Mawr Road (fields referred to as Towyn Parc) was owned by John Lloyd Jones of Deganwy House together with plots around Pant-y-Fron (fields referred to as Pant -y -Fron Cae Mawr & Cae Bach), Ty'n-y-Coed (fields referred to as Ty'n-y-Coed, Pen Towyn Ty, Cae Ty'n-y-Frith) and Deganwy House (fields referred to as Deganwy Tyddyn & Fridd Gerrig). The fields along the side of the river were referred as Warren (for rabbits). The Tithe Survey of 1846 and the Poor Rate Book for 1857 (taken on 8th May) are useful as they show the occupier and the owner. It shows that John Lloyd Jones owned Dreganway [sic] in addition he owned the following cottages and farms Maes Dola, Bryn Gosol, Bryn Gosol Bach, Pant-y-Fron, Ty'n-y-Coed, Pentywyn, Glan-y-Mor and Frith Gerrig, John Lloyd Jones was awarded 45 acres on the Great Orme as a result of the Enclosure Act of 1843 although the allotments were not made until 1848.

John Lloyd Jones, born in about 1805 in Llanddoget, was the son of the Rev. John Lloyd Jones and his wife Jane, living at Plas Madoc at Llanddoget about one mile north of Llanrwst (Ref: Lloyd, Thomas. 'The Lost Houses of Wales'). In 'A Topographical Dictionary of 1849' (Samuel Lewis) describes Plas Madoc as one of the principal houses of the parish, the residence of William Lloyd Jones Esq. (John's brother) to whom one half of the parish belongs. Their father, Rev. John Lloyd Jones, before his death was summoned before the Commission of Bankrupt having been involved in one of the pioneer banks of Wales (Denbigh c. 1794) with others such as Thomas Clough of Plas Clough. During the economic slump of 1814 the bank failed and the industrial properties held had to be sold and payment made in full to creditors (Ref London Gazette 14th June 1817 & Welsh Biography Online; National Library of Wales). The Commission of Bankrupts was still considering this matter in 1846 (Ref: London Gazette).

His wife Jane remarried to Ballard Jaques Nembherd (born in Jamaica in 1789) on September 8th 1820 at Capel Garmon. The Nembhard family of Jamaica was very wealthy and owned sugar plantations and vast tracts of land in Jamaica and stately homes in England (Ref: Nembhard, Mabel. 'The Nembhards of Jamaica'). However Ballard Nembhard died soon after on 19th March 1822 at Plas Madoc and is buried at Llanddoget.

John Lloyd Jones and his mother Jane Nembhard moved to Liverpool sometime in the 1820's and were living in Chatham Place in Edge Hill (Ref: Gore's Directory of Liverpool 1829). Plas Madoc was occupied by his elder brother William Lloyd Jones and his wife Catherine. (Ref: Pigot's Directory of 1829 & 1835).John Lloyd Jones was involved in a property 'Ty Coch' in Llandudno ;

agreement for a building lease Ty Coch, formerly Maes, Llandudno, between Jane Newbhard & John Lloyd Jones on one part & John Lester, a miner, on the other part in 1829. Later in 1830 there was a building lease between Jane Newbhard & John Lloyd Jones on the one part & Roger Lester, a miner, on the other part for a plot in same locality (*Ref: Gwynedd Archives*). In 1851 John Lloyd Jones was involved with the sale of a plot of land that had been part of the common, Morfa Isa, in Llandudno (*Ref: Hawarden Record Office*)

John Lloyd Jones married Charlotte Lyon (daughter of Joseph Lyon, born in Liverpool in 1808) at Neston on the Wirral in 1831 and their eight children were born there. The 1841 census shows John Lloyd Jones was living at Leighton, near Neston & Parkgate, and his occupation was brewer which may be connected to his father-in-law's business, Lyons & Co. Brewers & Malters in Great Neston (*Ref: Pigot's Directory 1835 & 1822*). His mother Jane Nembhard went to live with her married daughter Mary Lloyd Jones and her husband the Rev. John Burleigh Jones at Knowbury in Shropshire; she died there on 31st January 1854 (*Ref. Nembhard, Mabel. 'The Nembhards of Jamaica'*).

Interestingly the neighbouring landlord was the Hon. Edward Mostyn Lloyd Mostyn...one wonders if the Mostyns' plans for Llandudno gave some inspiration to John Lloyd Jones? Edward Mostyn had inherited the Mostyn Cheshire estates in 1840, and by 1842 he and his family moved to nearby Parkgate and entered into the life of the resort. The Mostyns had developed Parkgate as a 'watering place' in the 1750/60's but by the 1840's the resort was in decline as the River Dee was silting up (*Ref: Hiller, George.2003. Your Obedient Servant.*). The estate at Parkgate was sold in 1849; the same year as the first plots of land of the proposed new resort of Llandudno was sold at Plas Mawr in Conwy.

John Lloyd Jones appears to have inherited the Deganwy Estate through his grandmother, Mary Jones of Plas Madoc in her will dated 4th July 1835^{1 2} She in turn inherited the 'Estate & Demesne of Deganwy under virtue of the Will of Ellen Williams, widow deceased' who died in 1809³. Ellen Williams was the wife of Hugh Williams of Pentir, the daughter of Hugh Stoddart of Deganwy (*Ref Grave at St. Hilary's*⁴) and the niece of Beata Doulsen. Ellen Williams is mentioned in the will of Beata Doulsen of Deganwy whose sister was Ellin Stoddart.

The Lloyd Joneses probably moved to Deganwy after 1845 as their youngest daughter Beata was born in Neston in 1845.

