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Mynydd Epynt as an Event of Historic Welsh National Importance: A Re-evaluation of the 1940 Clearance

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Dissertation Presentation (HPPH6902)
19 March 2026

A red flag is flying on a tall pole in the foreground. The background shows a rolling green landscape with hills and a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

My Research Question

- The topic of my dissertation is the clearance of an upland area of Mid Wales known as Mynydd Epynt
- In 1940, the Ministry of Defence evicted 219 people from 54 farms and smallholdings to create an Army training ground covering approximately 60,000 acres
- I am specifically looking at the following question:
 - **‘Were the people of Mynydd Epynt treated fairly when compared to a sample of their English contemporaries and what was the cultural and linguistic impact of the evictions’.**

Credit: Fflur Davies

219 o bobl a 54 o ffermydd na fydd byth yn anghof

DOLFAWR
David Jones
Margaret Jones
Gwyn Jones
Jeffrey Jones
Trevor Jones
BERTHDDU
Rose Jones
Margaret Jones
Gwyneth Jones
Clare Jones
BWYCHGWYN
John Davies
Ann Davies
William Davies
Peggy Davies
Vivian Davies
Olwen Davies
Vincent Davies
FFOSYWHYAI
John Williams
Elizabeth Williams
Eunice Williams
Margaret James
Gwyn Davies
WAUNLWYD
David Richards
Margaret Richards
William Price
Gwyn Richards
BRYNMEHERIN
Brychan Davies
Rachel Davies
BRYNMELIN
Margaret Davies
David Davies
Ruth Davies
Eleanor Davies

HIRLLWYN
Rees Davies
Ruth Davies
Olwen Davies
Ruth Davies
Kosalis Davies
Annette Davies
LLWYNTEG-UCHAF
Rose Jones
Margaret Jones
Gwyneth Jones
Clare Jones
Eira Williams
Morgan Williams
David Williams
Blodwen Williams
Lena Williams
GLANFRAITH
William Pritchard
Grace Pritchard
Sally Pritchard
Elion Pritchard
GWYBEDOG
Margaret Davies
Miriam Davies
Goronwy Davies
Iorwerth Davies
CEFNIOLI
John Owen
Catherine Owen
William Owen
David Owen
FFYNNON DAFYDD BEFAN
William Jones
Mary Jones
Janet Edwards
John Jones
Eric Jones
Gwyn Jones

CROSS INN COTTAGE
John Jones
Emma Jones
Graham Jones
Kenneth Jones
LLWYNCOLI
Thomas Jones
Mary Jones
David Jones
Gwynfor Jones
Idris Jones
BLAENTALAR
John Pritchard
Lucy Pritchard
Iorwen Pritchard
Alan Pritchard
Gwenllian Pritchard
Ieuan Pritchard
Garnet Pritchard
GILFACH-YR-HAIDD
George Evans
Kate Evans
Eileen Evans
CEFNICYRNOG
David Price
Elizabeth Price
Mair Price
William Price
NEUADD FACH
Thomas Price
Elizabeth Price
Anwyl Price
Idris Price
WAENEAWR
Stanley Davies
Phyllis Davies
Gwyneth Davies
Tegwen Davies

CEFNGWYN
Daniel Price
Gertrude Price
Mary Price
William Price
Wyndham Price
Anne Price
Cyril Price
Ivor Price
Glyn Price
David Price
Leslie Price
Dennis Price
THE BUNGALOW
Rees Williams
Mary Williams
CROFFTE
Jack Price
Kate Price
CARLLWN
Griff Price
Megan Price
Anne Price
William Price
Heulwen Price
ABERCRYNOG
Evan Powell
Ethel Powell
TIRBACH
William Price
Joan Price
GYTHANE
Thomas Price
Gwen Price
Bertie Price
Gwen Price
DRAINDUON
William Price
Clara Price

GELLYGAETH
Cornelius Davies
Eleanor Davies
Herbert Davies
John Davies
CEFNERYN-UCHAF
Sally Jones
Brychan Jones
Owen Price
CEFNERYN-ISA
David Lewis
Anne Lewis
David Lewis
Mair Pritchard
DDEKW FAWR
Eunice Davies
Eunice Davies
Punice Davies
CARNAU
William Price
Elsie Price
Anne Price
May Price
PANTMAWR
John Price
Polly Price
Edward Price
Brynley Price
Gwenda Price
Elizabeth Price
RYCYD
Benjamin Price
Anne Price
Jack Price
Islwyn Price
William Price
Annie Price
Dillwyn Price
Evan Price

GRAIG
Thomas Price
Caroline Price
Gwladys Price
Owen Price
Gwyn Price
Brynley Price
DDEKW
John Williams
Anne Williams
Mary Jones
MAERDY
John Lewis
Sally Price
BLAENFONANT
Daniel Prytherch
Margaret Prytherch
Daniel Prytherch
William Prytherch
BWILFA UCHAF
John Pritchard
Margaret Pritchard
CWMCAR
Walter Watkins
Gwladys Watkins
Iorwen Watkins
CAR
Eunice Phillips
Elizabeth Phillips
Merryn Phillips
RHYDYMAEN
John Morgan
Eleanor Morgan
Tilly Morgan
Gwladys Morgan
BELL-RICHARD
David Davies
Doris Davies
Elsie Davies
Beryl Davies

