

*A trail exploring the  
historic connection between  
key sites in Monmouth,  
Charles Rolls – co-founder  
of Rolls-Royce – and his  
family, the Llangattocks*

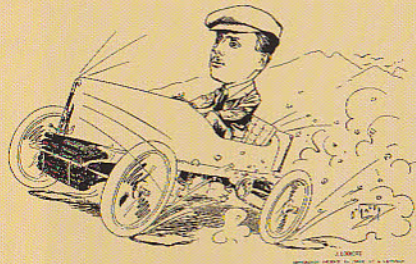
**In the footsteps of Rolls**  
*Monmouth and the Hendre family*



This trail has been produced by residents of Monmouth and Monmouth Museum staff as part of the Charles Rolls Commemoration Project, supported by Rolls-Royce plc.

The trail includes photographs, documents and objects from the collection of Monmouth Museum.

Rolls 'the competitor', caricature by J. Lockert



Lord Llangattock



Charles Stuart Rolls



Lady Llangattock



John Maclean Rolls



Henry Allan Rolls



Eleanor Georgiana Rolls



## About this trail

On July 12th 1910 Charles Rolls, pioneer aviator and co-founder of Rolls-Royce, became the first person in Britain to die in a plane crash.

Charles, the youngest son of John Allan and Georgiana Marcia Rolls, Lord and Lady Llangattock, lived at the Hendre, a large country estate just outside Monmouth. The Hendre lands came to the Rolls family in the second half of the 18th century. Marriage also brought the Rolls family land and property in Southwark and Bermondsey, London.



**Lady Llangattock and the Rolls children.**



**Lord Llangattock in his coronation robes.**

Throughout the 19th century the Rolls family's status and fortune grew. The Hendre was gradually developed from a shooting lodge into a large country mansion and attracted the 'great and good' of society for country house weekends and shooting parties. The Rolls family also acted with great generosity towards the people of Monmouth.

The trail will take about an hour and lead you to a number of sites associated with Charles Rolls and his family. The trail begins and ends at Monmouth Museum.

**Your route is marked on the enclosed map, which shows points of interest and stopping places.**





A The Masonic Lodge



B Old Gaol Gatchouse



C General Hospital



D The Library



E The Old Dispensary



Start here

Monmouth  
Museum

Priory Street

Monk Street

Dixton Road

Monnow Street

Church St

Agincourt Sq

Whitecross St

St James Square

St James Street

Almshouse St

Wyobridge St

Wye Bridge

Blestium Street

Glendower Street

H  
Monnow  
Bridge

P

P

P

P

F Wye Bridge view

G Glendower Street

H Monnow Bridge

I Shire Hall

J Monmouth Museum





# 1 The Llangattocks: Pillars of the establishment

Before leaving the museum why not take a little time to look at the displays which include information about Charles Rolls, his family and the local area.

*From the museum, turn left and walk along Priory Street. At the traffic lights turn left and continue a short distance until you come to **A** The Masonic Lodge, on your left.*



## ◀ The Masonic Lodge, c.1930.

This building was once a theatre. It was converted to a Masonic Lodge in 1846 by Charles Rolls' grandfather, John Etherington Welch Rolls. Many members of the Rolls family were Masons, a charitable organisation dedicated to helping its members and members of the local community.

*Continue straight along this road, carefully cross the junction and stop at **B** on your map.*



## ◀ Monmouth Gaol, c. 1866, with the toll-house and gate of the Monmouth to Llancloudy turnpike on the left.

This is the site of Monmouthshire's gaol. It was opened in 1790 and closed in 1869 when the gaol was moved to Usk. Today, the gatehouse is all that remains. The original flat roof of the gatehouse was once used for public executions. At least 5 male generations of the Rolls family were Justices of the Peace. In 1839 the gaol held several members of the Chartist movement, a national association which aimed to get all men the vote. After the Chartist riot in Newport, John Etherington Welch Rolls sat on the jury which sent the Newport Chartists to trial for treason. Three ringleaders were found guilty and sentenced to death, a sentence that was later changed to transportation.

## 2 Health and Welfare

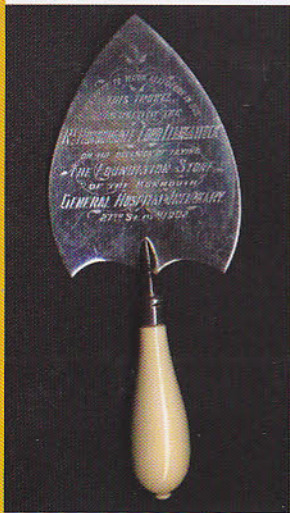
From the old gaol continue along the Hereford Road until you come to **C**.



◀ **Laying the foundation stone, Monmouth Hospital, September 27th 1902.**

You have now reached the former Monmouth General Hospital, the town's first purpose-built hospital. This building was opened by Lord and Lady Llangattock in 1903. It served the people of Monmouth for over 100 years until it was finally closed in 2006.