¹ Llanddoget- The Will of Mary Jones late of Plas Madoc Widow deceased, Proved the 4th July 1835- (Proved at St. Asaph's)

² Plas Madoc-Abstract of the Covenant subject to Mortgage of £10,000 of Plas Madoc Estate from Wm.Lloyd Jones to his mother, brothers & sisters. (Gwynedd Archives XCV/84)

³ The :Last Will & Testament of Ellin Williams, widow, of Deganwy (National Archives)

⁴ Llanrhos churchyard.Underneath/lie ye/ of Beata Doulsen/ daughter of Rev. David Doulsen/ of Llanganafal/ who died ye 2nd Janry 1801/ aged 77 years/ Likewise/ the remains of Ellin Williams/ of Deganwy/ relict of the late Hugh Williams/ of Pentir Esqr. She departed this/ life the 14th day of March 1809/ aged 58 years.

However there is a mention of John Lloyd Jones of Deganwy, Esq as being qualified to serve the office of sheriff in county of Caernarvonshire in the year 1842 (*Ref: London Gazette 16th November 1841*).

An important development for the Tywyn/Deganwy area at this time was the building of a branch line from Llandudno Junction to Llandudno. The St. George's Harbour Act of August 20th 1853 authorised a harbour in Ormes Bay with a railway to join the Chester & Holyhead Railway east of the Conway Tubular Bridge. The pier was built in 1858, destroyed in the next year by a violent storm but plans for the harbour were abandoned. The railway from Llandudno to a junction with the Chester & Holyhead Railway east of the tubular bridge was opened as a single line on October 1st 1858 with a tank engine and coaches hired from the LNWR. By April 1860 it was decided to remodel the Llandudno Junction station to ease branch line workings onto the main line. By then the St. George's Company was penniless and the branch line was in poor condition, and by early 1862 the LNWR took over the lease but only essential repairs were done. By 1863 traffic to Llandudno had increased, as the town became better known as a resort. By July 1863 improvements had been made to the branch line. Deganwy Station first appeared in Bradshaw in May 1866. In 1873 the branch line passed into LNWR ownership; by then Llandudno was expanding and the branch line was doubled and Deganwy Station was rebuilt in c.1876 (*Ref: Anderson, V. R. & Fox, G.K., 1984. A Historical Survey of Chester to Holyhead Railway. Track lay out and illustrations. Baughan, P. 1988 The North Wales Coast Railway*).

Another proposed development was a river steamer wharf at Deganwy and applications were made to parliament in 1858 and 1860 (*see notice given in the London Gazette Nov. 30th 1858 & Nov.30th 1860*). But no such construction is shown on a map dated September 1871(*pers. comm. Eric Smith*).

A wharf (Deganwy Dock) was built to take timber and slate traffic from the Conwy Valley once the branch line was extended to Bettws-y-Coed and then to Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1879. The wharf was built three years later in 1882 using the spoil from the Belmont tunnel at Bangor (*Ref: London Gazette Nov.24th 1882*).

It is interesting at the time of the building of the station the hamlet of Tywyn had more inhabitants than Deganwy, perhaps one reason why the station was built at Deganwy rather than Tywyn was the influence of the owner of Deganwy House, John Lloyd Jones Esq., a landed proprietor, Magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant . Apparently he stipulated that the railway should go across his land and that the railway station should be built outside his front door. The railway agreed to this and so the sitting of the railway station led to the development of Deganwy (*Ref: Account of my village in the North Wales Weekly News July 20th 1978 by Caroline Hughes*). John Lloyd Jones might have had an eye on the future as by now Llandudno was becoming a fashionable seaside resort and that Deganwy

could become the same. In addition John Lloyd Jones may have known John Sisson, Land Agent to the Mostyns and who acted for Lord Mostyn over the acquisition of land by the railway company for the Chester to Holyhead railway. John Sisson was the steward of the manors of Mostyn, Leighton (where Lloyd Jones had been living), Thorton and Great Neston. Another link was John Williams, Land agent to the Trustees of Lady Mostyn who amongst other affairs managed the estate of John Lloyd Jones (*Ref. Hiller, George.2003.' Your Obedient Servant'*).

To empower the Saint George's Harbour Company to construct the following additional works, or some of them (that is to say) :—

A pier for the landing of passengers and goods at a point in the parish of Eglwys Rhos, in the county of Carnarvon, on the west side of the Saint George's Harbour Railway, and about three chains south of the spot where the said railway first enters from the south side the garden of Deganwy house, belonging to and in the occupation of John Lloyd Jones.

A wharf or quay adjoining the said intended pier, and extending nearly, at low water mark, along the River Conway to a distance of about three chains northwards and five chains southwards of the said intended pier, together with such walls, jetties, and other works, as may be necessary or convenient for the purposes of the said pier and wharf or quay. All which works or intended works are or will be situate in the parishes of Eglwys Rhos and Llandudno, in the county of Carnarvon, or one of them.

1

Port Diganwy.

(Incorporation of Company for making a Pier, Quay, or Landing-place, and other Harbour Works on the East Bank of the River Conway, at or near Diganwy, and for making a Bailway therefrom to the St. George's Harbour Railway.)

NOTICE is hereby given, that application is intended to be made to Parliament in the ensuing session for an Act to incorporate a Company with powers to construct and maintain a pier, quay, or landing-place, together with all proper works and conveniences connected therewith, on the east side of the River Conway, and on the west side of the St. George's Harbour Railway, near to Diganwy House, in the township of Benglas, in the parish of Eglwys Rhos, otherwise Llanrhos, in the county of Carnarvon, which said pier, quay, or landing-place, and other works will be constructed in, or be situate within the said township of Benglas and the parish of Eglwys Rhos, otherwise Llanrhos, in the county of Carnarvon.

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1. London Gazette November 30th 1858
2. London Gazette November 30th 1860

Deganwy in the 1870's & 1880's

In the 1871 census the Lloyd Jones family was not at Deganwy House and only the housekeeper, Bessie Finlay and the housemaid Kate Edwards were at the house. Charlotte Lloyd Jones appears to have gone to Devon to live with her son William, the Vicar of Washfield and his family; another son had also gone to live in Devon. John Lloyd Jones died in 1873 in Devon and his wife Charlotte carried on living in Devon and later Somerset until her death there on 1st December 1889.

