

THE FLEMINGS

In Pembrokeshire.

BY

T. R. DAWES, M.A.,

Headmaster of the County School, Pembroke Dock.

A Lecture delivered in Pembroke Dock, and reprinted, with
additions, from the "Western Mail."

PRICE—SIXPENCE.

CARDIFF:

WESTERN MAIL, LIMITED, ST. MARY STREET.

1902.

The Flemings in Pembrokeshire.

By T. R. DAWES, M.A.

THE intelligent foreigner who travels from Paddington to Pembroke Dock finds that his fellow-passengers as far as Cardiff are English. Though he will not see the Englishman of Continental caricature—the Englishman with side whiskers, clad in a gaudy check-coloured suit and offensive manners—he will notice differences between the Englishman and the Frenchman or German. There is greater reserve, there is a difference in the wearing of the moustache, which is neither aspiring like that of the German, nor waxed and spiky like that of the Frenchman; there is a difference in the cut of the clothes. At Cardiff the Englishman gives way to the Welshman, the Saxon to the Celt. Instead of English, the traveller hears for the first time the guttural notes, the peculiar aspirated sibilants of Welsh—"the language of Paradise." His new fellow-passengers are the descendants of the Ancient Britons, voluble of speech, quick and excitable, dark of complexion, short of stature. At Whitland the Welsh ceases. Again nothing but English is heard, for though he is still in Wales, yet here in South Pembrokeshire (the premier county of Wales) he will hear nothing but English. He is tempted to believe he is in England again. If he asks, "How comes it that here in Wales, with Welsh to the north of you, Welsh to the east of you, the sea to the south, and the sea to the west of

you, with England 80 miles distant, yet here you speak English, and if you are not English, at any rate you resemble the English far more than you resemble the Welsh who surround you?" The answer will be probably, "We here in South Pembrokeshire are not Welsh at all. We are descendants of the Flemings who colonized Pembrokeshire in the reign of Henry I." And when he requires proof, he is, perhaps, referred to History; but probably, and with much greater confidence, to the following triad of evidences which few good Pembrokeshire men doubt:—

- (1.) Flemish chimneys.
- (2.) The village of Langum.
- (3.) The dialect of the people.

Let us first examine these three popular proofs that the Flemings ever were here at all. The so-called Flemish chimneys project from the houses and are often surmounted by a round stone structure. They are very common in South Pembrokeshire. They are not, it is believed, to be found elsewhere, though Mr. Romilly Allen and others assert that they are to be found about Llandilo. But there is not a scrap of serious evidence to connect them with the Flemings who, as we know, came to Pembrokeshire in the 12th century. Flemish chimneys in Pembrokeshire only date from about the 14th century. Flemish chimneys do not exist in Flanders. The Flemish chimneys of Pembrokeshire are interesting, since they distinguish the old Pembrokeshire houses from others. They prove that the builders were prosperous men who could afford to build substantial houses. But there is no more reason to call them Flemish chimneys than Norman chimneys or Irish chimneys.

It requires courage to stand before a Pembroke audience and deny the cherished belief that the Langum villagers

are descendants of the Flemings. Where I have ventured to question the fact in conversation, I am usually met with this retort, "Well, from whom do you say they are descended?" I will not venture to deny that the Langums are Flemings. I will say, however, that there is nothing to connect them, any more than the villagers of Marloes or Dale, with the Flemings. They differ from their neighbours no doubt, but fisher folk are always clannish and exclusive, and their occupation tends to separate them from those who till the fields. The Flemings who came to Pembrokeshire were perhaps warriors or masons, but hardly fishermen. There is, of course, no record of Flemings settling at Langum, and, indeed, I know of no earlier notice of Langum than that given by Fenton, who visited the village in 1801, and is not very complimentary to it. "This miserable village consists of several low, straggling houses, interspersed with trees amidst mountains of oyster shells." The oysters were pickled in vast quantities, sent in little barrels and earthen jugs to Bristol, where they were sold at about 6d. to 8d. a hundred.

Had Fenton been with me when I paid a visit to Langum a few days ago, he would have found in place of his miserable village a very thriving and prosperous village; prosperous-looking donkeys were grazing in the small front gardens, and there was no sign of poverty. At Pembroke Ferry I had noticed the Langum fishing boats with their curious square sails, each boat manned by two women and one man. I got but little information from the old lady I chatted with in the village. She was quite a stranger in the village, having only lived there some 50 years, and had but little sympathy with the Langums. Flemings they were without doubt, she told me, and terribly clannish, "offend one you offend the lot." She had scant sympathy with their teetotal habits, nor yet

with their piety, of which, indeed, she had doubts. I am told that I should have visited Langum on a Sunday, when I should have seen the village ladies dressed in the height of fashion, but I prefer to think of the Langum women in their own picturesque dress. The writer in the *Daily Mail* who pictured Langum as a paradise for men—a paradise in which only women work—would have modified his view had he been with me and met numbers of the men of the village trudging home from their day's work in the Pembroke Dockyard.

