BRYCHEINIOG

Cyfnodolyn Cymdeithas Brycheiniog
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Editor
MIKE ALUN WILLIAMS

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EDITORIAL

Is there a more interesting county than ours? I do not think so. And 48 issues of *Brycheiniog* suggest that others do not think so either. We have covered so much of our history and culture over the last 62 years, I am delighted that we can still publish for you a volume that is as new, fresh, and informative as this one.

But, before looking at the contents, a small announcement. If you have flipped through this volume before reading the Editorial (surely not!) you will have noticed a change. Colour. Throughout. I hope you like it. We have other ideas on the horizon: digitising back issues, updating the index, and a new website displaying both. Watch this space.

For me, as a reader of Brycheiniog and now as Editor, the journal is synonymous with a series of articles between 1963 and 1972, written by Stanley Jones and John Smith. 'Jones and Smith' has become a by-phrase for the study of vernacular houses of our county. Sadly, last year saw the death of John Smith, who died in August on his 94th birthday, and it seemed only right that the journal should reflect this loss.

Our nineteenth Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture was given by Richard Suggett, fittingly (but not realised at the time), on the vernacular houses of Breconshire. I am thrilled that Richard has adapted his lecture for *Brycheiniog*, with particular reference to the work of Jones and Smith. Poignantly, Richard dates many of the buildings in their study with an accuracy that the original surveyors could only have dreamed of, using the modern advances in dendrochronology (tree-ring dating). Richard explains the results, obtained in a collaborative project between the Royal Commission and the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, and provides a chronology of dates of buildings (including a crannog) from the ninth century through to the eighteenth. Our Chairman, John Gibbs, follows Richard with a review of the origins of Jones and Smith's work, paying tribute to their extraordinary contribution to our county history. It is also a privilege to read something of John Smith's forthright views, such as what once "bored the pants off him".

In a similar vein, Ieuan Evans provides a respectful look at the life of Deiniol Williams (Chief Education Officer for Breconshire), addended with contributions from his subject's family. It was Deiniol Williams who started the vernacular houses project and, without whom, Jones and Smith would probably never have come to our county. But Deiniol Williams was much more than a mere facilitator, as this article demonstrates. Above all, he thrived through encouraging others, especially students, and it is appropriate that our next article attempts to do the same.

Many readers—when offering feedback on the journal—have asked for new writers to be featured, particularly younger historians: the voices of the future.

Ivan Price, the author of our next article, won a prestigious award for his undergraduate dissertation on twelfth-century Brecon. It forms the basis of his contribution here. It has been a pleasure working with Ivan to develop his voice and I hope you will enjoy the result. Brecknock people are special, Ivan suggests, but we knew that already!

One voice that is never far away in our county is that of Romantic poet Henry Vaughan. Jonathan Nauman considers Vaughan, but through the life of his, ultimately thwarted, biographer Louise Guiney. After assembling the raw data that was used in most future studies of the poet, Jonathan explains why Louise Guiney, and her erstwhile collaborator and familiar Brecon personality, Gwenllian Morgan, failed to publish their own work. It is a bittersweet tale with no easy conclusions.

A 'tale' perhaps best describes Glyn Mathias' article. Deliberately eschewing a traditional introduction, this is history as lived, inspired by a group of three cottages, only one of which still stands. It joins insider dealing of the most outrageous kind, eye-popping gentrification of a castle, and, unexpectedly, the author's own life, in a narrative that enthrals as much as it informs. Allow yourself be carried away.

And, if you need reviving afterward, Elizabeth Siberry's article has the remedy. Elizabeth follows the life of Dr James Ford, royal physician to a Georgian queen, who ended his days in Llangattock and is, apparently, buried in its church. It was an engagingly circuitous and very eventful life that led him here.

Nigel Clubb follows our 2016 article on the Mansion House, with a note explaining how not all the building was demolished but a section became the building we still refer to as 'the Old Post Office' on St Mary Street. It is an architectural detective story.

Reviews bring us to a close; Henry Vaughan (I said his voice was never far away), Welsh art, medieval Powys, Offa's Dyke, and the Lords of Hay all feature.

It is a packed volume, brought to you in full colour. Do let me know what you think of it. But now, as is becoming traditional at this stage of proceedings, let me hand you over to our Chairman, Dr John Gibbs, followed by various other reports detailing the Society's activities and events through 2016. All new, fresh, and informative; just like the journal really.

It is with grateful appreciation that I acknowledge grants towards the publication of this volume of Brycheiniog *from Brecon Town Council and the Community Foundation in Wales under the Welsh Church Acts legislation. Thank you.*

REPORTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2016

This is the third year in which a Chairman's report on the activities of the Society has appeared in *Brycheiniog*. I am very pleased to be able to say that at our AGM in April all the officers agreed to remain in post. We express our great thanks for their work on behalf of the Society to Peter Seaman and David Morgan, who stood down after four years on the Executive Council, and we welcome Dr Elizabeth Bickerton.

Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery and Brecon Library Project: 'Brecon Cultural Hub'

In June, I was able to report to members the news that, after various delays, the redevelopment work was to go ahead. In an article in the *Brecon & Radnor Express*, Powys Cabinet Member Graham Brown said, "This decision re-affirms the Council's commitment to this exciting project, which will provide a huge boost to Brecon and the surrounding area". He continued by thanking the Heritage Lottery Fund, as major funder, as well as the Welsh Government, Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, the Brecknock Art Trust, the Armed Forces Community Covenant, and other trusts and individuals who have contributed additional funding. "Their support as committed partners in the project is second to none."