Why Mynydd Epynt is such an interesting dissertation topic

- Despite being a significant event in modern Welsh history it remains generally unknown and little studied
- What happened to the families who were evicted changed the course of lives. Even now, generations later it remains a sensitive topic for their descendants
- A feeling of injustice in the way the families were treated still persists, especially when compared to their English counterparts
- Recently, the clearance has started to attract popular attention, comparing it with the drowning of Tryweryn by Liverpool Corporation in 1965

219 people, 54 farms that will never be forgotten

Starting the research

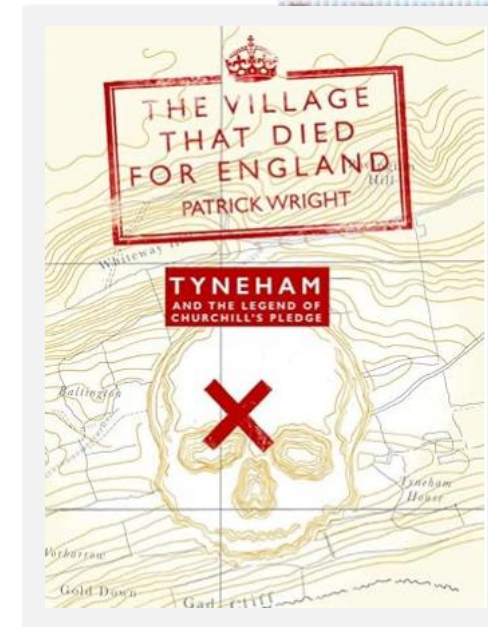


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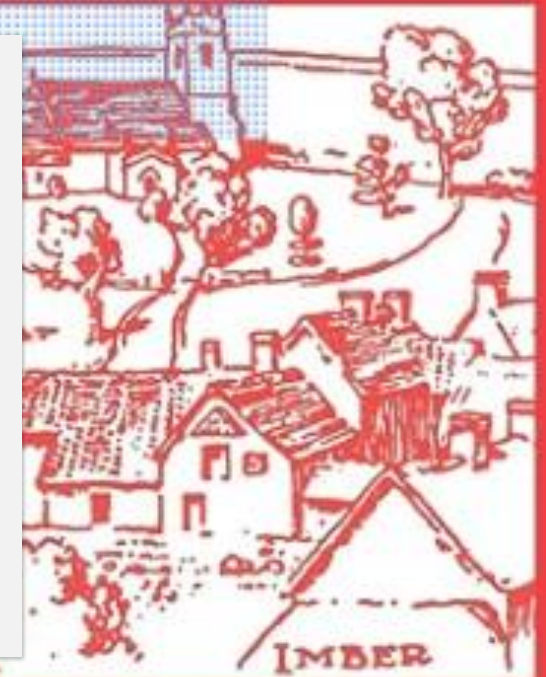
- Epynt
 - Why 2025 was a good year to start researching
 - Site visit
 - Meeting the families
- English clearances
 - Identification of areas and villages
 - Finding relevant sources

Focusing the research

- Too much information!
 - Identifying what is important to answer the research question
- Which English villages to include and why
 - Imber, Wiltshire
 - Tyneham, Dorset
 - The combined villages of West Tofts, Sturston, Langford, Stanford, Buckenham Tofts and Tottington, Norfolk



LITTLE IMBER
ON THE DOWN



SALISBURY PLAIN'S GHOST VILLAGE

REX SAWYER

Sources

- Limited availability of sources
- Reasons for scarcity
- Casting the net wider
 - Plaid Cymru
 - NFU
 - Welsh Nationalism

AN ENVIRONMENTAL
History of the UK
Defence Estate
1945 TO THE PRESENT

WALES WANTS MILITARY AREAS RELEASED From Our Own Corre
) LONDON, Tuesday. ANOTHER e ff ort is to be made

... land is vital' to the agricultural and tourist industries. The War Offices atten-, tion is being
to: **Mynydd Epynt**, Brecon, and to I North Wales. Members of Parliament are: receiving re
farmers and local authorities ...

ished: Wednesday 06 March 1946

papers: Western Mail

Glamorgan, Wales

Words: 140 | Page: 1 | Tags: none

Methods used and findings so far

- The dissertation uses two types of analysis:
- Quantitative analysis is used to answer the part of the research question, 'Were the people of Mynydd Epynt treated fairly when compared to a sample of their English contemporaries'
 - This is used to compare factual evidence such as notice period given to residents, compensation offered, assistance provided with relocation etc
 - Based on the data collected so far, there seems to have been similar treatment of evictees in both Wales and England
- Qualitative analysis is used to answer the part of the research question, '...what was the cultural and linguistic impact of the evictions'
 - This is in progress
 - Looking at aspect of Welsh Nationalism and what role that may have in this discussion

Further research

- Epynt
 - Interviews with descendants of Epynt families
- English villages
 - Visit to Imber village open day April 4th to April 6th, 2026
 - Contact local history societies for additional information
 - Attempt to contact descendants of evicted families
- Review legislation
 - Was the same legislation used for both Welsh and English evictions

was erected by Wiltshire County Council to commemorate V.E. and V.J. Days in tribute to the sacrifice to the War effort made by the men who gave up their homes in December 1944. The military training area could be extended as remained under military control and the Parish was abolished in 1991.

Conclusion

- Based on the data that I have been able to find, the people who were evicted from Mynydd Epynt do not appear to have received any significantly worse treatment than their English counterparts in terms of notice period, compensation etc.
- There is a solid body of evidence which suggests that the clearance of the Welsh-speaking community from Epynt deserves to be re-examined as the cultural and linguistic impact it caused was probably greater than that at Tryweryn



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Credit: Wiki Commons

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