It is commonly believed that a Langum marries a Langum, strange blood is not introduced into the village. They are a little clan. They do not seek or permit inter-marriage with neighbours. My investigations do not permit me to believe this to be true at the present time—or shall I say the rule has many exceptions? It is not always only from clannishness that the Langum maiden refuses the foreigner. "Would you believe it?" said a man to me a few days ago, "although I am well in with the Langums they'd never let me marry one of them gals." But I fancy that at Langum, as elsewhere, it depends very much on the man. The Langum maiden has a good pretext for declining unsuitable offers—"The village won't allow it."

To the question, "Whence came the Langums?" we may reply:—This little land of Pembrokeshire has attracted in past centuries hundreds and thousands of strangers, and any of these may have settled in Langum. Milford Haven was always a landing place for the pirate and the pilgrim. Just as Devonshire men came across to fish and settle at Tenby, and as Cornishmen have come to fish and settle at Dale, so in the past Langum was found a convenient spot for oyster fishing. The fisher folk who settled there became a peculiar people. But neither in their language, which is good broad Pembrokeshire (In Langum Church

Fenton asked, "Whose tomb is this?" and was answered in the true Ros accent, "A bee one Dolly Roch as they zay,") nor in their names, which are good Pembrokeshire names; nor in their customs or appearance is there anything to connect them more than the villagers of Angle with the Flemings. Langum is probably as Flemish as the rest of South Pembrokeshire—no more, no less.

We may dismiss at once the first two popular proofs—Flemish chimneys and the village of Langum. Let us hold over a consideration of the Pembrokeshire dialect until we learn what history has to tell us.

Look at the map of Pembrokeshire and imagine a line drawn from Amroth, a little north of Haverfordwest, to New Gale. Roughly speaking, south of this line you find no Welsh names. North of the line you find no English names. In South Pembrokeshire you are almost as much in England as in Norfolk. You are in "Little England below Wales." This line of division, it has been remarked, is so distinct that it even cuts one village, New Gale, into two divisions, English and Welsh. A modern writer, Mr. Bradley, whose charming "Highways and Byeways of North Wales" and graphic and vivid "Owen Glendower" have won the hearts of most Welshmen, finds in Pembrokeshire "a remarkable cleavage between two races, which makes the County of Pembroke present to-day an ethnological curiosity without a parallel in the United Kingdom." How has this cleavage come about?

Before dealing with the story of the Flemish colonization, let us review, briefly, the history of Pembrokeshire previous to the 12th century. The earliest inhabitants, of whom we have any certain knowledge, were the Iberians. Of their language, of their customs, we know little, save that they were certainly not Aryans, that they came from Africa along the Mediterranean, and that they were short and dark.

Somewhere perhaps about the 5th century before Christ, came the first Aryan invaders—the Goidels, an Aryan race, tall and blue-eyed and flaxen-haired, who conquered the Iberians, but did not exterminate them. Of the Goidels, we have traces in stone inscriptions.

After the Goidels, came the Brythons, another branch of the Celts, whose language slightly differed from the Goidels. The Brython did not exterminate the Gael and the Iberian. He became a new master and forced his language on them, but in the Brython or Welsh of the present day the Iberian predominates.

This brings us to about 300 B.C. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes, streamed into Britain and drove the Britons to the high lands of Wales and Cornwall. These Heathen English had no mercy for the Britons. They were not colonists who brought civilization with them like the Romans. They killed off, or drove beyond the borders all who opposed them, sweeping away both people and language. The country became England in name and English in language. But here in Pembrokeshire, we have no proof that this wave of English affected the district.

But a little later the Danish Pirates began to swarm upon the seas, and the beautiful harbour of Milford delighted these hardy sailors. They have left us many proofs of their visits, and perhaps colonies on the map. Skomer and Skokholm, Fishguard, Milford, Haverford, are all Norse names. Freysthorp—the village of Freya the heathen Goddess after whom we name Friday—proves that the Danes who settled here were not Christians, to whom its name of a heathen Goddess would have been hateful. About 836 it is probable that the Danes, who had ravaged England with the help of the Welshmen of Cornwall, founded a colony in Pembrokeshire. Some 30 years later Hubba and his Vikings wintered

in the Haven after slaughtering the Christians,—we have his name still in Hubberston, near Milford—and though he left with a large force in 878, it is probable that a large and increasing Norse colony remained behind. Dyved became a nest of pirates. In the year 921 Edward sent an expedition to Deepestowe, as the Saxons called it, but the Norse names Milford and Haverford are the names that have lived. In 1021 Olaf Haroldston ravaged Dyved, and spoiled the church of St. Davids.

