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Site Name: (NEW) MANCHESTER HOUSE, BRIDGE STREET, CARDIGAN.

PRN: 57351

My Site File Ref. No.: CARD/BSMH

Site Type: Shop; Office

N. G. Ref.: SN 1772 4593

Period: Post-Medieval; Modern

History:

The building stands on the corner of Bridge Street and Quay Street. Before New Manchester House was built there was a small square here which was used as a market and fair site, originally, as the name suggests, for the selling of pigs, but later for more general commodities. There were two inhabited dwellings here at Bancymoch in 1841. At the time of the Census on 6th June 1841 the residents of the two properties were: 1): Mary Michael, aged 70 years, a pauper; Hannah Michael, aged 35 years – perhaps her daughter; Esther Jones, aged 10 years; Elizabeth Evans, aged 40 years, a pauper; Ann Davies, aged 45 years, a lodging house keeper; Edward Davies, aged 20 years, a groom; William Roberts, aged 35 years, an earthenware dealer; Mary Roberts, aged 30 years; Griffith Roberts, aged 4 years; Sarah Davies, aged 35 years, a pedlar; Ann Roberts, aged 12 years; John Davies, aged 7 years; Margaret Davies, aged 1; and Catherine Edwards, aged 50, a pedlar. 2): William Evans, aged 35 years, a hawker; Catherine Evans, aged 40 years, his wife; Robert Evans, aged 9 years, their son; and William Thomas, aged 20 years, a labourer. It was later described thus:

“...The site at that time was waste land in a most disgraceful state, with a small cottage where potatoes and herrings were frequently sold...”

The cottage at Bancymoch was uninhabited at the time of the Census on 7th April 1861.

Situated on the junction of Bridge Street and Quay Street, the present building was begun in 1884, designed by the architect George Morgan of Carmarthen for John James, a draper, of Manchester House, No. 41 High Street. John James moved his business here on March 29th 1885 and traded and lived here from 1885 until 1897. John James had been born near St. David's, and was apprenticed to Mr. Levi Phillips, a draper, of Manchester House on the High Street, and took over the business upon Phillips' death. His wife was Ellen, the second daughter of Mr. Henry Davies of Quay Street. They had a son named Henry Davies James, and from 1885 until 1955 Henry Davies James lived here. The building is shown on the 1887 O. S. map and others. On 5th April 1891 at the time of the Census, the following persons were living here: John

James, aged 50 years, a draper, born in Cardigan; Ellen James, aged 50 years, his wife, born in Cardigan; Henry Davies James, aged 10 years, their son, born in Cardigan; and Mary Rees, aged 25 years, a servant, born in Bridell. The family were bilingual in English and Welsh, but Mary Rees spoke Welsh only. In June 1894 John James became a Borough Magistrate. On March 7th 1897 John James of New Manchester House died aged 57 years. On March 13th 1897 the following report appeared in the 'Cardigan Observer':

"...DEATH OF MR. JOHN JAMES, NEW MANCHESTER HOUSE.

It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the death, which occurred about 4 a. m. on Sunday last, of the above estimable gentleman. Mr James did not possess a robust constitution, and for the last six months he complained of weakness, though able to attend to his business almost to the last, having only kept his bed a few days, and peacefully passed away unexpectedly, at the age of 57 years. Deceased was well-known, a most successful tradesman, and esteemed by all who came in contact with him. When the English cause was started in the town, he, in conjunction with 100 other members of Bethania, left to form the new church at Mount Zion, of which he was a deacon and a tower of strength. In 1894 deceased was made a Justice of the Peace for the borough, the duties of which he preformed most conscientiously. Mr James was a man of genuine sympathies, and many are the kind acts related of him, as he was in the habit of doing good by stealth. Besides a bereaved widow and a son, he leaves a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss. His remains will be interred at Blaenywaun burial ground this afternoon (Friday)..."

The Cardigan & Tivy-Side Advertiser of March 12th 1897 added the following:

"...Obituary. DEATH OF MR JOHN JAMES, J P, NEW MANCHESTER HOUSE.