The Society's representative on the Progress Team, Dr Mervyn Bramley, who has played a key role in keeping things moving forward during the trials and tribulations of recent years, said, "We are delighted that the Council has re-affirmed its commitment and the project budget is now secured. The whole Breconshire community stands to benefit from this twenty-first-century facility, which will also be a major attraction for visitors, particularly on the bad weather days which are not infrequent in mid-Wales! The existing museum and art collections are of national significance and an important record of our Breconshire heritage; at last, these will be on public display again."

On 29 July, there was a launch event with speeches and toasts in the Council chamber of Brecon Guildhall and presentations and introductions in St Mary's Church, for example, to the team from the main contractors Kier Construction. In my speech, I said how marvellous it was to think of the story of the county being brought back to life through the array of art and artefacts that will be on display in the redeveloped Museum and Art Gallery. I also commented, "I have two grand-daughters growing up in Brecon, one is five, the other nearly three. It is my great delight to think of the rich resources that the new library and the transformed Museum and Art Gallery will offer for their enjoyment

and inspiration—and for the enjoyment and inspiration of so many others—from near and from afar".

Kier Construction started work on site in August under an enabling contract, pending the agreement of the main works contract. By the end of the year, the demolition of the Old Police Station and New County Hall, which adjoined the Shire Hall, had been completed. The Shire Hall had been largely stripped out ready for renovation, and construction had started on the foundations for the new atrium and library (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. The foundations for the new atrium and library. Courtesy: Nigel Blackamore

Winter meetings of the Society

As in the previous year, we began 2015 with a January talk by our President, Ken Jones. This year it was an account of the voyages of Captain John Lloyd (1748–1818) in the service of the East India Company. In February, Dr Mary Ann Constantine, of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (University of Wales), gave us 'Museums and Stories'. In this, she brought together elements of her current research on travel writing and collecting in Romantic-era Wales, with a more personal perspective on how museums, and the objects in them, can generate stories and exert a fascination on individuals. She also read from her recently-published novel, *Star-Shot,* which is set in and around the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

The Nineteenth Sir John Lloyd Lecture: The Vernacular Buildings of Breconshire: Following Jones and Smith

On 18 March, Richard Suggett, from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales, told a full Theatr Bycheiniog the story of

the houses of the Breconshire countryside. It is very good to record that the written version of this lecture appears in this volume of our journal.

Dendrochronological studies

To provide data on the age of some Breconshire buildings for Richard Suggett's lecture, the Society took on the responsibility of making contact with the owners of some of the historic properties described by Jones and Smith. In a reconnaissance during October 2015, several members of the Executive Council took Richard and Dr Dan Miles (of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory) to assess a number of buildings and this was followed by sampling trips to suitable properties in February and July 2016.

Breconshire Houses Group

At Richard Suggett's lecture, we raised the idea of developing an interest group, under the auspices of the Society, the members of which would seek to learn more about the houses of Breconshire through informal meetings and house visits. Two meetings were arranged during the year. On 26 June, a group of 30 people gathered at our house Aberyail, Llangynidr for a talk by me on the house and its history and a chance to look around this 'transformed longhouse'.[1] It was formerly part of the Beaufort Estate, and we are fortunate that a detailed map of the land, including a little sketch of the house itself (Fig. 2), appears in the 1588 Badminton Manorial survey (which was inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World UK Register in June).

Figure 2. A representation of Aberyail, Llangynidr from the 1588 Badminton estate map.

NLW, Badminton Map Vol. 3: A Survey of the Manors of Crickhowell and Tretower

Henry Vaughan

There were several events and activities during the year that were linked to the life and work of the great Breconshire poet. The Society held the annual memorial event, supported by the Vaughan Association and Llansantffraed Church Committee, at Llansantffraed Church on 24 April, the Sunday nearest to the date of the poet's death. This event was combined with the launch of the book *Henry Vaughan and the Usk Valley* (reviewed in this volume). This was a

joint project led by our Society and The Vaughan Association. The book was edited by Bob Wilcher of the Vaughan Association and Elizabeth Siberry. Three of those very much involved with its production, including Elizabeth, gave talks at the Hay Festival. These were well received by an appreciative audience in a full 'Cube' tent. It is important to record the very real achievement that saw this book moving from an initial concept note to publication and presentation at Hay within just two years!

Henry Vaughan and Samuel Taylor Coleridge

A few years ago, we learnt that there was to be a travelling festival in the summer of 2016 to mark the journey that the young Coleridge made through Wales in 1794. The Director, Richard Parry, wished to arrange events with local groups celebrating imagination, creativity, landscape, and community. Following an approach from Mervyn Bramley, Richard participated in the morning service at Llansantffraid Church on Sunday 29 May. The service included readings from Coleridge and Vaughan, and the address, on the theme of poetry and belief, was given by a mentor of Richard's, The Rev Professor John Rogerson. Afterwards there was a programme of music and poetry.