We hear no more of Danish raids, but the number of Norse names in Pembrokeshire seems to prove that large numbers of them must have settled down in villages to which they gave the names. The Norseman on his cruise carried cattle and household stuff with him—perhaps he brought wives as well, for polygamy was a Scandinavian custom. We may well believe that in the neighbourhood of the Haven hundreds of Danes settled, some of whom have left us their names as Hammil at Amblestone, Thorni at Thornton, Thor at Thurston, Gunnarf at Gumferston, and Wulf at Wulfscastle. Mr. Laws has a list of about 110 Norse names, a proof of how permanent the settlement was.

It is asserted by some historians, though it is doubted by others, that some 15 years after the battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror came on a pilgrimage to St. David's (and it is interesting to remember that William the Conqueror spoke a very remarkable kind of French, he was a Norseman and mixed up his Norse with his French), a welcome guest probably both to Kymro and Gael, for was he not the conqueror of the accursed Saxon? Welcome also to the Danish settlers for was he not also a Norseman, even though he had exchanged Norse for French? His Norman Bishop Sulien found St. David's a pirate-haunted See. William's visit no doubt made a great stir, but he soon returned to England.

When Martin of Tours came to Fishguard it was however to stay and found a Norman colony. Cemas became a March with Martin and his successors as Lords Marchers. Yet in spite of its Norman lords Cemas is as Kymric to-day as when Martin arrived (a parallel instance is Glamorganshire conquered by Normans but quite Welsh to-day). Yet in South Pembrokeshire, colonized about the same time by Danes and Normans, and subsequently by Flemings, all is English. Why is this? The ordnance map shows that with the exception of Fishguard and Goodwick there are no Norse names in Cemas, but in South Pembrokeshire Norse names abound. The Normans we know intermarried with their subjects. The Normans who married Welsh-women became Welsh, but those in South Pembrokeshire who married into the Danish colony never learnt Welsh, and soon learnt the tongue of the district, which was probably English. This may partly account for the English of South Pembrokeshire. We shall see later that numerous other foreign settlers—Flemings, etc.—came to join these Normans.

Arnulph of Montgomery seems to have been the first Norman to have explored Milford Haven. He came to Pembroke, which, according to Leland, "standeth upon an arm of Milford, the wich about a mile beyond the toun, creeketh in so that it almost peninsulatith the toun which standith in a veri maine rokki ground," and he found a fortified camp, where Pembroke Castle now stands. According to *Giraldus Cambrensis*, he threw up an earth-work and surrounded it with a pallisade. This was about the year 1090. The castle was handed over to Gerald of Windsor, who had many a fight with the neighbouring Welsh. Rufus paid a visit or two to Wales and came to St. David's, whence he said he could build a bridge of boats to Ireland. Later, when Arnulph rebelled against

Henry I. (it is significant that he hoped to get the Irish and Danes to join him), he lost his command at Pembroke. It is a curious fact that few Norman names remain among Pembrokeshire people, and those not among the landowning classes, though there is one noteworthy exception in the name Roch.

I have now come to the 12th century, and we are ready to ask what historical evidence is there of the coming of the Flemings to Dyfed? Our chief authorities for the history of the period are the Welsh Chronicle of the Princes, *Ordericus Vitalis*, the Chronicles of William of Malmesbury, Florence of Worcester, and *Giraldus Cambrensis*.

Under the date 1106 William of Malmesbury, one of the most accurate of chroniclers, says: "The Welsh perpetually rebelling, were subjugated by the King in repeated expeditions, who, relying on a prudent expedient to quell their tumults, transplanted thither all the Flemings resident in England. For that country contained much numbers of these people who, in the time of his father, had come over from national relationship to his mother that, from their numbers, they appeared burdensome to the kingdom. In consequence he settled them, with all their property and connexions, at Ross, a Welsh province, as in a common receptacle, both for the purpose of cleansing the kingdom and repressing the brutal temerity of the enemy."

William the Conqueror had married Matilda of Flanders, who, no doubt, brought many Flemings over with her to England. The Counts of Flanders and the Normans had fought together in the Crusades; many Flemings had doubtless served in William the Conqueror's Norman Army. Flanders and England are but 20 odd miles apart, and we can easily believe that crowds of needy Flemings hurried across to share in the spoils of the Conquest. We have one

striking proof of the close connection between the two countries. In 1100 a treaty was signed at Dover which stipulated that the Count of Flanders was to help Henry I. with 1,000 men if necessary. But even previous to the Conquest there were many Flemings in England, for Tostig had brought over a large number to fight under his banner against Harold.

Caradoc of Llancarvan, a writer who died about 1147, gives the following account:—"In the year 1108 the rage of the sea did overflow and drown a great part of the lowe countrie of Flanders in such sort that the inhabitants were driven to seek themselves some other dwelling places, who came to King Henrie and desired him to give them some void place to remain in, who being verie liberal of that which was not his owne, gave them the land of Ros in Dyvet or West Wales, where Pembroke, Tenby and Haverford are now built, and where they remain to this daie, as may well be perceived by their speach and conditione farre differing from the rest of the countrie."