This suggests that the Lloyd Joneses may have moved to Devon by 1871. The house was sold by auction on **25th September 1871 at Deganwy Castle Hotel** by Mr. George Felton (auctioneer & also architect involved in the development of Llandudno). The sale brochure gives a good description of the house and Miss Finlay (the housekeeper) was showing the house on production of a ticket from Mr. Felton (sale catalogue available at Gywnedd Archives). ***'The extremely desirable and very commodious Family House or Mansion House called Deganwy...charmingly situated on the banks of the river Conway, commanding delightful views of the Vale of Conway, Conway Castle & Bridges, Penmaen Maer, the Great & Little Ormeheads, the Irish Sea, Puffin Island, the Islands of Anglesey & etc. The House is in the best state of repair and contains numerous large and small Sitting, Reading and Entertaining rooms, Housekeeper's room, Butler, Pantry, Smoke Room, Coat and Knife rooms, Kitchens, Pantry, three Water Closets, Lavatory & etc on the ground floor with excellent Wine & Ale Cellars in the basement; sixteen excellent Bed and Dressing rooms, sitting room, Bathroom and two water closets on the first floor; and in the Tower (from which most extensive land & sea views are obtained) there is a small Bedroom and Observatory. The Out offices six stalled Stable and Harness room with Billiard room over, large Coach house, Wash house, Laundry, well ventilated Larder & etc. The House is approached by a carriage drive through tastefully laid out Pleasure grounds; there is a Croquet Lawn and two large productive Kitchen Gardens, one of which is walled and contains many valuable full bearing fruit trees.'***

This description suggests that the left hand side extension of Deganwy Castle Hotel with its distinctive tower had been built by 1871. The fact that the house was sold at auction at the **Deganwy Castle Hotel** may indicate that the Lloyd Joneses were running the place as a hotel. The map in William's Tourist Guide of Llandudno of 1864 shows **Deganwy Castle Hotel** and an entry for Slater's street directory of 1868 shows under the Inns & Hotels entries '**Deganwy J. F. Mason, Towyn**'. It suggests that John Lloyd Jones had changed the house into a hotel and had somebody to run the establishment whilst he and his family lived elsewhere, possibly with one of their sons.



Figure 1. Deganwy Castle Hotel

Slater's Directory for 1880 under the Llandudno entry describes ***'Deganwy (reached by rail) is a small village about 2 miles from Llandudno, chiefly comprised of villas. From its salubrious situation it is rapidly raising into repute as a summer resort. In the vicinity there are the ruins of a castle, considered to be one of the oldest in Wales, and which must possess many attractions to those of archaeological taste.'***

At this point there were a few villas along Station Road going from the junction of Ty Mawr Road towards the Deganwy Castle Hotel with a row of terraced houses (Deganwy Terrace). A few villas such as Platt House lay on the other side of the hotel on the present day Deganwy Road. A 'Vicarage' was shown near Platt House. The 1881 census shows some of these villas such as Riverdale, Penmaen Villa, Glan y Mor Villa, Fern Villa, Glyn and Platt House. It is noticeable that the owners of these villas came from England, mainly Manchester or Liverpool. Most were retired or living on their own income such as Arthur Noar at Riverdale whose income was derived from inherited money or William Drake Blew at Platt House as no occupation. Others such as Thomas Tory Smith described themselves simply as Gentleman. The curate of Eglwysrhos, A. Jones, lived at Glynn and the artist George Hayes lived at Fern Villa.

Leonard Raw, a builder and contractor, lived with his family at Deganwy. It is likely that he was involved in building these villas. As was Ralph Osborn, a joiner, living in Deganwy Terrace. The rates books are useful as they identify the occupier as well as the owner, and shows that Leonard Raw owned his house as well as several other houses. Several houses were owned by people not living in Deganwy, presumably bought as investments and a source of revenue. Henry Winterbottom of Manchester owned several houses built in the 1880's such as Annandale, Warren Villa, Plas Gwynant, Riversdale, Deganwy, and Mrs. Gray of Burton upon Trent owned one house, Barton Villa.

The 1886 Postal directory of Caernarvonshire gives a bit more detail on Deganwy such as John E. Jones, a Grocer & Italian Warehouseman, at Sunnyside. Later John Elias Jones would also have Deganwy Post Office...we still see his shop sign on the canopy on Station Road (see photograph below). Select lodging was offered at Glan-y-Mor Villa by Mrs. Davies, at Riversdale by Miss Eliza Dethick and Conway View by Thomas T. Smith.



Figure 2. Wrought Iron signage for J. E. Jones

The main road came from the turn off at Tywyn but did not carry onto West shore and Llandudno as at present. The road went back uphill, following the route of Bryn Lupus Road, towards Llanrhos. Along this road a few large villas had been built in addition to the existing farms. On the road going to Llanrhos, on the right hand side was Bryn Lupus where the Lowe family lived and further uphill was Bryniau Farm. To the left hand side were Bryn Gosol and Maes Dolau Farms and further on were the villas Bryn Maelgwyn and Bryn Mair where James Wells, the manager of the N. & P. Bank, Llandudno lived.

Deganwy Castle Hotel was being run by John Robert Barber, from Suffolk, as the Hotel keeper with his wife and family there (1881 census). His sister-in-law Ellen Richards was the housekeeper with Rachel Jones as the waitress and Ann Evans as the cook.

