

PLA O LINDYS: Digwyddiad hynod yn y Rhondda, haf 1884

Casgliad o doriadau papurau newyddion lleol sydd yma yn olrhain hanes y 'pla' o lindys a effeithiodd ardal eang o'r Rhondda ym 1884. Tybir mai lindys gwyfyn y corn carw *Cerapterix graminis* yw'r rhywogaeth dan sylw ond ni lwyddwyd cael cadarnhad o hynny hyd yma. Mae nifer o enghreifftiau eraill o'r ffenomenon yng Nghymru a thu hwnt yn Y Tywyddiadur (www.llen.nature.com), megis 1403, 1419 (isod), Gorffennaf 1893 (Swisdir), Mehefin 1936, Mai 2007, Gorffennaf 1992 (Selkirk), a Cumbria (dim dyddiad ond yn ddiweddar.



Gwyfyn y corn carw (oedolyn ar y chwith)
Mwy o wybodaeth! http://cy.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gwyfyn_corn_carw
(h. lun y lindys <http://wildflowerfinder.org.uk/Moths/>)

Aberdare Times 21 Mehefin 1884

EXTRAORDINARY PHENOMENON. — *The inhabitants of upper Rhondda Valley have been considerably astonished to find their hill-tops and sides all covered with vast swarms of insects. They cover acres of ground, and so dense are they that bonfires have been lit to consume them. How and when they came there are mystical points The size of the insect is somewhat larger than the caterpillar the species is not dissimilar in many essentials. Mr Wm. Jenkins, of Ystradfechan House, Treorky, has sent specimens for examination and report to competent college authorities.*
[GWYFYN CORN CARW?]

Weekly Mail 21 Mehefin 1884

THE EXTRAORDINARY PLAGUE OF CATERPILLARS: THE YSTRADYFODWG MOUNTAINS FIRE PUBLIC EXCITEMENT:

"Morten" writing on Monday evening, states :— A most extraordinary scene is now being witnessed on the mountains of Ystradyfodwg, consisting of countless myriads of worms supposed to be caterpillars. They devour every green thing as they arch along, leaving the mountains brown behind them. They are causing great public alarm, and their depredations are the only subject talked about, at least in the Rhondds Valley. It seems that they were first noticed on Bwlchyclawdd, a lofty ridge dividing Cwmpark from the Rhondda Valley: But on Sunday last it was found that they had attacked, or rather were attacking, also the north-east side of the valley as well as the west side.

On Monday morning the wildest rumours prevailed in the valley as to what the extraordinary insect was, many being under the impression that they are locusts in course of development! The day before Sunday many thousands of people climbed the mountains to inspect them, and on Monday workmen were to be seen on the hills engaged in a similar task. I proceeded to Treorky Station, and there ascertained that the mountain brook, running from the Fforch Mountains, was thick with myriads of those insects which had been drowned by falling into it during their rapid march across the side of the mountain. Accompanied by a friend, I climbed the Bwlchyclawdd Mountain, situate at the top of Cwmpark I found the Ystrad side of the mountain brown as the result of recent fires. which David Llewelyn, the Park farmer, had ignited with a view to destroy the pests. Near the summit I came upon the insects, which moved down to the mountain path from the burnt herbage with extraordinary rapidity. I examined one of them, and boxed more with a view to send them for the inspection of the scientific men of Cardiff.