Another writer—Florence of Worcester—has the following entry under the date 1111:—"Henry, King of England, removed into Wales all the Flemings who were living in Northumbria, with their chattels, and made them settle in the district called Rhos," and under the date 1139, Florence of Worcester says: "The Welsh having suffered much in the defence of their native land, not only from the powerful Normans, but also from the Flemings, after numbers had fallen on both sides at length subdued the Flemings, and did not cease to commit devastation on all sides."

Other chroniclers say that Henry first settled them in waste lands on the Tweed. Perhaps it was some of these Flemings that King David, a contemporary of Henry I., imported into Scotland. That he did import Flemings to fill the place of Celts whom he had expelled from some parts of

his country is certain. Indeed the warrior house of Douglas claims as its ancestor one of these Flemings—William by name, who had acquired the lands of Douglas in Lanarkshire. William the Flemish Weaver is the ancestor of that terrible race of fighting men whose descendants we find among the noble houses of Germany, Prussia, Baden and Sweden—doughty warriors these Douglasses, who well deserved the compliment contained in the English mother's lullaby to her baby—

“Hush thee, hush thee, do not fret thee,
“The Black Douglas shall not get thee.”

Every Douglas was a good Scot, who has been defined as “a man who keeps the Sabbath—and everything else he can lay his hands on.”

But to return to our chroniclers:—

The Welsh Chronicle says that an inundation of the sea took place in Flanders in 1106 and another in 1116. The homeless Flemings were sent down to settle in Rhos. Others whom the King sent arrived with letters of introduction to their relatives to supply loss through pestilence. The Welsh Chronicle has also the curious statement—“They remained a few years and then disappeared.”

Again in 1155, Henry II. banished all the Flemings whom Stephen had brought over and sent them to the towns in West Wales. Roger of Hovedon, who wrote in the 12th century, has this entry under the year 1111, “In this year died Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, and was succeeded by his son Baldwin. Henry, King of the English, removed the people of Flanders who inhabited Northumbria, with all their chattels into Wales and gave them orders to colonize the district which bears the name of Ross.” A note by the editors of Bohn's edition of Hovedon tells us that the town of Denbigh is referred to. I presume he meant Tenby.

We have a few details of the settlement in *Ordericus*

Ecclesiastical History—a conscientious and trustworthy, though confused, chronicle. *Ordericus* died in 1142, so he was a contemporary writer. "In 1134," we learn, "the Welsh were grievously oppressed, and several of their provinces were granted to the Flemings, by whom they were butchered like dogs, without any regard to humanity, whenever they could track them out in the woods and caves in which they lurked." Turning to a later historian, Holinshed, who died in 1577, we have the following account: "A great part of Flanders being drowned (?) by an inundation or breaking in of the waters, a great number of Flemings came into England, beseeching the king to have some void place assigned them wherein they might inhabit. At first they were assigned to the country lying East of the Tweed, but within four years they were removed into a corner by the seaside, in Wales, called Pembrokeshire, to the end that they might be a defence against the unquiet Welshmen."

The coming of the Flemings to Pembrokeshire has been doubted, but since it has been affirmed by so many contemporary authors, we may well believe with Freeman and Thirlwall that no fact is better authenticated in History. Anyone, however, who reads the old chronicles finds that there are so many tales (and very interesting tales) which are mere tradition, that a little healthy scepticism is not out of place. It is quite possible, for instance, that the inundations by the sea is merely a picturesque addition. There is, I believe, no record of an inundation which would account for the Flemings migrating to England before 1106. If we turn to *Ordericus* he tells us: "In Flanders the sea overflowed its banks during the night, and suddenly deluging the country for an extent of seven miles covered alike churches, towns, and villages, and destroyed, in one common catastrophe, thousands of human beings of both sexes and of all ranks and orders." In this inundation

Ordericus saw the just punishment of the Flemish pirates for their iniquities. "The sea," he tells us, "accomplished the punishment of these wretched people, and straitway, at the command of God, returned within its bounds." This catastrophe happened in 1137, some twenty years after the coming of the Flemings to Rhos, and if we believe *Ordericus*, the Flemings lost not only their homes, but their lives. Their lands remained after the tidal wave had passed.

Let us leave the inundation and enquire what sort of men these Flemings were. Were they Filibusters, men-at-arms who had fought perhaps in the first crusade, and who simply came down to lend a hand to the Norman Barons? Were they, as others tell us, masons who came to build such castles as Pembroke and Carew? Was the Flemish Colony a colony consisting almost entirely of persons of the lower class, soldiers, artificers, and manufacturers? Probably all of these classes were represented.