Being a Hotel keeper for John Barber appears to have been a brief interlude in the world of teaching. He had been a schoolmaster in Salford; Slater's directory for 1880 shows him to be the head of Deganwy College and later in the 1890's he was the principal of Waterloo College in Northampton and later a private tutor. It is possible that the Deganwy Castle Hotel had been Deganwy College, run by John Robert Barber, and then reverted back to being a hotel. A map from 'The Gossiping Guide to Wales' (date) shows Diganwy College (just by Diganwy [sic] Station) but not a hotel. In the Rates book for Conwy Corporation taken on 7th September 1881 shows an entry for John Robert Barber against the property described as college. This entry had been crossed out and the name Moon, 17 Oxford St, Liverpool had been inserted against the name of owner. John Robert Barber's name is against several entries, some of them crossed out. John Robert Barber appears to own the nearby Glan-y-Mor farm and occupied part of this property.

Later Deganway [sic] School (Llandudno Junction), headmaster Rev. R. O. Thomas, was established in 1887 and probably ran until 1892; this may have been in a different location as the Deganwy Castle Hotel was definitely a hotel in the 1891 census and the fact that Llandudno Junction was put in brackets after the name may suggest that it was near that station rather than Deganwy Station.

Henry Stewart Tritton is listed as the 'hotel proprietor' in the 1886 Postal Directory of Caernarvonshire. Henry Stewart Tritton was born in Rochester, Kent in 1836 and by about 1845 his family moved to Lincolnshire where his father, Henry, was the Collector of Customs at Great Grimsby. Henry Stewart Tritton went into banking as did his brother William. Henry married Helen Marie Moxon on 3rd May 1865 at Wray in Lincolnshire and they lived on Wrawby Road in Glanford Brigg, Lincolnshire. Here Henry became the Bank manager at Smith, Ellison & Co Bankers (1868 Lincolnshire directory). Later (about 1882/3) the family lived in Gainsborough in Lincolnshire where Henry appeared not to be involved in banking but was an agent for Midland Counties Fire Insurance (1885

directory); his father Henry also was an agent for numerous insurance companies.

Why the Trittons decided to move to Deganwy to run a hotel I'm not sure! But they certainly put Deganwy on the map with their improvements to the hotel and the hotel became a 'name'. Henry Stewart Tritton died on 15th December 1892 and left £2055 18s 8d to his wife Helen Marie. She died much later in 1921. After 1912 one of the daughters ran the hotel.

At Conwy Archives there are the plans for an extension to the right hand side of Deganwy House. An earlier plan (possibly 1880's) shows the extension to the right hand side with bedrooms and sitting rooms on the first floor and bedrooms on the second floor. A later plan of October 1898 shows how this extension was altered and enlarged; plan drawn up by James Prescott, architect surveyor & valuer of North John Street, Liverpool, for Mrs. H.M. Tritton. The main room at front was a Billiards Room with a Bar adjacent. From the Hall there was an Office (site later occupied by the bar) with Kitchen, Wash House behind this and with a Pantry & Servants Hall to the left. Behind the Billiards Room the hotel was extended along the side of the main road with an entrance to the road which led to a Refreshment Room & Bar. At the rear of the buildings there was a yard with stables and coach house (previously the billiard room was over these buildings). The first and second floor plans show more bedrooms over the side extension. Later in 1912 the stables and coach house were converted to a Laundry, Engine room & accumulators and suction gas plant. Along the side of the main road the hotel was extended to provide more bedroom space.

Deganwy in the 1890's & 1900's & 1910's

By the 1891 census Deganwy had grown, St. James' church had been built and later by 1899 the larger All Saints' church had been built, mainly by the exertion of Lady Augusta Mostyn. St. James's church was then used as a school, mainly to replace Llanrhos School which was quite a distance from much of the population of Deganwy and nearby Tywyn.

In 1880 a mission church was built in Deganwy near the junction of Ty Mawr Road & Glan-y-Mor Road. This mission church was built by the exertion of Rev. Arthur Jones and much voluntary local labour at a cost of £800. When the building was first completed, it was first used as a Church School as the local children at the time attended school at Llanrhos. In 1884 Revd Arthur Jones was appointed as Chaplain. The building was called St. James's Church and was open for divine service, and the children returned to Llanrhos (*Ref: Leaflet on All Saints Church, available at All Saints' Church*).

By 1890 the population had grown and thought was given to building a larger church. The site was given by the Hon. Lord Mostyn, and his mother Lady Henrietta Augusta Mostyn funded the cost of building the church in memory of

her parents, the Earl & Countess of Abergavenny. Messrs. Douglas & Marshall of Chester designed the church and the building work was done by local labour, mainly Messrs. Samuel Parry of Llanrwst & Llandudno Junction. The first sod was cut on November 1st 1897. When completed, the building was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph's on All Saints' Day, 1st November 1899.

In Tywyn there were chapels for non-conformists; Calvinistic Methodist chapel, Peniel Chapel, on Ty Mawr Road which opened in 1884. Also there was a Wesleyan Methodist chapel on Pentywyn Hill; later this was replaced by the Bethel Chapel opened in 1905 on Overlea Avenue. A Baptist Chapel was at on Back Marine Crescent (shown on O.S. Map 1898/99) although how long this operated is not known.



Figure 3. All Saints' Church with St. James' Church, later school, in the background.

As St. James's was no longer required for worship, the building was then used again as a school and was in use until Ysgol Deganwy on Park Drive was built in 1939. The school logbook notes that Deganwy National School was formally opened on October 25th 1897 with W. Williams, Llanrhos School, in charge and with about 63 children attending. Most of the children from Llanrhos then went to Deganwy School which comprised an infant school and a mixed school for the older children whilst the Llanrhos school remained open until 1905. The managers of the school were the Hon. Lady Augusta Mostyn, Rev. F.G. Jones (vicar), Rev. Bevan Evans (curate), Mr. Pilkington (of Bryn Cregin) and Mr. Fincham (*original Logbook is at Conwy Archives*). Previously the St. James's building appears to have been used as an infant school, known as Towyn/Tywyn Deganwy CE School (for infants) with R. Hughes in charge from 1893.

