

## RHYS, WALTER FITZURYN 7th Baron DYNEVOR (1873-1956), nobleman and politician

**Name:** Walter Fitzuryn Rhys

**Date of birth:** 1873

**Date of death:** 1956

**Spouse:** Margaret Rhys (née Child-Villiers)

**Child:** Charles Arthur Uryan Rhys

**Parent:** Margaret Selina Rice (née Lascelles)

**Parent:** Arthur de Cardonnel Rice

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** nobleman and politician

**Area of activity:** Land Ownership; Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society

**Author:** Christopher Dignam

Born at Dursley, Gloucestershire, 17 August 1873, son of Arthur de Cardonnel, 6th Baron, and Selina Lascelles (of the Earls of Harewood). He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He returned to Dynevor Castle in 1898 on marrying Lady Margaret Child-Villiers, eldest daughter of the Earl of Jersey. Involvement in running the estate did not prevent his serving the Government as private secretary to the Secretary of State for India (1899-1903) and to the First Lord of the Admiralty (1903-05). He became Member of Parliament (C) for Brighton and Hove, 1910-11 (but resigned his seat on his elevation to the House of Lords). He assisted the Ministry of Munitions 1916-18, was a J.P., Carmarthenshire County Councillor 1919-35, chairman of the Land Union 1920-37 and Lord Lieutenant of Carmarthenshire 1938-48. The Depression hit the Dynevor and Neath Abbey estates hard, both being coal and steel-centred and the Dynevors are remembered for the charity, employment and other assistance offered to tenants and local people. Offering Dynevor Castle to the War Office in 1939 for use by the army prevented the seizure and destruction suffered by many other noble houses. Despite the army's quitting the estate after the war, failing health led to the stagnation and decline of Dynevor. Lord Dynevor was acutely aware of his Welsh heritage. He bore the ring at the investiture of Edward Prince of Wales in 1911, and in 1916 readopted the Welsh spelling of Rhys by Royal Licence. He wrote about his family and estate in *Trees at Dynevor* (1934) and *History of the two castles of Dynevor* (1935), he corresponded with [Sir Cyril Fox](#) regarding Newton House (Dynevor Castle) and he was concerned about preserving the park's ancient herd of wild white cattle. He died 8 June 1956 and was buried at Llandyfeisant Church in Dynevor Park.

### RHYS, CHARLES ARTHUR URYAN, the eldest son and 8th Baron Dynevor (1899 - 1962),

Born 21 September 1899, and was educated at Eton and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was a captain in the Grenadier Guards Reserve of Officers, and served in the British Expeditionary Force in Russia 1919. He was awarded the M.C. and the Order of S. Anne of Russia. He was Member of Parliament (C) for the Essex and Romford division, 1923-29. He became parliamentary private secretary to the Financial Secretary of the War Office (1924) and to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (1926). In 1927 he was elevated to the position of parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, until he lost his seat. During the 1920s and 30s he became more involved in estate affairs, taking over the administration of the Neath Abbey Estate from his father. He was closely concerned with heavy industry as a director of Richard Thomas and Baldwin's tinplate works on the estate at Jersey Marine. 1931-35 he was Member of Parliament (C) for Guildford. During World War II he served in the Reserve of Guards and was the unsuccessful C. candidate for North Islington in the 1945 election. Farming in general and timber production in particular interested him (in 1954 he was a member of the Departmental Committee on Home Grown Timber). He began a programme of conifer planting and cropping on the Dynevor estate. After the war he persuaded his father to connect Dynevor to mains electricity and in the 1950s he began an extensive refurbishment of Dynevor Castle and the rationalisation of estate finances which involved the sale of estate properties. Reform was made more essential because of the death duties due following his father's death but Charles died before the plan was realised. He had been a governor of the National Museum of Wales, president of the University College of South Wales and a member of the Welsh Advisory Committee on Civil Aviation. He married, 1934, Hope Mary Woodbine Soames and had one son. He died 15 December 1962.

### Author

Christopher Dignam

### Sources

*Who was who?*, 1951-60, 1961-70

*Who's who?*, 1956-62

*Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage, and Companionage*, 1963

Walter Fitzgibbon Rhys, *My reminiscences* (Carmarthen 1937) (1934) and his works cited above

Dynevor estate papers at the County Records Office, Carmarthen

information from Richard Fitzgibbon Rhys, 9th. Baron Dynevor

**Published date:** 2001

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