It may be of interest, now, to make a guess at their numbers. The population of Pembrokeshire is at present 89,000, the population of the whole of Wales and Monmouthshire in 1901, was about 1,776,405. In 1801 the population of Wales was 586,634. It has been calculated that in the 11th century the population of the whole of Wales was about 100,000, and we shall therefore, if we take a twelfth of these for Pembrokeshire, get about 9,000, and if we take the district of Roos as about the ninth part of Pembrokeshire, we get the population of Roos as about 1,000. As the Flemings were to settle in Roos, I will suppose that they settled down there with something like the numbers they evicted—this gives us 1,000 Flemings. If we are to credit the old chroniclers we must believe they came, bag and baggage, that is, with their wives and families.

How did they come? By sea, perhaps from the Tweed, landing at Sandy Haven, a perilous voyage, much more difficult than the transference of the Patagonia Welsh Colony to Canada. But perhaps by land, in which case they had a very lively journey, for as you have noticed in the chronicles they were not beloved. The kingdom was "sore pestered with them," says one, another talks of "Flemish wolves," another talks of them as he might of the contents of a dust-bin, or worse. Henry certainly did not love them, and Mr. Laws is probably correct in saying that he really hoped "that the Flemings would first kill a Welshman and then get killed in turn."

Gerald, the Welshman, who flourished in the 13th century, has given us a graphic picture of both the Welsh and the Flemings of his time. Gerald was born in the castle of Manorbier, and, as we who know Manorbier can well understand, he loved his beautiful home. He describes enthusiastically the beauty of its situation and its salubrious air "due to its vicinity to Ireland." "Dimetia, therefore, with its seven cantreds," says *Geraldus*, "is the most beautiful as well as the most powerful district of Wales, Pembroke the finest part of the province of Dimetia, and Manorbier the most delightful part of Pembroke. It is evident, therefore, that Manorbier is the pleasantest spot in Wales."

Gerald was by birth connected with the great Norman and Welsh families of the district. From his vivid pages we get a description of the Flemings and Welsh, whom he found in South Pembrokeshire at the beginning of the 13th Century. Of his kinsmen, the Welsh, he writes at great length. Speaking as a Welshman and a brother, he praises their boldness and courage, their frugality, hospitality and love of liberty, the care with which they cultivated their teeth and their understanding, their part-

singing—"You will hear as many parts and voices as there are performers, who all at length unite with organic melody in one consonance and the soft sweetness of 'B flat,' not as in Yorkshire where they sing in two parts, one murmuring in the base, the other warbling in the acute or treble." He praises their quick wit and pleasantry, their boldness in speaking, their love of high birth, and their love of Christianity.

But Gerald was not only a Welshman, but also a Norman, and he sees and points out the defects of the Welsh: their inconsistency, love of plunder and war, deficiency in battle—"severe in their first attack, terrible by their clamour and looks, but unable to bear a repulse, easily thrown into confusion as soon as they turn their backs; in their first attack they are more than men, in their second less than women."

Of the Flemings Gerald gives a much briefer account. During a journey made in company with Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury, in the year 1188, Gerald came to Haverford, in the province of Rhos. The Archbishop was making a pilgrimage in order to persuade men to take the cross and join the second crusade, and at Haverford preached a sermon. Then the "Word of God was preached to the people" by Gerald, who held the office of Archdeacon of Brecon. Many soldiers and plebeians took the cross, but the most remarkable thing is that some at least did so without having understood a word from the preacher, for this is Gerald's account:—"It appeared wonderful and miraculous that, although the Archdeacon (Gerald) addressed them both in the Latin and French tongues; those persons who understood neither of those tongues were equally affected and flocked in great numbers to the cross." Perhaps there were few women in the congregation, for it was the women who, at the end of every sermon, dissuaded the men from taking the cross. "Nor is

it wonderful," says the woman-hater Gerald, "if a woman follows her innate evil bent. For it is written in Ecclesiastes, 'I have found one good man out of a thousand, but not one good woman.'"

Gerald being a Churchman knew Latin; being a Norman he knew French, which was the language of the Normans and upper classes in England, but what language would these hearers have understood? Should he have addressed them in Welsh, or in English, or in Flemish? Gerald does not tell us this, but he does tell us that "the inhabitants of this province derived their origin from Flanders, and were sent by King Henry 1st to inhabit these districts;" "a people brave and robust, ever most hostile to the Welsh; a people, I say, well versed in commerce and woollen manufactures; a people anxious to seek gain by sea and land, in defiance of fatigue and hunger; a hardy race equally fitted for the plough or the sword; a people brave and happy, if Wales had been dear to its Sovereign."

Although Gerald has a good deal to say about Pembroch, the part of our county which is south of Milford Haven, he does not say that the inhabitants of this part were Flemings, so perhaps we may conclude that at the time of his visit, some 70 years after the arrival of the Flemish colony, there were no Flemings South of the Haven.

His account of a well-known and often quoted superstition of the Flemings is very interesting. "It is worthy of remark that these Flemings from the Inspection of of the right shoulders of rams which have been stripped of their flesh and not wasted but boiled, can discover future events, or those which have passed and remained long unknown." I have read, indeed, that this curious superstition is still preserved in this district, where the young women divine, by means of the blade bone of a shoulder of mutton, who is to be their sweetheart.