The Society's own contribution to the Coleridge in Wales Festival was a 'Swan of the Usk' concert at Llansantffraed Church on Saturday 18 June, which we organised jointly with The Unicorn Singers. All 100 tickets were sold for a fascinating evening of music, song and poetry in homage to two great poets. More on the festival can be found at http://coleridgefestival.org/.[2]

Llanwrtyd & District Heritage & Arts Centre

In July, members of the Society visited this award-winning centre with its impressive array of exhibits and displays. It had been opened earlier in the year, following a very sensitive conversion from a former Congregational chapel. In the afternoon, there was there was a guided walk around the village and a visit to the beautifully located old Llanwrtyd parish church.

Brecknock History Week: Breconshire: Traditions, Myths, and Legends

Our principal contribution to Brecknock History Week, organised by the Brecknock History Forum, was a very well-attended evening event in the Studio of Theatr Brycheiniog, where, in addition to various displays, there was a series of short presentations on the theme of traditions, myths, and legends, a topic which fits in with next year's theme for 'Visit Wales'. Highlights included Saint Eluned: Daughter of Brychan, The Legends of Cwm Llwch, the Boughrood Dead House, and the Llangynidr Ghost Story. Publicity for the evening was provided by one of Robert Macdonald's paintings of the Legends of Llangorse Lake, used by kind permission of the artist (Fig. 3). We are very grateful to Steve Morris for co-ordinating the programme for the third successive year.

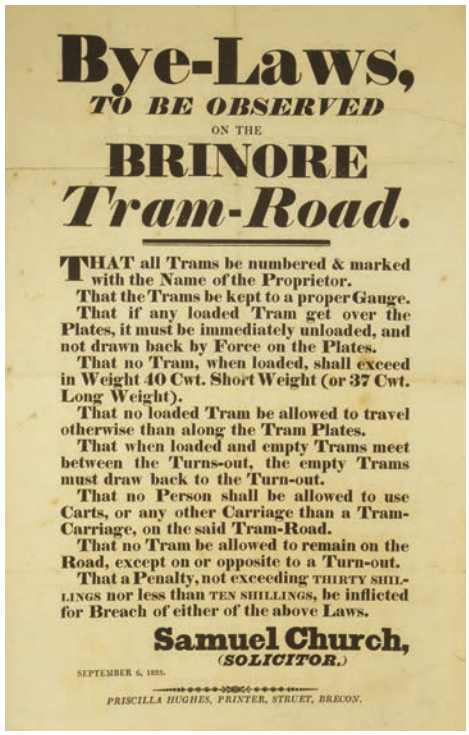
Figure 3. 'The legend of Llangorse' by Robert Macdonald (2004), as used in the publicity material for 'Breconshire: traditions, myths and legends'. According to this legend the birds of the lake will only sing at the command of a true Prince of Wales.

Penpont 350

This festival, on 1 and 2 October, marked the putative 350 years since the founding of the Penpont estate in its wonderful location beside the Usk, a few miles west of Brecon (cover photograph). The society worked closely with Jonathan Williams, a member of the family, on a half-day conference on 1 October, which made use of the excellent facilities that have been created at Penpont itself. The conference was a great success and a capacity audience of about 100 was treated to a lively and varied series of talks. These included two by Jonathan Williams, one on the history of the house, and one on the history of the estate.[3] Richard Suggett was also with us again: this time talking specifically about Breconshire Gentry Houses over the centuries. In an adjacent room, there was a display of artefacts and documents connected with the house and estate.

Autumn Meetings

In mid-October, there was a joint event with the Powys Branch of the Art Fund. William Gibbs arranged for an 'an evening with Sir Richard Colt Hoare' at the Muse. We were shown a wonderful array of paintings of Wales, while



Bye-Laws,
TO BE OBSERVED
ON THE
BRINORE
Tram-Road.

THAT all Trams be numbered & marked with the Name of the Proprietor.
That the Trams be kept to a proper Gauge.
That if any loaded Tram get over the Plates, it must be immediately unloaded, and not drawn back by Force on the Plates.
That no Tram, when loaded, shall exceed in Weight 40 Cwt. Short Weight (or 37 Cwt. Long Weight).
That no loaded Tram be allowed to travel otherwise than along the Tram Plates.
That when loaded and empty Trams meet between the Turns-out, the empty Trams must draw back to the Turn-out.
That no Person shall be allowed to use Carts, or any other Carriage than a Tram-Carriage, on the said Tram-Road.
That no Tram be allowed to remain on the Road, except on or opposite to a Turn-out.
That a Penalty, not exceeding THIRTY SHILLINGS nor less than TEN SHILLINGS, be inflicted for Breach of either of the above Laws.

Samuel Church,
(SOLICITOR.)

SEPTEMBER 6, 1825.

PRISCILLA HUGHES, PRINTER, STRUET, BRECON.

Figure 4. Documents relating to the Brinore Tramroad Company: Bylaws notice. Brecknock Museum

Figure 5. Documents relating to the Brinore Tramroad Company: Bundles of payment vouchers. Brecknock Museum

William interviewed Sir Richard, most effectively played by Phillip Bowen of the Willow Globe theatre in Radnorshire.

In November, and postponed from the previous year, there was a talk on the Brinore Tramroad, one of the key links between the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and industrial South Wales. John Jones spoke about the tramroad itself and Tom Davies spoke about his work (supported by a small grant from the Society) cataloguing a remarkable find of documents connected with the tram-road company (Fig. 4 and 5). These have now been presented to the Museum.