The hospital was built in the grounds of the old gaol. Lord Llangattock was one of many benefactors who donated money for the building of the new hospital, giving £2000 towards its construction.



◀ **Silver trowel from the foundation ceremony.**

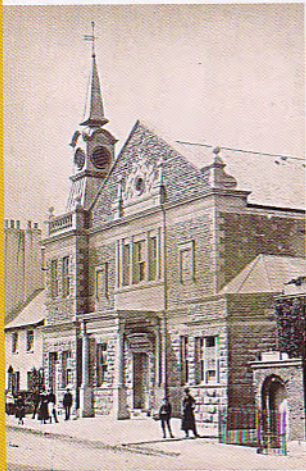
The hospital was furnished by local furniture dealer George Edwards and its wards were all named after important Monmouth people or events, including the Rolls family.

*From the Hospital carefully cross the road and return to the traffic lights. At the traffic lights continue straight on and follow the pavement into St. James' Square. **D** Look for the Library on your left.*



### 3 A celebration gift

Monmouth's library is housed in The Rolls Hall, built in 1887, a gift to the town from the Llangattock family to celebrate 50 years of Queen Victoria's reign.



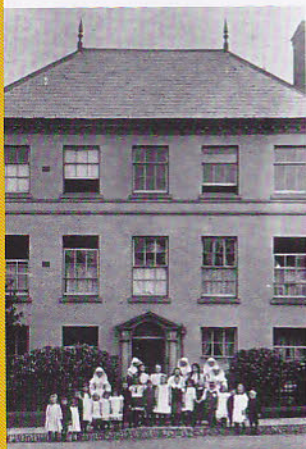
◀ **The Rolls Hall, c.1890.**

After its opening in 1888 the Rolls Hall was used for exhibitions, theatre performances, shows, dances and community events. It was converted to a library in 1992. On the face of the building you will see the Rolls family crest, a curled fist holding a scroll.



◀ **Silver key presented to Lady Llangattock at the opening of the Rolls Hall.**

If the library is open you might like to go inside and look at the portraits of Lord and Lady Llangattock and their oldest son, John Maclean Rolls.



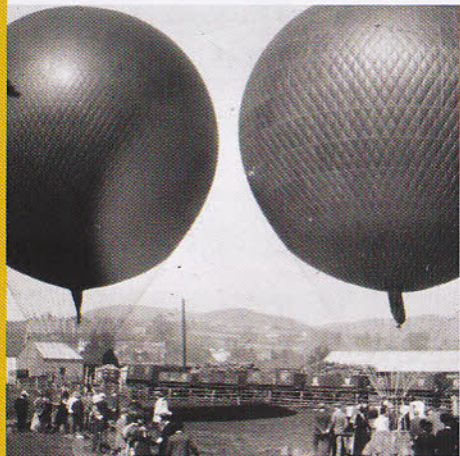
◀ **The Dispensary 1907, in use as a private school run by the 'French Sisters'.**

*From the Rolls Hall continue along to St James' Square, carefully cross the road and head for **E** on the map, the Dispensary.*

The Dispensary was originally set up as a charity to give advice and treatment to the poor of Monmouth. Eventually the Dispensary became too small to meet the needs of the town and Lord Llangattock took up the campaign to provide Monmouth with a purpose-built hospital.

## 4 Fuelling a passion

*From the Dispensary continue along St James' Street. When you reach the Queens Head pub, look left down Wyebriidge Street and across the River Wye **F**.*



### ◀ Rolls balloons at the old gas works, 1906.

Today there is little to see at this site but in the early 20th century crowds would gather across the Wye to see Charles Rolls fill his balloons with town gas from the local gasworks. It cost £10.00 to fill his balloon and almost emptied the town's gasometer!

Ballooning was Charles Rolls' first aerial adventure, a hobby taken up with great enthusiasm by other members of his family. Charles regarded ballooning as a sport rather than a viable means of aerial transport.



### ◀ Charles Rolls in the basket of his balloon Midget, c.1900.

His ballooning exploits led to the formation of the Aero Club, which later became the Royal Aero Club in 1910. This organisation was responsible for the training of military pilots in its early days.

Charles made over 100 balloon ascents and revived the sport of 'Hare and Hounds', a cross-country pastime where a lead balloon was chased across the countryside by a 'pack' of other balloons.



## 5 A 'fitting' tribute

*After pausing to look at the view continue along St James' Street, passing the Haberdashers Monmouth School for Boys and the Blake Theatre. Follow the map and turn right into Glendower Street. Continue walking until you reach the last building on the right, before the junction with Agincourt Street **G**.*



### ◀ Inside the Gymnasium, c.1900.

This building is the former Gymnasium. It was built in 1891 and donated to the town to commemorate the Coming of Age (21st birthday) of John Maclean Rolls, Lord and Lady Llangattocks' eldest son.

Monmouth's gymnastic team had previously trained in a building in Monnow Street. When this building became unsafe, Lord Llangattock bought Dr Woolitt's malt house, and had it converted into a gym. He also paid for a caretaker and an instructor.