Joseph Evans of Haydock was the owner of Deganwy Estate. Joseph's father, Richard had become a successful colliery owner in the Newton le Willows area. On his death the business passed over to two of his sons, Josiah and Joseph. Joseph never married and lived with his sister Ruth at Hurst House and also at

the Grange at Haydock and Maenan House in Llanrwst. Joseph Evans held large tracts of land over North Wales (another estate was on the Great Orme & Joseph Evans was involved in the development of Marine Drive) and in Lancashire (*much of his papers are held at St. Helens Local History & Archives Library*). He appears to have sold some of the Deganwy Estate in about 1877 to Robert James Sissons & Charles Pilkington. The bulk of the estate was sold after his death on 31st May 1899.

During the 1890's with the sale of the Deganwy Estate, land was becoming available for building. The first sale was on 15th September 1891 and the second sale was on 23rd August 1892 at the Imperial Hotel in Llandudno....the area for sale is described in very flowing terms....***Deganwy Estate area of 276a 3r 35p of rich, park-like lands with south-west aspect, gently sloping from the Ruins of the Ancient Castell Treganwy to the banks of the Conway with a River Frontage of over a mile, extending from Deganwy to Llandudno, the far-famed & fashionable sea-side resort being intersected by a fine carriage drive on a direct route to Conway thus opening out a Grand Building Estate which will unquestionably take First rank in the Principality as a high class residential locality, being accessible by frequent express railway service from all parts & swift first class steamers to & from Liverpool, Beaumaris, Bangor, Menai Bridge, Carnarvon & the Welsh Coast***'. The sale catalogues extols the mild climate, good water supply, postal & telegraphic communication, a good harbour, capital fishing, golf links, steamers to Trefriw and concludes that this development '***supplies a long felt want and increasing demand for suburban residences***'

Much of the lots were either side of Glan-y-Mor Road & going uphill along the present day Bryn Lupus Road with additional lots going along the coast towards West Shore (at that time the main road just led back up the hill towards Llanrhos and did not continue onto West Shore). It is worth noting that Maesdu Avenue was not built until about 1928 and a long established public footpath went across the 'Warren' from Deganwy to West Shore.

With the sale catalogue there is an artist impression of the development that would stretch from Deganwy along the River Conwy to meet up with West Shore. Most of this area was used for the North Wales Golf Club established in 1894 and later Maes Du Links in 1915

There was a further sale on 7th September 1903 This catalogue states '***the scheme of development of this Estate embodies the essentials of Residential requirements & safeguards at the same time by varying the areas & dimensions of the Lots & affords opportunities to large & small capitists & suppliers a long felt want & increasing demand for suburban residences***'.

These developments were not to everybody's taste as a note in the North Wales Weekly News of May 1899 shows **'*¾ of the area covered by the links of North Wales (Llandudno) Golf Club on Deganwy Warren & sand hills –this favourite spot is in danger of being wiped out by an enterprising speculative builder who aims at extending Llandudno and Deganwy***' and goes on to ask whether the Urban Council should acquire possession of this area. However the Council declined to acquire the area as the asking price was too high (Ref NWWN December 1899)

Slater's Directory of 1895 describes **'*Deganwy as a small village and railway station in the parish of Eglwys-rhos, about 2 miles south of Llandudno, is pleasantly situated at the mouth of the Conway river and commands a fine view of the castle and town of Conway with Beaumaris Bay in front and the mountains behind; it is principally composed of villa residences, there are some lodging houses and a good hotel. In the near vicinity are the ruins of an old castle said to have been built at the end of the 11th century.....There is a first class hotel called the Deganwy Castle.***'

By the start of the century Deganwy was becoming an established seaside resort as a report in the NWWN of 1902 (July 18th) shows. The article reports that *'the visiting season of this rapidly rising watering place continues to become brighter in its prospects as the season advances. The fine weather of the past week brought thousands of visitors to the river side, many of whom made the trip to Trefriw with the splendid little steamers of the St. George Steamship Company. Bathing has been largely indulged in and boating has also been practiced and through the beautiful sunny days a great many have spent the time basking on the promenade.'* A report later that summer (8th August 1902) says that *'Deganwy received during the week a record share of public patronage- great crowds of visitors-no less than one thousand visitors left by rail during the Bank Holiday alone-special trains were put on to cope with the traffic from Llandudno for Trefriw'*.

As mentioned in these newspaper reports, one attraction for visitors to Deganwy was the paddle steamers which brought tourists up the river from Conwy and Deganwy to Trefriw. Passengers from Deganwy joined the steam packets from a small landing stage just over the railway line at the start of Marine Crescent .Some postcards show several landing stages for the rival companies; the main company being the St. George's. A packet service (for goods & passengers) was in service by 1851 from Conwy to Trefriw; this year round service continued until about 1863 when the railway reached neighbouring Llanrwst. The cargo service disappeared as it was easier and cheaper to use the railway and the emphasis changed to carrying passengers in the summer. By about 1890 the railway company would lay on special trains to bring visitors to Deganwy to enjoy a ride upriver on the steamers; the boats had to go up river on the tide so the time of departure would change daily and so the time of the trains would change accordingly. If there were more passengers than could be accommodate on one

boat, then they would whistle for an extra boat to be sent over from Conwy. Once they had reached Trefriw the visitors could only stay about fifteen minutes as the boats had return with the ebbing tide. The visitors could stay at Trefriw and return by other means (*Ref: Richard Clammer from a talk given to History of Deganwy Group on April 14th 2011*).



Figure 4. Landing Stage at Deganwy c.1904

The steamers were laid up in the WWII and this spelled the end of the cruises, other than a brief couple of seasons in the 1950s when motor boats were used .The steamers were beached upstream of Conwy bridges, and eventually scrapped. Their passage up the river had necessitated regular river-dredging, which was no longer been continued. (See www.postcardnostalgia.co.uk/Trefriw for a good selection of old postcard views for the steamers at Trefriw).