We have noticed that Gerald does not tell us whether the Flemings of his day spoke Flemish or English or Welsh. Ralph Higden, who died in 1363, and whose historical work, called "Polychronicon," was translated by John Trevisa in 1387, says they spoke English in his day. "But the Flemmynges that be on the west side of Wales be now all turned as they were Englishmen, because they company with Englishmen. And they be mighty and strong to fight, and be the most enemies that Welshmen have. They use merchandise and clothing, and be full ready to put themselves to adventure and to peril in the sea and land because of great winning, and be ready sometimes to go to the plough and sometimes to deeds of arms when times and place ask it." And again: "But the Flemmynges who dwell on the west side of Wales have left their strange speech and speak Saxon lych y now." Higden contrasts with the industry and enterprise of the Flemings the character of the English of Pembrokeshire. "Far from their own land," he says, "they turn to contrary deeds. . . Uneasy, also full dispising of peace, enemies of business and full of sloath, when they have destroyed their enemies all to ground, then they fight with themselves and flee each other as a wide and empty stomach worketh in itself."

Of the language of these Pembrokeshire men he says that by coming and mingling first with Danes and afterwards with Normans, in many things the country language is impaired, "for some use strange blabbing, chattering, harrying, jarrying and grisbyting."

Nearly three centuries later, coming down to the year 1603, we find that George Owen in his description of Pembrokeshire says that there is no show of any remnant of them, the Flemings, left. "For if any of their progeny be remaining, yet is the memory thereof with their language quite forgotten, but I am persuaded that

divers of the common people, swains and labourers of the country, are descended of those Flemings." Gerald tells us nothing of Flemings in any other part save Roose. From Owen we learn that at the end of the sixteenth century the whole of Roose, Castlemartyn, Narberth, and most of Dungleddy were English, "the descendants of the Normans, Flemings and Englishmen," who had utterly expelled the inhabitants thereof. With the Welsh of the Northern part of the country they have no dealings, they differ from them in manner, diet, buildings and tilling of the land. The sight of a Welshman, indeed, excites wonder, the one neighbour saying to the other, 'Look, there goeth a Welshman.'" Traces of Flemish origin are found, says Owen, in the character and habits of the meaner sort of people. "For by their serious and careful applying their labours they have in hand, in not meddling with other men's affairs and for true and plaine dealing they shew themselves to be the heirs of these Ancient Flemings and do therein much resemble their cousins the low countrymen at this day, who for the qualities above expressed carry the praise of all other nations. In one thing these our Flemings have altered their stomachs from the rest over the sea, for in that excess with which the Dutchmen are taxed for drinking, are these their cousins for excessive eating, for of custom at certain seasons and labours they will have five meals a day, and if you will bestowe the sixth on them they will accept of it very kindly, and if they be but a little entreated they will bestow labour on the seventh meal. Of them I will speak more largely among the inconveniences used in their country."

Before leaving our delightful Pembrokeshire historian Owen, whose descendant is the learned Dr. Henry Owen, the well-known authority on the history of Pembrokeshire, we

must note one very significant fact—the number of Irishmen in Pembrokeshire. “As for the Irishmen, they are so powdered among the inhabitants of Roose and Castlemartin, that in every village you will find the third, fourth, or fifth householder an Irishman.” In some parishes the only Englishman was the parson. The trade between Pembrokeshire and Ireland and the exodus from Ireland after Lyrme’s rebellion account for this swarm of Irishmen. And though the lapse of a century rid the country of the Hibernian swarm, which left little save a pernicious taste for whisky, we may be sure that there is still plenty of Irish blood in Pembrokeshire. Perhaps we owe more to the Irish than to the Flemings.

Another later influx of strangers may be referred to. When the dockyard was opened, shipwrights and labourers from Devonshire and the south of England emigrated to Pembroke Dock and tradespeople from the same districts came to settle in the new town of Pembroke Dock. So we can easily understand why we have so many Devonshire family names in our district.

Although I am dealing with South Pembrokeshire, I may just refer to the neighbouring district of Gower. There is no historical evidence of Flemings settling in Gower. But in Gower, as in Pembrokeshire, we have a district in which the people speak only English and have but little intercourse with the Welsh, their neighbours. We know that Normans settled in Gower, and we know that there was much intercourse by sea, between the people of South Pembrokeshire and the people of Gower. Welsh place names which are so rare in Pembrokeshire are common in Gower, so that the expulsion or extermination of the former Welsh inhabitants was not carried out so thoroughly as in Little England. The belief that the Gower people are descendants of the Flemings is,

however, widespread. One account of their arrival is interesting—The devil was flying down to Pembroke with a lot of Flemings in his apron and, as he was passing over Gower, a few dropped out.