Nothing probably stirs more the feelings of a community to their lowest depths than the death of an esteemed and beloved member thereof, and it is with sincere sorrow participated in by the town and district at large, that we have this week the mournful duty to record the passing away of one who was endeared to all by ties of affection and respect earned for himself by a blameless life as a citizen, and the strictest integrity in all matters entrusted to him. We allude to the death of our much lamented fellow townsman Mr John James, New Manchester House, the announcement of which on Sunday morning last took the town by surprise, and cast the dark pall of grief over all. It was felt that a good man had succumbed in the "World's broad field of battle," and while "Not lost, had gone before" into the mysterious bourne from which no mortal hath as yet returned. Mr James it was known had been ailing for some time, but it was not until the last week or two that serious results were so soon anticipated, which were unfortunately confirmed after a consultation between Dr Phillips, the deceased gentleman's medical adviser, and a Specialist called in for the purpose. On Saturday evening, however, when Dr Phillips left him, he was thought to be better and much easier than for some days past, but any hope engendered speedily passed away, Mr James peacefully "Crossing the Bar" of eternity early on Sunday morning, to the intense sorrow of his family and all who knew him. Mr James was born near St David's, Pembrokeshire,, and at an early age he was apprenticed to Mr Levi Phillips, draper, Manchester House, rising step by step

until he became manager of the establishment, and ultimately, on the retirement of Mrs Phillips, its proprietor. He married Ellen, second daughter of the late Mr Hy. Davies, Quay Street, whom, with one son, survives him. Some year ago he built the palatial pile of buildings known as New Manchester House, and without doubt assumed a foremost position amongst the leading tradesmen of Cardigan. To speak adequately of the pre-eminently good qualities of such a man is positively beyond our power. Naturally of a quiet and inoffensive disposition, he was firm, upright and straightforward in the discharge of any duty devolving upon him. As a tradesman he was integrity impersonified, and as an employer he was beyond reproach. To his assistants, by whom he was simply idolised, he was kind, considerate and affable, and by none perhaps will his loss be more keenly felt, or his memory enshrined, than by those who have for so many long years borne with him the brunt and anxieties of business. As a magistrate he was impartial and painstaking, always anxious to decide upon a case strictly upon its merits, but in every instance his tendency was to be as merciful as the circumstances would allow him to be.

Virtually Mr James never took an active part in public life, but at the same time he felt a keen interest in all that was progressing; and everything for the benefit of the town was generously supported. For any and every deserving cause his sympathies were at once enlisted, and his contributions thereto were on a most liberal scale. The poor of the town have lost a judicious but ready helper in their adversities, and the English Baptist Chapel of Mount Zion have to deplore a munificent supporter and earnest and warm-hearted worker; all this good work being carried out with an unostentation which enhanced the value of the benefits conferred. Deceased was a large shareholder of the Cardigan Gas Company, director of the Cardigan Mercantile Company, and also a director of the S S 'Sea Flower' Company, the flag of the steamer being kept at half mast throughout the week..."

John James was buried at Blaenwaun Baptist Chapel, St Dogmaels. The shops in Cardigan and St Dogmaels were closed out of respect, and there was a large funeral cortege from New Manchester House to the chapel cemetery. There were more than 30 carriages in the procession.

In September 1897 David Bowen Davies took over the business formerly run by John James. From 1897 until 1915 the business premises was occupied by David Bowen Davies, a draper. In March 1898 he was clearing out the goods of the late John James. At the time of the Census on 31st March 1901 Ellen James, aged 61 years, a widow, lived here with her son Henry Davies James, aged 20 years. Both of them were bilingual in Welsh and English and had been born in Cardigan. Ellen James lived here in 1901-13. On February 5th 1903 David Bowen Davies of New Manchester House married Mrs. Mary Ann Felix, the widow of Thomas Felix. On August 25th 1903 draper Johnny Jones, who worked at New Manchester House, married Miss Mary Anne Jones of Stafford House, No. 25 High Street. In November 1909 a dress and costume-making department opened here. At the time of the Census on 2nd April 1911 the following persons lived here: Ellen James, aged 71 years, a widow, born in Cardigan; Henry Davies James, aged 30 years, her son, a solicitor's clerk, born in Cardigan; and Anna Morris, aged 21 years, a general servant, born at Llandygwydd. All of them were bilingual in Welsh and English. On 19th March 1913 Henry Davies James of New Manchester House purchased a Premier motor cycle, registration number EJ 118. On April 11th 1913 Ellen James, the widow of John

James, died aged 73 years. She had been a member of Mount Zion Baptist Chapel for 33 years, and was buried at Blaenwaun Baptist Chapel, St Dogmaels. On 27th February 1914 Henry D James of New Manchester House bought a Rudge Whitworth motor cycle and side car to replace his earlier motorcycle. This model he kept for ten years. In June 1914 there was a break-in at the property by Thomas Davies of Foundry Terrace and William Jones of the Three Mariners, No. 40 High Street, both aged 14 years. On November 7th 1915 David Bowen Davies died. He was buried at Hermon Baptist Chapel, Llanfyrnach.