A ferry also ran across from here to Conwy Morfa although this could be dangerous depending on the tide. An attraction on the Morfa side was the Caernarvonshire (Conway) Golf Club, founded in 1890.

Other visitors to the area included army (probably territorial units/ brigade camps. An old postcard shows the camp of the York & Durham with its bell tents on the fields to the Llandudno side of York Road, going along Deganwy Road direction (Ref www.oldllandudno.co.uk). Another popular spots for these camps were on the 'Warren' and on Conwy Morfa opposite Deganwy. There is often reference to these camps in the North Wales Weekly News as the soldiers/ brigades often attended the local church on Sunday.

.The O.S. map of 1900 shows quite a difference from the previous O.S. map of 1889/90.The number of villas increased, mainly the spaces between the existing villas were built on; both on Station Road and Deganwy Road. Another line of terraced houses/shops (many have a shop front with an additional entrance for

the living accommodation above) were added on Station Road. Marine Crescent and Sefton Terrace had been built. York Road and Gannock Road had been laid out and a few houses built at the start of these roads.

From Ty Mawr road towards the village the additional houses (1891 census) were Waen View, Seaview, Morfa View, Allandale, Warren Villa, Poplars, Barton Villa, Holmsdene, Rock Villa, with Randolph House on Deganwy Road. By the 1901 census the Deganwy Road side had developed further with the following additional houses Heath House, Bron Air, Bryn Seriol, Bryn Menai, Highfield, Summerfield and Ravenswood. Many of the owners of these villas were described as 'living on their own means' or were in professions such as barrister or curate. Again many of these people came from England like Manchester, Liverpool or Birmingham. Some of their staff was locally born but many had moved to Deganwy with the family they served.



Figure 5. View of Deganwy, Marine Crescent, Deganwy Castle Hotel, Terraces along Station Road with large houses along Glan-y-Mor Road & the start of York Road with lots of open fields behind

Postcard views show that Marine Crescent was initially unmade without the promenade wall; later views show the road surfaced with the promenade which later continued alongside the beach. Earlier postcards show some beach huts, one with the name 'Castle Hotel Deganwy' on the side. Later postcards show the promenade continuing along by the beach with the small enclosed shelter which is still there, having been renovated in the past couple of years.

In the North Wales Weekly News of 10th March 1899 at a Conway Corporation meeting it was commented that the great majority of property owners along Marine Crescent were willing to contribute to a promenade along Marine Crescent. Another comment was that now that Deganwy was growing very fast that the Council should construct a promenade that would meet the requirements of the neighbourhood. By April 1899 the Corporation of Conwy had sent out a

contract for Deganwy Promenade; a Schedule of Quantities of Work required & Materials to be supplied (*a copy at Gwynedd Archives*). Price came to £1850 18s 0d which included exaction of the surface for a carriage way and footway, surfacing of road, walling, steps, gullies, kerbs etc with lamp pillars and lamps. However there must have been delays as by October 1900 the promenade was still not built. By July 1901 work on promenade was progressing and by August 1901 the promenade was finished (*Ref NWWN July 1901 & NWWN 9th August 1901*). The surveyor reported to the Conway Town Council that the promenade was completed and that the council should purchase six or nine seats to place on the promenade. He reported that ***'the promenade was much appreciated by both the inhabitants and visitors..very much valued by all...in fact rather too much so by the cyclists who were enjoying the pleasure of riding on it, to the danger of other users'***.



Figure 6. Two views of Marine Crescent

There was a footbridge over the railway (near to the signal box) to reach the beach which replaced an earlier footpath over the railway (*London Gazette November 22nd 1889*). Later this footbridge would be dismantled and now you walk over the railway at the level crossing. There was the main footbridge, still in use, at the station.

London Gazette November 22nd 1889

In the parish of Eglwys Rhos, otherwise Llanrhos, in the county of Carnarvon.
To stop up and discontinue so much of the footpath which crosses the Company's Llandudno Branch Railway on the level at or near the north-west end of Deganwy Station as lies between the boundaries of the Company's property, and to carry the said footpath over the said railway by means of a footbridge.

Slater's directory of 1895 shows some of commercial concerns in Deganwy. Charles Bowdage a provision dealer at Penmaen Villa, Thomas Davies a coal merchant at Sunnyside, H.E. Ford a stationer & fancy bazaar at Holmdene, Robert Hughes a grocer at Bryn Arvon, Owen Jones a boot maker at Waen View, and John E. Jones grocer at Sunnyside. John E. Jones was also the postmaster in charge of the Post, Telegraph & Money Office & Saving Bank; letters were dispatched (via Llandudno) at 10.50 am and 9.00 pm and on Sunday at 6.15 pm. Charles Drover was an agent for Inde.Cope & Co whilst John Hughes was an estate agent at 1 Marine Crescent. Several had apartments at Riversdale (Richard Davies), Glan y Mor (Jane Davies), Rock Villa (Mary Evans), 4 Post Office Place (Catherine Jones), Heath House (M. Longshaw), Conway View (Thomas T. Smith), Some were concerned with the quay such as John Evans who was the superintendent of quay & goods agent at Deganwy wharf (lived at Fern Villa), P. & H. Lewis were timber merchants at Deganwy wharf & Conwy, Thomas Lunt was a boat proprietor at Riversdale, F.J. Sellick had the Deep sea Fishery Company at Deganwy wharf, and James George Tufford was a slate merchant at Deganwy wharf.