Now let us turn to the question of the Language of South Pembrokeshire. It is English of course, and the question is often asked—are there no traces in the language of the Flemish origin of some at least of the people? How and when did these Flemings come to speak English?

It must be remembered that Flemish or Dutch at the present day closely resembles English. In the 12th century before Norman French had exercised its enormous influence on the language the resemblance must have been much closer. Dutch, English, and Danish are all three Teutonic languages, resembling one another much more than they resemble French, which is a Latin language, or Welsh, which is a Celtic language.

To give a simple instance of the similarity of English to Dutch, let us take the perfect of the verb "to be," 'I have been.' You all know how often we hear the expression "I've adone it" in Pembroke Dock. In this word "adone" the "a" is the simplification of the old English participial prefix 'ge' so "adone" represents "gedone," *cf.* German 'gethan.' I also hear sometimes the expression "I've abeen," representing "I have gebeen." The Dutch have formed the past participle by this prefix 'ge' with our past tense 'was.' So we have 'geweest,' 'gewast.' Now comparing the two—for the English 'I have been,' the Dutch equivalent, formed as I have shown from the same verb, is "ik heb geweest," or rather "ik ben geweest," which is "I be gewast."

Look at the past tense of our verb "to be."

I was.. ..	Ik was	We were ..	Wij waren
Thou wast..	Gij waart	You were ..	Gij waart
He was ..	Hij was	They were ..	Zij waren

Compare, again, the future of the verb "to have," or as they say in Dutch, the toekomstende tijd of the verb "to have."

I shall have	..	Ik zal hebben.
Thou wilt have	..	Gij zult hebben.
He will have	..	Hij zal hebben.
We shall have	..	Wij zullen hebben.
You will have	..	Gij zult hebben.
They will have	..	Zij zullen hebben.

Let us take a few nouns.

Mutton is sheepflesh—schapenvleesch; brood is bread; vleesch, meat.

If you asked a Dutchman at dinner for a little calvesflesh or oxenflesh, he would know you meant veal or beef.

A countryman is a landman, night is nacht, a deed is daad, and a shipwright is a scheepstimmerman.

When a Dutchman speaks of a thing as "diep" or "goed" or "valsch," you can easily guess the English deep, good, false.

Take a few sentences chosen at random to show the similarity.

"Het is gebeurd als de duivel een klein mannekin was."

"That happened when the devil was a little boy."

"'Soort zoekt soort,' zei de duivel, en hij pakte nen koolbrander-er bij r-bij zijnen kop."

"'Like seeks like,' says the devil, and he seized a charcoal burner by his head."

"Men zou zweren dat het de duivel en zijn moer is!"

"One could swear that it was the devil and his mother."

We see, then, that in the common speech of every-day

life Dutch bears a close resemblance to English, and Dutch boys learn English very easily, much more easily than they learn French. I found myself that, with a knowledge of English and German, Dutch was very easy to read.

But English and Dutch have changed a good deal in 800 years. Look at this specimen of English in the 13th century:—

‘Paa^(th)h ich k^(th)ūde,’ hē seid, ‘alle monne ledene and englene; and p^(th)a^(th)h ich d^(th)ude o mīne bodie alle pe pīnen, and alle pe p^(the)assiūns pet bodi muhte polien; and p^(th)a^(th)h ich gēne pōure men al pet ich hefde; but gif ich hefde luue per-mide to God and to alle men, in him and for him, al wēre as^(th)pilled.’—*I. Cor. xiii. 1, 3.*

Caxton, the man who introduced printing into England, and a good Dutch scholar, tells us that when he examined the Old English chronicles somewhere about the year 1400, which the Abbot of Westminster lent him as a model for his English, from the archives of his house, he found them “more like to Dutch than to English.” It was very difficult for him to determine what was good standard English, for even the speech of common talk was in a state of rapid flux. “Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born.” The tongue of each shire was peculiar to itself, and hardly intelligible to men of another county.

“Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames, for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland and went on land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could

speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have had eggs, but she understood him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo! what should a man in these days now write," adds the puzzled printer, "eggs or eyren? Certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language."

The earliest specimen of literary Flemish or Dutch is the tale of "Renard the Fox," written in the 13th century. From it we see that the resemblance of literary Dutch to literary English in the 12th century was very great; colloquial Dutch and English were probably still more alike. It would be very easy then for these Flemings to slip into the English of the Norman Englishmen, who were their neighbours. We need not be surprised that they did not set themselves to acquire the language of the despised hill tribes of North Pembrokeshire.