Reports on the Victor Jones Junior School History Prize and on the Roland Mathias Poetry Prize for 2016 appear elsewhere in the Journal

In summary, 2016 was a busy and productive year. For support and encouragement, I would like to thank all the members of the Executive Council, and especially our Council Secretary Gwyneth Evans.

JOHN GIBBS

Notes

[1] See Richard Suggett's article in this volume of Brycheiniog for a definition of this term.

[2] Accessed 6 February 2017.

[3] Some of this information can be found in Williams. J. P. D. 2012. *Penpont: History, Buildings, Landscape, People*. The Penpont Estate. Interestingly, dendrochronological studies, conducted as part of the exercise described in this report, have shown that the rear 'courtyard wing' is not, as was long thought, the oldest part of the house.

THE ROLAND MATHIAS PRIZE

The 2016 event in Brecon to celebrate the winner of the Roland Mathias Prize took a different form from previous years—because there were three poets on the stage instead of one. The winner of the Prize was Philip Gross and, when I approached him, he graciously offered to share the stage with the two poets who had been on the shortlist with him: Paul Henry and Stephen Payne. "They were all friends", he said, so there was no reason why not. Accordingly, on 4 November, the three of them performed their poetry to a full house at the Muse in Brecon.

The Roland Mathias Prize for poetry, supported by the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, is part of the Wales Book of the Year and Philip Gross won the award for *Love Songs of Carbon,* published by Bloodaxe Books (Fig. 1). This was his eighteenth book of poetry and he is no stranger to prizes, in recent years the T.S. Eliot Prize and the Wales Book of the Year, as well as being shortlisted for a previous Roland Mathias Prize. He is Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Glamorgan and his ability to explain his writing and, in particular, the relationship between the poet and the reader, was very much on show.

This volume has received widespread praise, with one critic describing Philip Gross as writing "with a full-throated clarity that sounds, suddenly, like no-one else around". Some of his poems here are tantamount to love poems, not just to the person but the body itself, such as *The Shapes They Make*:

and our two bodies, together...
and surprise us, waking

facing, in the knees-up,
chin to knuckle crouch

an archaeologist would recognise –
today, with hand to hand
raised, right to right,

half-way between a high-five
and a handshake

like the glancing clasp of team-mates...

Figure 1. Philip Gross.

Paul Henry, who has spent much of his life in Brecon and the surrounding area, was short-listed for *Boy Running*, published by Seren and described by one reviewer as "rich, wise and regretful" (Fig. 2). He was initially a song-

writer, which led him into poetry, and is now also a lecturer and broadcaster, performing his work at literary festivals across the world. In *Studio Flat* he conjures up the loneliness and regrets of the newly-divorced:

Socks hang like bats from a skylight.
They may be dry in time for the moon.
The camp-site owner's water-feature
drains more blood from the sun.

Cars queue for the narrow bridge.
Birds capture their pulses and fly.
I am suddenly old. What's an attic
but a bungalow in the sky.

Figure 2. Paul Henry.

For Stephen Payne, it was his first full collection of poetry that made it to the shortlist, although his poems have been published widely since 2005 (Fig. 3). What makes *Pattern Beyond Chance*, published by Happenstance Press, very different is that the poet is Professor of Human-Centric Systems at the University of Bath with a particular interest in the interactions between human beings and computers. The result is quite a few poems with a scientific bent, but playful at the same time. *The Scientific Method* is an example, which tells of a discussion as to whether exceptions to a rule mean the rule is invalid:

I tell her it doesn't matter, nothing
about human behaviour is neat and tidy.
When people say, say ... girls read more than boys,
they don't mean all girls read more than all boys.
What matters is the tendency, the pattern
beyond chance, which calls for an explanation.

Figure 3. Stephen Payne.

The Wales Book of the Year is run by Literature Wales, who are, at the time of writing, undertaking a review of the structure and format of the competition. It is our hope that poetry retains a prime position, and that we can continue to experience the joyful kind of event the trio of poets provided for us in November.

GLYN MATHIAS

BRECKNOCK MUSEUM & ART GALLERY REPORT 2016

Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery has been closed for redevelopment since 31 October 2011 and will remain closed until it is fully restored and its expanded facilities are completed in 2018.

During the summer of 2016, construction work on the new Brecon Cultural Hub finally got underway. The building works commenced with the soft stripping of the former New County Hall and Old Police Station roofs. Under license, the tiles and capping stones were carefully removed in order to facilitate the escape and/or removal of any bats, which may have been using the abandoned cavities. Bat boxes were installed elsewhere on site and these continue to be monitored. The bat works were followed by the removal of all identified asbestos-containing material from within the buildings. Built in the 1950s, the New County Hall had several uses for asbestos within its fabric and this material was all carefully removed before the main demolition works proceeded (Fig 1). Once the main demolition phase had been completed, the recyclable material was removed from site and the leftover building debris was crushed ready for reuse in the foundations. Much of the rubble has been reused by a local farmer for hard-core. The site was then levelled and, in late December, the concrete for the foundations and ground beams of the new library space was poured. Good progress continues to be made as attention turns to the interior of the Grade II* listed Shire Hall.

The Connecting Communities and Collections Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project aims not only to see the restoration of the Grade II* listed Shire Hall and Assize Court but also the reinterpretation of the Museum collection

Figure 1. Demolition at the site of the Brecon Cultural Hub during September.