On March 2nd 1916 Henry Davies James of New Manchester House, a solicitor's clerk, appealed against his "call up." His claim was not entertained so he appealed. On April 18th 1916 his appeal was dismissed, and Henry D. James served in the army during the 1914-18 war, despite claiming that his medical showed that he was only fit for clerical duties. In May 1918 Frederick George, the manager of the drapery business here, lost his appeal at the Cardiganshire Tribunal and was ordered to enlist to fight in the war. On May 22nd 1920 Henry Davies James married Harriet Ann Rees of Newcastle Emlyn. In January 1921 the property was offered for sale, comprising: Basement: Kitchen, Back-Kitchen, Scullery, Pantry, Coal Room and other offices. Ground Floor: Double-fronted shop, large show room and Dining Room. First Floor – Drawing Room, Bedroom, Workroom and Storeroom. Second Floor – 4 bedrooms and W C. Attic – Extending from one pine end to the other. Outside was a greenhouse, yard and w c. In June 1921 Henry D. James was the Vice-Chairman of the Cardigan Liberal Club. On 8th May 1922 Henry Davies James of New Manchester House bought a Calthorpe car – a four seat model in battleship grey, registration number EJ 873. In February 1923 there was a removal sale held here for 'D. B. Davies & Co.', who were moving to Old Manchester House at No. 41 High Street. The shop was then advertised to let. In January 1924 there was a clearance sale held here.

In June 1926 William Henry Hallam of the 'Grosvenor Hotel' opened a restaurant here. On March 4th 1927 Daisy Llewelyn and Katie Morris announced that they would shortly be opening '*The Realm*' for business at this address. From 1927 until 1949 this was '*Llywelyn & Morris*' drapery shop – the '*Realm*'. On May 18th 1928 Harriet Ann James, the wife of Henry Davies James, died suddenly, aged 44 years at her family home in Bridge Street, Newcastle Emlyn. On 16th July 1932 Henry Davies James of New Manchester House purchased an Armstrong Siddeley coupe car in cream and green, registration number EJ 3460. Between 1933 and 1954 Mr H D James of New Manchester House attended the town's Mount Zion English Baptist Chapel. In 1938 Miss Katie Morris traded at '*The Realm*'. From 1940 until 1955 Sim Evans & Co., estate agents, traded here. Between 1941 and 1954 Mr H D James was a Deacon and the Secretary of Mount Zion English Baptist Chapel. In April 1949 W. T. Morgan took over '*Llywelyn & Morris*', '*The Realm*', although the two ladies continued to run the business for a time. Between 1951 and 1955 Mrs. E. Morgan '*The Realm*' traded here. On June 26th 1955 Henry Davies James died aged 76 years. He had been the secretary of Mount Zion English Baptist Chapel for 35 years. On December 16th 1955 the property was advertised for sale, including '*The Realm*' on the ground floor.

On January 20th 1956 *Cemaes Rural District Council* elected to purchase the property for their chambers. The new *Cemaes Rural District Council* chambers

opened on January 9th 1957. On February 10th 1960 '*Glan's Radio*' began trading here, though relocated after a short time to Priory Street. On July 15th 1960 Mr. & Mrs. W. T. Morgan were trading as '*The Realm*' from Regent House, Pendre, as their premises here were undergoing extensive repair. On December 1st 1960 '*The Realm*' was re-opened here by Mr & Mrs W. T. Morgan, following renovations. In 1961 estate agent Fred Rees opened an office here which continued to trade here until 1986. Between 1960 and 1975 W. T. Morgan's '*The Realm*' still traded here.

From 1970 until February 1973 '*Adrienne's*' Ladies Hairdresser traded here. On November 14th 1975 Mr & Mrs W. T. Morgan retired as the proprietors of '*The Realm*'. Mr & Mrs J. L. Evans took over and the business became '*Suzanne's*' ladies' fashions shop until at least 1986. In November 1976 Roland Lloyd opened a hairdressing salon here. By December 1978 '*Caban Crefft*' was trading here. Between 1976 and November 30th 1979 hairdresser Roland Lloyd had a salon here. Tremle Kitchens may have been based here from 1982. The building became Grade II listed in 1992.