We must not expect to find, after 800 years, many or perhaps any traces of Flemish in the Pembrokeshire language. We must not expect to find here such traces of Flemish as you may find of French in the German Rhineland, where you may hear donkey drivers crying "Allez" to the donkeys, as they urge them up the steep paths leading to the Drachenfels, and where instead of the common German "Danke" for thanks, you will commonly hear the French "Merci." As we hear these familiar words we remember that it is but 100 years since Napoleon was leading his victorious army to the fields of Sadowa and Austerlitz. In the circumstances we must not expect to find pronunciations peculiar to Flemings carried over into English, as is the case when the Flemings speak French at the present time. A German who learns English carries over his German pronunciation into English and we can detect

that he is a German. But his son educated in England picks up the accent not of his father but of the playfellows with whom he associates. The young German-American speaks English with an American and not with an English accent. The young Londoner of French extraction speaks with a cockney accent, and so the Flemings would acquire the accent of the Norman English with whom they lived.

In the opinions of competent judges the dialect of Pembrokeshire resembles closely the dialect of Somersetshire. It is very doubtful—perhaps more than doubtful—whether an examination of Pembrokeshire English will exhibit more traces of Flemish than would an examination of Somersetshire English. Two great authorities, Ellis and Sweet, have examined the evidence as to a supposed connection, and they declare that the evidence breaks down. Mr. Laws gives a few odd words on page 118, but they are not very convincing. The word “tucken” in tucken mills seems a likely word from the Dutch “doek” cloth.

An eminent scholar has discovered in the word “ach a fi” a relic from the Flemish invasion. But Welshmen know that “ach a fi” is not Flemish but Welsh. It is all the Welsh that some people know. And, curiously enough, another scholar finds in the same expression “ach a fi,” which is common in Gower, a proof that Gower was at one time not Flemish but Welsh. Bearing in mind the various pirates and colonists we have had in this little corner, we can hardly expect to find very distinct traces of the tongue of this one colony—the Flemings.

Another eminent historian finds traces of the Flemings not in the character nor in the tongue, but in the personal appearance of the people of South Pembrokeshire. “Go into any fair or market in South Pembrokeshire, and it will be strange if you do not observe certain fair-haired, bright-eyed women, considerably inclined to embonpoint. If young, many of them have a complexion of strawberries and

cream and might have come from Antwerp, or, for the matter of that, stepped out of a picture drawn by Peter Paul Rubens. Such to my fancy are the prettiest relics left by the Flemish immigrants for our delectation." Other relics are spades, for we have a peculiar kind of spade in Pembrokeshire.

I have quoted the chief historical authorities for the coming of the Flemish Colony. I have shown you that we can hardly expect to find many traces in the language. I must leave you to judge yourself of the doubtful relics like spades, and the pretty relics quoted above.

Let me relieve sober history by quoting tales told of our own village of Marloes, and of the village of Hillegem in Flanders. The villagers in each case are probably as shrewd as their neighbours, but yet they enjoy a reputation for stupidity. It is hard to believe that the Marloes people put their horses out on the roofs of their houses to graze. It is still harder to believe that the villagers finding the journey to Haverfordwest for market day too long for a single journey, go half way on the Friday, return to Marloes to sleep Friday night, and then do the whole journey on Saturday. But how shall we manage to believe this third tale? One day the villagers took off their boots and stockings to paddle in a pond, and then got into great difficulties because they could not recognize their own feet.

Now for two tales of Hillegem. The church of Hillegem was in a bad position, and the villagers determined to move it. They all assembled and began to push with all their might. The parish clerk had taken off his coat and placed it before the porch in order to measure by it the result obtained. A beggar happened to pass and he took the coat. When the clerk wished to measure the work they had accomplished he found the coat gone, and so cried out, "Go ahead, my men, go ahead. We're doing well. We've already pushed the church over my coat!"

This is the second story:—Seven villagers were together one day. They knew that they were seven, but when they counted they could only make their number six. The men who counted proceeded thus: "I am myself, then you are one, two, three," and so on. They never got to seven. After much discussion they managed to solve the difficult question. Each one made a mark with his finger on the wall, and they counted the seven marks.

In Paris they say of a very stupid-looking man, "He looks as if he were coming back from Pontoise." If our tales are not libellous we in Pembrokeshire should say, "He looks as if he were returning from Marloes."

I return to my question—Why is South Pembrokeshire English? Is it the result of the action of that one King, Henry I., in sending a colony of Flemings here? Probably the correct answer is:—The Flemish colony is only one of many causes why South Pembrokeshire is not Welsh but "English." The beautiful haven and fertile land of Pembrokeshire, the "Garden of Wales," have attracted as we have seen strangers of many different races, who had to combine against the surrounding Welsh, and to whom the English language was a powerful bond of union.

Mr. Laws calls his history the "History of the Non-Kymric Colony in Pembrokeshire." He tells us in his interesting and scientific work how waves of Silurians, Dutchmen, Kymry, Scandinavians, Bretons, English, Normans, Saxons, Flemings, Mediæval Irish, and he might have added 19th century Devonshire men, have rolled into this little corner of land 24 miles by 36 miles, and here we, their descendants, remain to-day, English in speech, very mixed in blood, not the scum of the earth as was said of Johannesburgers, but, I am sure all in Pembrokeshire will admit, the very cream of creation.