Courtesy: Nigel Blackamore

and increased engagement with the local community. During the last year, our volunteers have provided over 1,900 hours towards museum projects, with volunteers assisting Museum staff in improving database records, digital recording projects, care of collections, and educational activities.

2016 brought another busy year for our Outreach Service. In total, 1,960 participants were engaged in a variety of family art and craft sessions, which we facilitate during every school holiday. We continue to partner with other local organisations who kindly provide their venue. Throughout the year, we held six events at Brecknockshire libraries, four at Brecon Cathedral/Heritage Centre, and, during the Summer holidays, we ran a 'Circus' Art and Craft event for the first time at Theatr Brycheiniog. This was very popular with 260 children and adults joining us throughout the day. We also ran a children's art session at a local school fayre where children were able to draw a selection of museum artefacts; these will soon be displayed on the site hoarding. Another of our outreach sessions was held at Cartrefi Cymru; an organisation which supports adults with learning difficulties. Participants really enjoyed the day, choosing to make a bird feeder or weave a bookmark. We have continued to engage with social media, with images of our events and selected objects shared on our Facebook and Twitter pages; these have resulted in over 1,600 online followers for the Museum

Nearly 9,000 items have been added to the Museum collection during the year, including new archaeological objects, artworks, photographs, and several social history items. Newly accessioned objects of particular interest include a silver paten and chalice, a collection of shop bags from the 1970s, and two Brecon-based Eagle Brewery bottles.

During the summer, the Museum was contacted by an auction house tasked with selling a silver paten and chalice, on behalf of the community of Llanfihangel Nant Bran (Fig. 2). The objects, dating to the reign of James I (1615), had been recently found in a bank vault, placed there for safe keeping many years previous and, with the change of church staff, forgotten about. The Community decided to part with the precious objects in order to take care of the church building. Financial support from the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends helped unlock further funding from The Art Fund

Figure 2. The silver paten and chalice, Llanfihangel Nant Bran. Brecknock Museum

and The V&A Purchase Fund and, after a nerve racking auction, the objects were successfully purchased, saving them for the people of Brecknockshire.

A most unusual collection also arrived at the Museum during the summer, although this time of much less financial value, but still holding special social and historical interest. During the 1970s, a local lady had collected a number of paper bags from the shops found in and around Brecon, and carefully stored them away (Fig. 3). Many of the bags are from shops now long disappeared,

Figure 3. Paper bags from the shops found in and around Brecon during the 1970s.
Brecknock Museum

with some recording the address and telephone number, as well as images of the buildings and products. The collector also added notes recording the specific dates when the bags were collected. The bags are in some cases very aesthetic and are a good cross section of the type of disposable bag used in the 1970s, long before the High Street became chain focussed.

Two final objects added to the collection were identified during the soft strip and demolition of the buildings surrounding the Shire Hall. We have been careful to photograph and record the demolition and also collect samples of the buildings along with any finds which have been revealed. This has included a yellow 1896 Ruabon brick from the Old Police Station and the 1950s door handles from the (old) New County Hall. However, a particularly exciting find was a glass beer bottle from a small vault under the Old Police Station Cells (Fig. 4). The distinctive green glass Codd type bottle was found with its neck and marble missing and had been sealed into the buildings foundations in 1896. The bottle advertises the *Eagle Brewery Co. Brecon*, with the bottle manufacturer recorded, *Powell & Ricketts Bristol*, on the rear. The Eagle Brewery operated close by, on the Watton, during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, with the brewery closing in 1919. A few weeks after this discovery, a local lady contacted the Museum regarding donating a glass 'ginger beer' bottle, which her husband had dug up from their garden many years previously; they had kept on a windowsill so that light would shine through it. When the bottle arrived, it was an identical example of the Old Police Station bottle, only this time it included the neck and marble.

Figure 4. An Eagle Brewery glass beer bottle from a small vault under the Old Police Station Cells. Brecknock Museum

Also during the year, we have had support from The Brecknock Art Trust, along again with The Art Fund and The V&A Purchase Fund. Assistance was given for the purchase at auction of a new watercolour for the collection. Titled *Brecon Bridge with the Castle Beyond*, by Paul Sandby Munn, this view of Brecon encompasses the Honddu River entering the Usk River, with the three arches of the old Honddu Bridge, the Castle Mill, and the ruins of Brecon Castle overlooking the composition (Fig. 5). Munn may have sketched this popular view of Brecon around 1802 when he is known to have toured Wales with John Sell Cotman. This painting has added to our developing collection of nineteenth-century artists and adds further colour to our view of this part of Brecon.

Figure 5. *Brecon Bridge with the Castle Beyond* by Paul Sandby Munn. Brecknock Museum

Throughout the year we have continued to develop a series of Dementia Friendly Memory Boxes for use in the local community. These have proven incredibly popular and are loaned out to organisations and carers for group work or individual engagements. Our HLF project has helped to support the purchase of some objects for this resource, but many other objects have been donated by local charity shops and our staff and volunteers, who have worked to pull together the themes and prompt cards for each unique box. However, occasionally objects have been discovered or donated which weren't suitable for the boxes, but were important enough to be added to the collection. One such items was a World War One game donated by a charity shop. Called 'The Silver Bullet', or the road to Berlin, it is a fantastic piece of WW1 Homefront propaganda and will help us illustrate what it was like to be a child at home during the War (Fig. 6).

