**Recollections**

Hetty Price, a farmer's daughter who lived in the lower Claerwen valley in the 1880's, recorded some of her memories of the lost valleys when she was in her seventies. Her father's farm was on the other side of the River Claerwen opposite "the Grand Mansion of Nantgwyllt where the Squire lived."

*"At Christmas we always had a treat and Christmas tree in the drawing room at Nantgwyllt, and the young ladies waited on us. It was looked forward to for months."*

She recalled the old school attended by the children of the two valleys:

*"There was a nice School and School-house attached, kept altogether by Miss Gertrude Lewis Lloyd, a sister of the Squire. She was always doing good deeds, giving suits of clothes for the poorer children, and material to make frocks for the girls."*

The tiny church which served the community was also remembered:

*"Lower down the road from the School was Nantgwyllt Church where most of the children and parents of the two valleys went to worship every Sunday afternoon. The Parson had to come all the way from Rhayader on horse back. He had a very long beard, and we children stood in awe of him, and also the Gentry of Nantgwyllt."*

Hetty Price wrote of the Gro-Mill at Nantgwyllt:

*"Just by the Church was the Mill, a lovely quaint old wheel fed by a brook, to saw all the timber for the Estate, and also to grind the oats and barley. Nearly every farmer took their grain to be done in the autumn. There was also a kiln to dry the grain. It was done by night, and most of the young men around would congregate to have a good time around the large fire that was kept up all night."*

The little shop, seen at the roadside in the old postcard view of Nantgwyllt, is mentioned in Hetty Price's account of the lost community:

*"Further down the road was Seth Thomas's Shop where they sold most things, flour and grocery and bottles of sweets, but it was very rare indeed that we should have a penny to buy them."*

The baptist chapel in the Elan Valley, which lay just below the centre of the submerged dam and viaduct of Garreg-ddu on the downstream side, is also described:

*"There were stepping stones to cross the river to the little Baptist's Chapel, where we used to see the converts being baptised in the river. It made a great impression on me as a child.*

*....On the end of the Chapel was a little house, where a dear old man used to live by himself. He used to lead the singing in the Chapel, and how my sister and I used to love the evenings there ! Oh ! the memories of it all. It is too sad to think about."*