In Bennett's Business Directory for North Wales for 1898 shows Dunphy Stores, a chain of grocers' shops in the area; in 1902 a license & excise certificate was issued to Stephen Dunphy to sell ales, wines etc in Deganwy. (*Ref Conwy Archives*) and another store was Enoch Hughes at Glyn Isa, a game and poultry dealer (later fishmonger too); both businesses were to stay in Deganwy for a long time

Artists were being attracted to the area with the Royal Cambrian Academy being established at Plas Mawr in Conwy; Edwin Ellis at Allandale, Walter John Slater at Fern Villa, Frank William Longshaw at Randolph Villa, Albert Ayling at the Deganwy Castle Hotel and John Cuthbert Salmon and his daughter Maud at Elsinore. There were other artists living along Ty Mawr Road and other parts of Tywyn.

Utilities such as piped water, gas and electricity had reached Deganwy; in 1875 the Llandudno Water & Gas Company (*Ref London Gazette 26th November 1875*) could supply water and gas for public and private purposes in the Deganwy area. The Deganwy Estate sale catalogue of 1903 extols that the '**celebrated Cowlyd Board Water supply is available**'. In 1904 the Conwy Corporation Electric Lighting Company (*Ref London Gazette 11th November 1904*) would produce and supply electricity within the Borough of Conway which included the Deganwy area.

The motor car was beginning to make an impact and in 1910 speed restrictions were set from the entrance of the Deganwy Castle Hotel through the village to the Ty Mawr Road junction....motor car were not to exceed 10 miles a hour along this section (*Ref London Gazette 9th May 1911*).

The O.S. map of 1912/13 shows an additional terrace of houses/shops on Station Road. The main feature is the layout of Gannock Park, leading on from York Road and Gannock Road (developed by the Whitely Brothers as an exclusive residential area). A few houses had been built on these plots as a view below shows. One house has a date of 1907



Figure 7. Gannock Park from the Vardre, then & now

The street directories of 1911 and 1914 give a good deal of information on the area; in the local information section there are details about the church, its officials and services as well as for the two chapels. The Elementary school is described as having an average attendance of 150 whilst its accommodation was for 215 with W. Williams as the headmaster.

These directories give great detail on the businesses and shops now being run along Station Road. Many of these buildings had a shop premises with a separate entrance for the house above the shops; quite a few of these were referred to as apartments.

At the top end of Station Road in 1914 there was Smith's Garage, proprietor Arthur T.S. Smith (see copy of advertisement & photograph of building) now housing Robertson's Geologging. High class cars could be hired, repairs made, Vulcanizing by H.F. Process could be done and any make of car supplied!



Figure 8. Former Smith's Garage



Figure 9. Street Directory of 1914, advertisement for Smith's Garage

The next line of building were referred to as the Victoria buildings with the Café Royal (proprietress Mrs. W. Thomas), grocers, confectioner and fruiter shops, a boots & shoe dealer (John Barron), a plumber & decorator (John W. Owen at Tudno House), an outfitters (R.C. Baxter) and watchmaker (C. Bates at Glen Garth).

The next line of buildings was referred to as Castle Buildings with Jones Bros. butchers at Hyfryd-Le (now the Olive Grove), Smith's Drapers, Dunphy & Sons grocers (now Acorn Antiques), Edward Price an ironmonger, Miss Walmsley a confectioner, and David Griffith a tailor. The names Jones Family Butchers & Dunphy can be discerned in some old postcards. Dunphy & Sons was a company owning grocery shops, bakeries, wine & spirit retailers in Llandudno, Craig-y-Don, Conwy, Deganwy and Penmaenmawr. The company was found by Mrs. Dunphy who was succeeded by her son Stephen Dunphy. He had four sons, two of which Richard and Arthur went into the grocery trade with their father. The business closed in 1970 (Ref Conwy Archives).

The next building is referred to as Auburn House with the chemist Walter Hartle in 1911 and J.D. Melling in 1914 (see photo of shop front). Next to this was Glynisa; the small shop (see photo) housed a hairdressers whilst the large shop housed Enoch Hughes, a fishmonger. The adjacent building was Lancaster & Co. a stationers and tobacconists (now Tarmasters).



Figure 10.

Next was Rock Cottage with Deganwy Terrace; here apartments were available. Then there was the National Provincial Bank Ltd (later becomes the NatWest when the National Provincial Bank merged with the National Westminster Bank in 1970).

The next part of the terrace was referred as Sunnyside with John E. Jones's grocer's shop and post office (John E. Jones was the Mayor of Conwy in 1952). The 1911 directory gives the opening hours... longer than today....Weekdays 8am to 8pm; Sundays 8.30am to 10am! Next door a fruiterers was run by Roger & Greig, later Brookes. In 1914 the London, City & Midland Bank was erected or rather the existing building was being changed to the Bank frontage (postcards show terraced houses with small enclosed gardens at the front; later postcards show the frontage as it appears later with the Midland Bank).

A feature of Deganwy is the canopied verandah along the shop fronts. The canopy with 'J. E. Jones' signage was manufactured by James Allan & Co. Ltd at the Elmbank Foundry in Glasgow (Ref: www.scottishironwork.org). This replaced an earlier canopy with a large wooden sign and corrugated iron roof. It is not known where the other canopies in Deganwy were manufactured.



Figure 11. Ironwork on canopies on Station Road.

The next house was Glan-y-Mor (now Payassane) where Gilbert Griffiths, the local doctor lived; he had married Muriel Tritton in 1904, and the adjacent house was Belle Vue, described as the Station Restaurant run by Philip Melley. The last

commercial property was called Conway View in 1911 and in 1914 referred to as Smith's Hotel, a Temperance Hotel (now Garrick House) run by T.T. Smith.

Near here was Mordon, the National Telephone Call Office; some of the local businesses were on the phone by now such Smith's Garage telephone no. 29, Owens a plumber at Castle Building was telephone no. 17 whilst his neighbour, Prices, a cycle agent was no.14.

Bennett's Directory of 1898 shows the Deganwy Lending Library run by M.E. Ainsworth; he also stocked stationery, books, fancy goods, glass and chinaware so it would appear that this library was run from one of the shops.