Figure 6. "The Silver Bullet" game, a fantastic piece of WW1 Homefront propaganda. Brecknock Museum

Back in the late spring of 2016, our part-time HLF Volunteer Co-ordinator, Emily Tilling, left us for a full-time role with CITB-Construction Skills. Emily spent a year with us and brought a great deal of professionalism to the Volunteer Co-ordinator role, expanding our volunteer scheme and taking on many responsibilities, especially around the Memory Boxes. We are very grateful for the work she did. After a short gap, we were able to invite Caitlin Gingell to join the team in this important role. Caitlin has previously worked for museums in Torfaen and Newport and has had a number of volunteer development roles previously, and she has brought great skills with her. Born and raised in Brecon, we welcome Caitlin to her new role and the team.

Once again, we continue to be grateful that the collections and facilities at Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery are able to grow and develop through the enduring support of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends.

NIGEL BLACKAMORE MPhil.
Senior Curator
Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery

VICTOR JONES HISTORY PROJECT COMPETITION

The aim of the Victor Jones History Project Competition is to encourage Year Six pupils of Breconshire schools to find out and write about local history. The competition is in memory of Victor Jones, who was a founding member of the Brecknock Society, and who taught in Breconshire for 35 years. We would like to thank his family for their generous contribution to the prizes. As well as the top three prizes, there is also an Art and Design prize, and a school prize of £200 for the school that gains the greatest number of individual marks.

We had some clever Art and Design entries this year and first prize was awarded to Molly McCarthy of Cradoc School, who created an eye-catching design of a gaol door to accompany her project *The History of What Used to be Brecon Gaol* (Fig. 1). We thought the idea of a separately made key was great fun.

Figure 1. Molly McCarthy of Cradoc School: *The History of What Used to be Brecon Gaol*.

This year, as in previous years, we received a high standard of projects covering a vast array of historical topics and it was a difficult job narrowing it down. Hence, there were six 'highly commended' prizes awarded.

But for the main winners, third prize went jointly to Joseph Freeland of Llangors School and Jack Tustin of Cradoc School. Joseph wrote a very informative project about the history of his house in Llangorse called *Penbont* (Fig. 2). He provided a 'start to finish' account of the history of the house and its inhabitants and showed how it has been renovated by his family today. It was extremely interesting to read. Jack's project was called *Y Gaer* and consisted of maps, interviews, and photographs that captured the history of the local Roman fort's excavation (Fig. 3). We felt Jack had a genuine interest in the

Figure 2. Joseph Freeland of Llangors School: *Penbont*.

Figure 3. Jack Tustin of Cradoc School: *Y Gaer*.

Gaer, which was portrayed through his work. It was a very good project.

Second place went to Jodie Dickson of Llangors School. Her project was titled *St Mary the Virgin Church, Llanywern* and the judges were very impressed with Jodie's interest in her local church and how she spent a lot of time drawing a plan of the churchyard and recording the inscriptions of the gravestones (Fig. 4). This is something that has not been done before and can now be used as a source of information, which is fantastic.

Figure 4. Jodie Dickson of Llangors School: *St Mary the Virgin Church, Llanywern*.

First prize went to Lloyd Jeremiah of Crickhowell School who wrote his project on an area of Breconshire called *Twyn*, which is a small abandoned settlement on the outskirts of Crickhowell (Fig. 5). Twyn has never been written about before in this competition. Lloyd's project included census information about who used to live there, and how Twyn's men went to fight in WW1. When they did not return, the few inhabitants left were forced to leave due to the high rent charged and Twyn has been abandoned ever since. Lloyd's project also contained photographs of his visits there and he portrayed a real passion for what remains of Twyn. His project was a joy to read (Fig. 6).

Figure 5. Lloyd Jeremiah of Crickhowell School: *Twyn*.

Figure 6. The presentation. Back row: Martine Woodcock, Richard Suggett (who presented the awards), and John Gibbs. Front row: Joseph Freeland, Jodie Dickson, and Lloyd Jeremiah (Jack Tustin could not attend).

The school prize was awarded to Llangors Church in Wales School.

MARTINE WOODCOCK

ARTICLES

THE VERNACULAR HOUSES OF BRECONSHIRE: FOLLOWING JONES AND SMITH

RICHARD SUGGETT

Introduction

It was an honour to give the nineteenth Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture and a pleasure to follow previous lecturers, mostly historians and archaeologists, whose work I know and admire.[1] I was conscious that George Owen, the redoubtable Elizabethan historian, described Breconshire people as "vnrulie [unruly]" so I did my best to choose a topic that would appeal to the Society: the study of vernacular houses with particular reference to the work of Stanley Jones and John Smith. These inspirational architectural historians, whose intensive study of Breconshire houses was begun over 50 years ago, not only set new standards in recording but raised questions of interpretation and chronology that are still challenging us. At the time of the lecture, John was 93 and Stan was 89. John died in August 2016, poignantly on his 94th birthday. I had the pleasure of discussing Breconshire houses with Stan and John while I was preparing the lecture. They attributed their long lives to keeping fit, especially through the pursuit of vernacular architecture in rugged terrain: this recipe for a long and productive life I pass on to you all. An account of the *modus operandi* of Jones and Smith in the 1960s appears elsewhere in this Journal, as does a paper on the motivating Deiniol Williams, Chief Education Officer of Breconshire from 1948 to 1972, without whose enthusiasm Jones and Smith would never have explored this delectable county. I should also say that while the focus of the lecture was on the houses of Breconshire, I felt free to draw on examples from neighbouring counties, particularly Radnorshire, when this seemed appropriate.[2] But to begin my presentation, I first paid tribute to Sir John Lloyd, remembered through the name of the lecture, a founder of the Brecknock Society and one who galvanised the Society into saving Tretower Court and presenting it to the nation in a noble and far-sighted act of generosity.[3]

