

## HASSALL, CHARLES (1754 - 1814), land agent and surveyor

**Name:** Charles Hassall  
**Date of birth:** 1754  
**Date of death:** 1814  
**Spouse:** Dorothy Hassall (née Bullfinch)  
**Child:** Oriana Hassall  
**Child:** William Hassall  
**Child:** George Hassall  
**Parent:** Martha Hassall (née Rose)  
**Parent:** James Hassall  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** land agent and surveyor  
**Area of activity:** Engineering, Construction, Naval Architecture and Surveying  
**Authors:** Edwyn Henry Stuart Jones, Marion Löffler

Born 1754, the second son of James Hassall of Cardigan (1718-1787) and Martha Rose of Stourbridge (died 1795), resided at Eastwood near Narberth. He married Dorothy Bullfinch (died 1845) and had three children, the Rev. William Hassall of Llyswen (1788-1849), Oriana Hassall (1790-1809) and George Hassall (born and died 1792).

An agricultural pioneer and colourful figure, he achieved some prominence in West Wales during his life-time. He came to Pembrokeshire as agent to the Llanstinan and Sleebch estates of William Knox, c. 1784, but was dismissed. In 1791 he was appointed surveyor of the South Wales Association for the Improvement of Roads, and compiled reports on the agriculture of the counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen for the Board of Agriculture. His 1794 *A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Pembroke with Observations on the Means of its Improvements*, is still valuable as a detailed survey of conditions at the time. It provides, for instance, the first record of an agricultural society in Pembrokeshire, founded in 1784. Hassall participated as a volunteer in lord Cawdor's march to Fishguard when the French landed in 1797, and was the first to meet Thomas Knox in the latter's retreat from Fishguard. Using this opportunity to get even with the Knox family, he was instrumental in causing Knox to resign his command of the Fishguard Volunteers. Hassall became Major of Pioneers in the invasion scare of 1803 and secretary to the Pembrokeshire Agricultural Society in 1806. A capable and knowledgeable agriculturalist, he was on friendly terms with lord Milford, lord Cawdor, **Greville**, and the **Foleys**, whilst **Sir Thomas Picton** condescended to fight a duel with him over a quarrel which originated in a ball-room.

Charles and his older brother Thomas (1750-1813) have been called 'two of the best-known agriculturists in Wales' of the time, pioneering land improvement measures, such as draining wetlands, but both also acted as Commissioners of Enclosures for Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Glamorganshire and Merionethshire in the early 1800s, controversial work which attracted criticism. Distressed by his older brother's death in 1813 while supervising the enclosure of Cors Fochno and by complications in the process of buying recently enclosed land at Mynydd Mawr, Charles Hassall took his own life while visiting Lampeter, on 16 May 1814. He is commemorated by a tablet in Narberth church.

### Authors

**Commander Edwyn Henry Stuart Jones**

**Marion Löffler**

### Sources

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Robin Hassall, 'The Hassalls of Cilrhue and Eastwood', *Dyfed Family History Journal*, Volume 11, Number 8 (April 2014), 12-19

### Works

Charles Hassall, *General view of the agriculture of the county of Carmarthen, with observations on the means of its improvement* (London 1794)

### Additional Links

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