In January 1901 amended plans for a Reading Room was submitted by C.J. Wallace Esquire (who lived at Gwynedd on Ty Mawr Road and had been Mayor of Conway 1897-98). The New Branch Library (Deganwy) was opened in 1904 (*Ref: NWWN 28th October 1904*); the article reports on final arrangements were being made to equip the new reading room thanks to the generosity of C.J. Wallace & Miss. Wallace. An ample supply of current literature was to be made available. The Street directory of 1911 refers to the Free Public Library (probably the present position of the library; a library is shown on the 1912/13 O.S. map & the 1911 street directory states that it was situated at the end of Station Road near Church schools). Again opening hours were much improved on the present day hours...open daily (except on Sundays & Bank Holidays) from 10am to 1pm and 6pm to 10pm; Wednesdays and Saturdays 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 10pm. Catalogues priced at 2d were available from the librarian.

By now various societies and groups were forming in the Deganwy area, one being the Deganwy & District Ratepayers Association which started in 1896(check NWWN for 1896), also a Deganwy Literary Society (*Ref: NWWN 1900*), a Sailing Club, later the Conway River Sailing Club, was formed in September 1899, Deganwy Lawn Tennis Club, Deganwy Male Voice Choir.. There were also the two Golf clubs; North Wales Golf Club and Caernarvonshire Golf Club (Deganwy members cross by ferry for 2d.),

One society was the Deganwy Young Men's Club which presumably met at the Reading Rooms (later the Reading Rooms were altered in 1925 to have a Billiard Room in the main part of the building whilst the reading room was housed in a small extension; *Ref plans in Conwy Archives*). The NWWN reports on 11th April 1902 that ***'the first season of the Deganwy Young Men's Club was brought to a close on last Wednesday evening ...by a supper and smoking concert...there was a good attendance of members..the chairperson was Mr. C.J. Wallace M.P, J. P. The audience enjoyed the cigars, cigarettes and tobacco kindly provided by Dr. G. H. Griffith and cigars were also kindly brought by Mr. Bennett, Bryn Cregin.*** There were songs and a comic performance and it was proposed that a paper chase club and a swimming club

would be formed and gymnastic culture classes would be formed. By May 1902 they had formed the Conwy River Swimming Club (*Ref NWWN May 16th 1902*).

One of the main events of the year was the Conway River Regatta organized by the Conway River Regatta Committee meeting at the Deganwy Castle Hotel (*Ref: NWWN 13th June 1902*). The Regatta in 1902 was held on 14th August for small crafts and also swimming races. It enjoyed the patronage of the Right Hon. Lord Mostyn and the Mayor of Conwy, Mr. Albert Wood together with a large committee of local worthies. The chief race was a handicap race for yachts of any rig, not exceeding 15 tons, and the prize was the Cornelius Sever Challenge Cup and £5. The starting point was Bar Buoy, then the course lay around Dutchman Buoy to the buoy in the fairway of the North Deep, back to Bar Buoy and then to the finishing point by the Committee boat off the steamer piers at Deganwy. The four yachts entered the race, one became grounded just before the start of the race and the 'Tess' won. The next race was the Deganwy Challenge Cup open to members of the Llandudno Sailing Club. Then there were various rowing races, all keenly contested, followed by the swimming races. The weather apparently was fine but the lack of breeze hindered the yacht races!

In the evening the annual dinner for the Regatta was held at the Deganwy Castle Hotel, presided over by Commodore Mr. R. B. Crowe. The *'tables were most tastefully decorated and an excellent dinner was served in that good style for which the hostess Mrs. Tritton is so noted'* (Mrs. Tritton would be turning in her grave at the present state of the Deganwy Castle Hotel!). Numerous toasts were proposed after the dinner. It was noted that there must have been over three thousand people and that it was most unusual to see so many well dressed and orderly people in so large a crowd and that the police had nothing to do apart from watch the races.

The coronation of Edward VII in 1902 was a cause for national celebration and Deganwy was no exception...having decided that Deganwy would have its own celebrations rather than being with Conwy. The report in the NWWN of Friday 14th July 1902 describes the Deganwy Coronation Celebration held last Thursday. An intercessory service held at the church in the morning, and in the afternoon the children of the various Sunday Schools in the district walked in procession through Tywyn, Deganwy and part of Llanrhos. The route was decorated with bunting etc. After the procession sports were held on the Park Field where tea was served to the children and the poor of the district in a large marquee. Each child was presented with a mug and a handsome medal to commemorate the occasion as well as a tin of chocolate and an orange [in addition to the good fare provided]. The sports were watched by a large number of people and each event was well and honorably contested. The judges were Colonel Stephenson and Mr. A. Hall.

Deganwy developed from a slightly isolated sandy shoreline with Deganwy House, a few farms and small holdings to the village we know today. One of the

main factors in its development was the railway line and the position of Deganwy Station. The railway opened the area to outsiders, both those looking for somewhere to live within the reach of Liverpool and Manchester, and those wishing to holiday here, near the up and coming resort of Llandudno. . Another factor in the development of Deganwy was the sale of land, particularly the Deganwy Estate, which opened the area up for further development.

The development of Deganwy House into the Deganwy Castle Hotel, particularly by the Trittons certainly made Deganwy into a well known resort. The Trefriw Steamer trade certainly brought in the tourists.

Although at the time of writing, July 2011, the future of Deganwy Castle Hotel is unknown as the hotel closed in January 2010 (*Ref: North Wales Pioneer 6th January 2010*). However in early 2011 the hotel was bought by Coastal & Country Developments, a North Wales based developer, and they hope to turn this landmark building into a hotel, bar, restaurant, bar and apartments and are currently seeking planning and listed building consent from Conwy Council (*Ref: North Wales Weekly News 18th August 2011*).

The glory days of Deganwy's holiday trade may have gone but the area is still a popular spot with visitors and residents alike.

Fiona Richards
Deganwy 2011

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