Trewalter as a starting point

With so much architectural richness in Breconshire, it was difficult to know where best to start the lecture. However, I set the scene with a wall painting recorded in a derelict house called Trewalter, near Llangorse (Fig. 1). The house was found by the Royal Commission in 1967, abandoned and unroofed in a farmyard. It was something of a miracle that it had survived into the mid-twentieth century and no surprise that it has now gone. The loss of Trewalter

emphasises the fragile nature of our architectural inheritance and the importance of making a record for posterity when there is the opportunity. The wall painting serves to demonstrate that (whatever old black-and-white photographs may suggest) our ancestors lived in a world of colour and design. Moreover, they had some decided preferences about how to organise a house.

In its day, Trewalter was a substantial house. Increasing dereliction allowed the Commission to record the house in unusual detail, and a reconstruction drawing was featured in Peter Smith's classic survey, *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* (Fig. 2).[4] Subsequently, an early-eighteenth-century prospect of the front (south) elevation has been discovered in a map volume delineating the estate of Walter Pryse, esquire (Fig. 3).[5] The drawing adds some significant detail to what was known already, although it presents the coursed rubble walling of Trewalter as if it was ashlar-like masonry topped by a boldly moulded eaves course! The house had two full storeys but the drawing omits the first-floor windows and shows dormer windows in the roof, revealing that there were habitable attics or garrets. The house was entered from a porch and the broad entrance passage behind the central chimney stack is technically called a hearth-passage. This plan resembles the famous longhouse plan, then ubiquitous in the area, except that at Trewalter the downhouse was a parlour rather than a cowhouse.

Figure 1. Trewalter (Llangorse): parlour wallpainting.

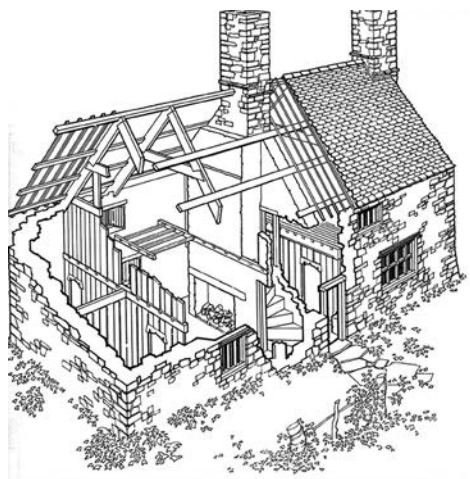


Figure 2. Trewalter (Llangorse): cutaway drawing by RCAHMW. Smith 1998: Fig. 102

Figure 3. Trewalter (Llangorse): south Prospect as depicted in the survey of the estates of Walter Pryse, esquire, by John Withy, 1738. NLW, MS Map Volume 40

Trewalter was full of moulded timber detail, including stop-chamfered beams, post-and-panel partitions, and ornate door-heads. The principal doorway had an inscription on a shaped door-head, which, with difficulty, was deciphered: DEVS NOBIS HÆC OTIA FECIT : W: L : : [/] ANNO DOMINI 1653 W: L :: This Latin motto (also adopted by the city of Liverpool) conventionally translates as 'God gave us our leisure'. W.L. has been identified as William Lewis (1598–1677), whose life was rather remarkable.[6]

Lewis was the grandson of a Brecon mercer and inherited a substantial estate. Following marriage to a Hampshire widow, he pursued a public career in the south of England and was elected MP for Petersfield in 1640. He was a Presbyterian and Parliamentarian but was forced by the army to withdraw from Parliament in 1647 and was apparently treated with 'particular severity' at Pride's Purge, not being released until 1651. Lewis evidently retired to his Breconshire estate and remained there until the Restoration.[7] The inscription no doubt records Lewis's relief and gratitude for his enforced but safe retirement. The house that he completed in 1653 was comfortable in the vernacular tradition of the region with a distinctive plan and architectural detail.[8] We are used to the idea that the Englishman's house was his castle. By contrast, the Welshman's house was his delight, and, in early modern Wales, householders often chose to build rather lavishly.

The shaped door-head from Trewalter deserves contemplation for its vernacular quality (Fig. 4). Shaped door-heads are a distinctive regional feature largely restricted to Radnorshire, Breconshire, and Monmouthshire. About 100 sites were mapped in *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*, but new examples regularly come to light.[9] It is a regional style but, at the same time, the scrolls and rolls—a combination of the ovolo and the ogee—are part of an international decorative vocabulary ('Renaissance' in Fox and Raglan's terminology[10]) that was adopted in farmhouse and cottage from about 1600 and graced beams, windows, and doorways.

Vernacular is a slippery word. It suggests the idea of buildings that are traditional in design and locally rooted. Certainly, they are built of local

Figure 4. Trewalter: the doorhead.

materials but plans and building styles can change radically. During *c.* 1500–1700, houses changed profoundly from timber-built open halls to stone-built storeyed houses, showing that vernacular houses can be innovative as well as apparently 'traditional'. Vernacular architecture is not unchanging. We must remember that there is always choice in architecture: choice of building materials, choice of siting, and choice of plans.