They average in length from one to two inches. They are of a brown colour, and with regular dark lines running from the head to the hinder part. Each has a large number of feet running the full length of the body. The head is dark yellow, and seems to be furnished with a formidable forceps. Under a powerful glass this has an ugly appearance, and one cannot examine it without feeling glad the pest is not larger than it is. I walked some miles in the direction of Maesteg, leaving the Ogmore and Garw Valleys on my left, and everywhere the insect was swarming. I came in one place upon a large hole in the peat, and here thousands of the insects had fallen in and died. I found that the Maindy and Bwllfa Mountains were alive with them. Beyond the ridge of Bwlchyclawdd the grass was still burning. While standing here, with the Ogmore Valley far below me, smoke of mountain fires was to be seen ascending from the mountains to the west of that valley from men engaged in endeavouring to destroy the insects. Garw Valley mountains seemed to be alive with them; and a man crossing from above Maesteg to the Rhondda told me that he continued to see them beneath his feet all the way from the first-named locality to where he met me. People travelling on horseback said that in some places they lay so thick that they cracked beneath the hoofs of their horses. The Maesteg man told me that in some localities he had passed a large number of crows, which were continually darting down and picking the insects in their beaks. It is feared that this will be the means of conveying the pests to the more fertile valleys, and should they once get into the green grain sprouts the destruction will be most alarming, for the creatures are most voracious. The utmost alarm is felt as to the probable consequences. The oldest inhabitants say they never before witnessed anything like this visitation. As I close my paragraph I hear that specimens of the pests have been sent to London to the Government, with a view to get the best scientific opinion on the matter.

Weekly Mail 28 Mehefin 1884

THE PLAGUE OF CATERPILLARS IN THE RHONDDA VALLEY. Our Pontypridd correspondent writes:—The caterpillars on the Ystradyfodwg Mountains show no sign of diminution but, on the contrary, seem to be actively spreading. They are now in vast numbers on the mountain between Ffrwdamos and Gilfachgoch. During the last few days men and boys have brought some of them down to the valley as curiosities. Many public houses contain specimens, and groups of tap-room naturalists are frequently to be seen examining them with great interest, Many exaggerated statements are in circulation respecting these insects. In some places it is stated that

they have contaminated the water of the reservoir of St. Mary (Ffynon Fair, on the side of Pen Rhys Mountain. It is from the splendid well of the Blessed St. Mary that this reservoir is supplied with water, and until recent years it was from here the old parishioners obtained water for christening their children. The water being still held in great reverence, the statement that the insect has polluted it has deepened the awe with which some housewives regard the what they describe as "visitation"— indicating to the mind that Satan has something to do with the matter. But there is not a word of truth in the statement that such a contamination has taken place.

There is general anxiety to learn the result of Colonel Picton Turbervill's application to have the report of competent naturalists as to the nature of the pest, where it came from, and when it is likely to depart. Colonel H. H. Davies, Rompney Castle, writes: Some days ago, whilst perusing Mr. John Rowlands ("Giraldus") collection of Glamorganshire Antiquities, I found that a similar plague of happened in A.D. 1403. All the grass and leaves were eaten up by immense swarms of strange insects. The people limed their walls and grounds for protection, and ever since whitewashing has continued prevalent in Glamorgan a fact which gave rise to the old saying, Morganwg a'i muriau gwynion." In A.D. 1419 there were three days of such intense heat that men and beasts fell down dead, birds died on the wing, a brake of wood at Margam and some trees and hedges at Nash took fire. The heat also killed the green vermin which devoured the herbage in Glamorgan. Probably the present pests are the same kind as those which troubled our forefathers centuries ago. I shall be glad if any of your readers can inform me if there is any record of their visitations since the above date

Weekly Mail 12 Gorffennaf 1884

THE CATERPILLARS ON THE RHONDDA MOUNTAINS The local naturalists who watch the caterpillars on the mountains state they are now undergoing a process of transformation. Instead of, as heretofore, devouring the green blades, they are assuming a rigid condition, as if nature was inclined to convert them into mummies. Each is being endowed with a scarlet shroud. The above is the popular notion of the matter, but, of course, the naturalists are aware that this condition is simply the chrysalis state, and that a month hence the apparently dead insects will again come forth. and, instead of crawling among the grassroots, will be among the flowers. It appears that another kind of caterpillar has found out that the Rhondda is rather a good place to sojourn in. Immense swarms of these latest comers are devouring the garden produce, such as peas, beans, cabbages, and so forth.

Casglwyd y cofnodion gan Duncan Brown ar ran gwefan Llên Natur diolch I wasanaeth chwilio ar lein papurau newyddion Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru. Mae'r hawlfraint ar y ffynonellau hyn yn anhysbys.

[http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=1514&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=5273](http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=1514&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=5273)