

Talk 060220

**February 6<sup>th</sup> - 'Historical Tour Through Pembrokeshire in the footsteps of Richard Fenton' - Dr Robert Davies**

Richard Fenton was born in St Davids in January 1747 into a 'lower gentry family'. He went to school at the Cathedral School, then to Haverfordwest Grammar School and finally to Oxford. At an early age he obtained a job the Custom House in London. Later he entered the Middle Temple and studied for the legal profession. After being called to the bar he attended circuits in Wales for several years. While in London he married his wife, Eloise, and became friendly with writers like Oliver Goldsmith.

His uncle, Samuel Fenton, who lived in Fishguard, asked Richard to come and help him with his mackerel fishing business. Uncle Samuel died, his will left Richard a wealthy man. He decided to give up his working life and focus on his interests of poetry, history and his love of the Pembrokeshire landscape.

He rode off on a number of tours of the different areas of the County. His first tour was of the one nearest home, documenting what he saw between Fishguard and St Davids. He had a curious and inquisitive mind that took in landscapes and seascapes, castles, churches, estates and their houses, prehistoric standing stones and graves and what was a recent event to him, the Last Invasion.

He continued his travels over a number of years, with other 'Tours' around the County, often just turning up at 'Stately Homes' and asking for shelter for a night.

There is too much in his books to be contained in a 1 hour talk, but Robert had a catalogue of photos which showed the many places Fenton had visited.

Richard Fenton died in 1821 and is buried at Manorowen.