to the famed leniency of Pembrokeshire juries, this one did, in fact, find him guilty of the crime of Murder. In sentencing Roblin to death the Judge, Lord Milford, merely exercised his duty as laid down by law.

The first account with its more romantic flavour, is naturally the more interesting.

William Roblin was hanged at Haverfordwest Castle on Easter Monday, the twenty third of April 1821. His body was dissected.

Before he died Roblin forgave all those he considered to be his enemies and asked for God’s mercy for himself and his protection for his wife and daughter. He also hoped that his own fate would be a warning to all those who indulged in drunkenness and intemperate passion.

While waiting on the scaffold for his last step before eternity, Roblin was asked if he had anything to say. He replied, “No, I have nothing. I suppose you want me to confess to murders of which I am not guilty.”

An answer which doubtless did not please the authorities. Roblin’s confession to any outstanding unsolved murders would have done him no harm and would have improved Pembrokeshire’s crime statistics.

The mound and permanent gallows at Haverfordwest Castle where he was executed had been erected some time prior to the murder of William Davies. Ironically, William Roblin had been one of the local men involved in hauling the materials for the mound and the erection of the scaffold and, by a twist of fate, William Roblin was the first and the last man to be hanged from it.

Will Cefn-Coch

In all probability when William Richards shot and killed Joseph Butler during the early hours of the twenty eighth of November 1868, he was as surprised as anyone else, by an accidental pulling of the gun’s trigger — in the excitement and confusion of the moment.

To avoid arrest, he had already three times in the space of minutes aimed his gun and threatened to shoot another man, James Morgan. Each time Morgan had begged him not to shoot and Richards had held his fire. This reluctance to kill or seriously injure an unarmed man, who was, after all, only doing his job, would suggest that Will Cefn-Coch, as William Richards was known, though a determined, if frightened man, was not a cold-hearted killer.

Another difference in this account, although to be accurate the Brandy Cove Murderer did escape retribution, Will Cefn-Coch was never punished for his crime. That he was guilty was never in doubt, if he had been caught he would have been tried, convicted and executed. He was just never caught.

Poaching lurks in some people’s minds uncertainly in that grey area between right and wrong. The law itself is clear, poaching (trespassing on land to take game or fish without permission) is illegal, therefore wrong and has been that way for centuries. Another school of thought feels that it is an Englishman’s (or in the case of Will Cefn-Coch and his companions, a Welshman’s) right to feed himself and his family off the land irrespective of the land’s temporal proprietorship.

Certainly the taking for the pot of the odd rabbit, pheasant or salmon, has never seemed as serious a matter as some of the savage penalties meted out to poachers in less enlightened times would have one believe.

On the cold moonlit night of November the twenty seventh 1868 three men left their homes in the parish of Llangwyryfon,