In 1992 the Tremle Kitchens and Bedrooms shop was founded. There was a fire here in a second floor room used by the Natural Healing Centre on September 23rd 1997. The property then belonged to chartered accountancy partners Simon Stuart-Wilson and Peter Campbell. In the late 1990's the building housed the '*Tremle Kitchen*' shop and an alternative medicine healing centre on the first floor. In June 2000 Ashmole & Company, accountants, traded here. In 2003 the property housed '*Ashmole & Co.*', chartered accountants; *Cymdeithas Tai Hafan*; C. Jabroo, herbalist and the furniture shop. In September 2003 the proprietor of the '*Tremle Kitchen*' shop died and the property was advertised for sale. In January 2004 the shop became '*Rivendell*' and the new *Cardigan Gallery* opened upstairs in March 2004. The 'Beacon of Hope' Cancer Charity was also housed in the building. The name of the shop was quickly changed to '*Gandalf's Garden*' and traded here from 2005 until 2009. An art gallery was located above the shop in 2005. The building was given a facelift in January 2006. In January 2007 the Natural Healing Centre and Beacon of Hope still occupied the first floor. Early in 2008 the shop name changed to '*Charmaine's Garden*'. In January 2009 '*Flower Pot*', managed by Amanda Thomas, moved here from Pendre and began trading alongside '*Charmaine's Garden*'. In January 2010 '*Flower Pot*' moved out. In 2010 the shop became '*Loyalties*' and traded here between 2010 and 2014. In October 2013 the One Stop Bridal Shop began trading on the ground floor amongst the other traders, under the management of Sharon Morgan. A number of traders, using the name '*Cardigan Trading Post*' shared the space from 2013 until 2019. From 2014 until 2019 the property traded as '*Loyalties*'. In 2017 the building was advertised for sale. In May 2019 'Cardigan Trading Post' closed and moved, on a reduced scale, to the High Street Shopping Arcade.

The shop was then given a refit and was converted into an art gallery. The new gallery, named 'Canfas', opened on July 19th 2019 and traded here in 2019-2021. It closed temporarily between March and July 2020 owing to the COVID-19 outbreak. In August 2020 the gallery launched an art activity booklet aimed at children, marking the completion of a year's trading.

Description:

The building was described by CADW in 1992:

“...1884-5 built for John James, draper, to replace previous Manchester House, High Street. Former draper’s warehouse and house by George Morgan, stucco with hipped slate roofs and red brick end stacks. Rough square plan with canted north west angle, 3-storey with 4-window fronts to Bridge Street and Quay Street. Bridge Street front has left bay of double width to allow for 2-storey canted bay window with tripartite sash above, upper giant pilasters with cornice and deep plain frieze under eaves. Plate glass sashes with painted slate sills and moulded bands between floors, except in left bay where bay window has plain hipped roof. Similar one-window range to canted north west angle. Ground floor has channelled rustication to left angle pier and flanking adjoining bay window, then centre door between pilasters, shop front to right, with matching pilaster to right and similar pilaster framing to shop window in canted angle. Overall entablature with moulded cornice, carried around the bay window. Centre panelled door with overlight. Shop front has plate glass windows with deeply recessed centre door with overlight. Plainer 4-window front to Quay Street.

SHOP INTERIOR has T-plan pitch-pine stair, single flight up to double flight return. Turned balusters...”

Sources:

Cardigan & Tivy-Side Advertiser 1885; 1893-94; 1896; 12/03/1897; 1898; 01/12/1899; 18/05/1900; 1901-1906; 1908; 05/11/1909; 1911-12; 08/04/1913; 1914-15; 1917; 1919-20; 21/01/1921; 1924; 25/06/1926; 1927; 18/05/1928; 1933-35; 04/09/1936; 1937-38; 1940-41; 1946; 1948-51; 1953-57; 1960; 1962; 1968; 1970-73; 1975-76; 1978-79; 1991; December 1992; 01/10/1997; 28/06/2000; 25/02/2004; 30/01/2007; 12/06/2007; 20/01/2009; 15/10/2013; 23/07/2019

O. S. Map 1887 etc.

Census Returns 1841; 1861; 1891; 1901; 1911

Cardigan Observer 1894; 13/03/1897

Kelly’s Directory of South Wales 1895; 1914; 1926

List of Voters – Cardigan 25/07/1910

Register of Electors – Cardigan 1912

All About Cardigan, Cardigan Chamber of Commerce 1923

Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest – Cardigan, CADW 1992

Caring For Cardigan 1998

Monumental Inscriptions, Blaenwaun Chapel cemetery, St Dogmaels

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Images:

Top-028 (1998)

IMG_1523 (2019)