### ◀ The Nelson displays in the former gymnasium.

Following the death of Lady Llangattock, in 1924 the building became the original Nelson Museum. Lady Llangattock was an enthusiastic collector of Horatio Nelson memorabilia and she bequeathed her collection to the town.

*From the Gymnasium turn left into Agincourt Street. Follow the road to the Shire Hall. Look left down Monnow Street, you will notice a gated bridge in the distance **H**.*



# 6 Motoring through Monmouth

Charles Rolls owned one of the first cars in Britain. In 1896 he made the 140 mile journey from Cambridge to the Hendre. The town knew Charles was on his way home in a car and that he would have to cross the Monnow Bridge on his way out of town. The journey took so long that people were left waiting for two days and nights to see the spectacle of his car crossing the Monnow Bridge.



◀ An early Rolls-Royce crossing Monnow Bridge, 1960.

Charles Rolls did much to popularise motoring. He was a founder member of the Automobile Association and took part in many motor races and competitions, winning a number of trophies. His father was also fascinated by the new motor cars and the Hendre played host to a variety of social motoring events.

◀ A 1905 C.S. Rolls brochure advert for one of the early Rolls-Royce motor cars.

## 15 H.P. ROLLS-ROYCE CAR.



15 H.P. "R-R" LANDAULET.

### THREE CYLINDERS.

16 inches behind dashboard. Tyres, 32 x 34 inches.

The Ideal lady's carriage for use in town and country.

THREE SPEEDS FORWARD AND REVERSE.  
DIRECT DRIVE ON TOP SPEED.

**Silent and Vibrationless.**

### PRICES:

With "Barker" Single Landaulet - - **£550**  
With "Barker" Side Entrance Tonneau **£500**



# 7 Celebration and Commemoration

Turn right into Agincourt Square. The large building on your right is Shire Hall 1.



## ◀ John Maclean Rolls Coming of Age celebrations in Agincourt Square, 30th April 1891.

On Thursday 30th April 1891 Agincourt Square was crowded with people as the town celebrated the Coming of Age of John Maclean Rolls. An ox roast was held in the square, special trains were laid on to bring people to Monmouth, and crowds came out to cheer the 21 year old, heir to the Llangattock estates and title.



## ◀ Lord Llangatock, mayors, guests and crowds at the unveiling of the Rolls memorial, 1911.

On 19th October 1911 Agincourt Square played host to another Rolls family event. This time the mood was much more sombre. It was the unveiling of a statue to commemorate the life and death of Charles Rolls.



## ◀ Charles Rolls in his Wright biplane shortly before his fatal accident, 12th July 1910.

Charles Rolls had developed a passion for flying but it was to be a short career. On 12th July 1910 his plane crashed during a flying competition at Bournemouth. Shortly before his death he had become the first person to cross the Channel, both ways, non-stop. The statue in Agincourt Square was planned to celebrate this achievement. Instead, it became his memorial.



# 8 Rise and Fall

From Agincourt Square turn right and follow the pavement until you reach Monmouth Museum 1.



## ◀ The Market Hall and Athenaeum c.1900.

The building which now houses Monmouth Museum was the home of the Athenaeum as well as being the market hall. The Athenaeum was a type of 'gentlemen's club' which regularly opened its doors to members of the public for literary, musical and theatrical entertainments.

The Rolls family, particularly Charles' grandfather and father, had a keen interest in amateur dramatics performing regularly at the Athenaeum.

## ◀ An Athenaeum event.

In 1969 the market hall building became the new home of the Nelson Museum.

Two years after Charles Rolls' death in 1910, Lord Llangattock died. He was followed by Charles' two older brothers in 1916 and his wife, in 1923. In 1961 Charles' sister Eleanor died. None of Lord and Lady Llangattock's children had children of their own.

**MONMOUTH  
ATHENÆUM.**  
The Committee of the above Institution respectfully announce that  
**The Last  
READING**  
AND  
**Musical Entertainment**  
WILL TAKE PLACE  
On **TUESDAY** next, **APRIL 4th, 1865,**  
**IN THE BOROUGH COURT**

**PROGRAMME:**  
A Glee.....  
The Rev. JOHN HARRING.—"School Boy's Song"..... Duetto.  
Sops.—"The Dream of other Days"—J. ROLLÉ, Esq. ....... Lasso—Ces. Serra.  
JOHN R. W. ROLLÉ, Esq.—"The Day after the Wedding"—A. Janschke, by Maria Tassara Kavana.  
Duet.—Mrs. WALK and Miss BENTON.  
The Mayor, MAJOR KING—A passage from the Life of Lewis Arnold.  
Sops.—"Think the Roman Emperor's Song"—JOHN ALEX. ROLLÉ, Esq.  
JOHN R. W. ROLLÉ, Esq.—An Epilogue, original.  
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

*Musical Arrangements under the direction of E. RANDELL FELL, Esq.*  
PRICE OF ADMISSION—Duet Solo, 5s.—Duet and Solo, 3s. Doors open at 7 p.m.—To commence promptly at 8 o'clock.

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