Timber Dating in Breconshire

We know a great deal about the houses of Breconshire thanks to the work of Jones and Smith, which was published in seven remarkable parts in *Brycheiniog* 1963–72, revealing the astonishing architectural inheritance of the county.[11] Jones and Smith were continually tackling problems of chronology in 'The Houses of Breconshire'. It is always necessary to consider the question that Jones and Smith were continually asking as they tackled the problems of interpretation and phasing: 'How old is this building?' This is always a challenging question and answers are often informed by comparisons with other sites, but comparative dates can be wrong, sometimes wildly so. Date inscriptions are relatively few and, even where they exist, can be tantalisingly weathered. The distribution maps in *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* show that there are about nine date inscriptions in Breconshire between 1600–1649, and that there are only four dated houses before 1600.[12] The earliest (apparently) is College Farm, Trefeca, where the inscribed date of 1576 (supported by 'Batavian' angels) has weathered away since it was read by Theophilus Jones, who corrected an earlier, optimistic reading of 1176![13]

Secure dating is, of course, fundamental for the study of building history and now, thanks to dendrochronology (the science of tree-ring dating), structural timbers can be dated precisely. If a timber has a good series of growth rings (more than 75), complete sapwood with the rounded surface ('waney edge') where the bark was, then it is possible to obtain an exact felling date after analysis. Finding suitable buildings for tree-ring dating is something of a challenge as many fine buildings have structural timbers that have grown too rapidly to be suitable for analysis. Nevertheless, perhaps one in three of the buildings assessed in Breconshire had some slow-grown timber which sometimes included sapwood. It is perhaps a surprise to learn that building timber, especially in roofs, can retain complete sapwood and sometimes even the bark itself. Since we know that timber was generally used green and seasoned *in situ*, a felling date obtained by dendrochronology generally provides the date of construction to within a year or two.[14]

Two cautionary remarks should be made about tree-ring dating: it is expensive (currently about £750 per building period) and a building may have several building periods. To spend a budget wisely one must select significant or characteristic buildings rather than attractive fragments or those with

tenuous historical associations. Collaboration is the best way forward, and during 2015/16 the Royal Commission in partnership with the Brecknock Society has successfully investigated a range of historic houses informed by the richness of Jones and Smith's 'Houses of Breconshire'. It is an exciting moment. At last we have precise dates for some of Breconshire's important but characteristic vernacular buildings (listed chronologically in the Appendix).

In Breconshire, we are fortunate that tree-ring dating has been successful despite a fair amount of fast-grown timber. There have been some excellent results, yielding precise felling dates, and this information fits in well with other tree-ring data obtained over the past few years for some individual sites. Chronologies for Breconshire now stretch back from the eighteenth century to the early and mid-medieval period, that is, before the Norman conquest to the age of the Welsh princes. Indeed, Breconshire has a greater range of tree-ring dated sites than any other Welsh county.

The earliest tree-ring dates are among the most spectacular: ninth-century dates were obtained from the timber palisade of the crannog at Llangorse. To be precise, the oak trees for the main structure were cut down during 889–893 AD. Excavation of the site, between 1988 and 1994, showed that the crannog was occupied only for a short time before it was burnt and abandoned. Remarkably the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that in 916 AD Brecenanmere ('Brecknock Mere'), was destroyed by the Mercian queen Æthelflæd, and that she captured the wife of the king of Brecon and thirty-three others.[15] There is, therefore, a gratifyingly convincing fit between tree-ring dates and documentary sources.

Moving forward dendrochronologically to the Norman conquest of Breconshire, there is little surviving timberwork to sample. However, we live in hope of dating the great gate at Hay Castle (Fig. 5). I must emphasise how important this gate is. It is one of very few surviving early castle gates and probably the only one *in situ*. The gate has two leaves or doors of different design; dendrochronology has shown that one leaf is a replacement of *c.* 1600. The earlier cross-braced leaf is constructed from fast-grown timber and unsuitable for tree-ring dating. However, remarkably, the timber lining of the associated draw-bar socket survives

Figure 5. Hay Castle: the great gate.

with some 200 rings (but without sapwood). If tree-ring dating fails, then recourse will be had to precision radiocarbon dating.

Some early timber survives in the priory complex founded in the lordship centre at Brecon by Bernard de Neufmarché and vested in Battle Abbey. Rather unexpectedly the Royal Commission discovered the remains of an early roof above the old Deanery (now the Diocesan Centre).[16] The relatively slight smoke-blackened trusses of this collar-rafter roof are astonishingly old and were made from timber felled in the thirteenth century between 1235–70 (Fig. 6). It needs to be emphasised that this is a fragmentary roof and that most roofs were reconstructed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Figure 6. Priory House, Brecon: thirteenth-century roof-truss in the old Deanery.

It is instructive to compare this plain roof with the precisely dated roof over the chancel in the priory church. The roof is now concealed by a nineteenth-century vault. To reach the roof you make an exciting journey through the wall passages before finally arriving in the tower and dropping down on the top of the wafer-thin and very dusty vault. There you can see one of the hidden treasures of the cathedral: the low-pitched chancel roof with elaborate decorative detail including trefoiled arcading and floral bosses (Fig. 7). The

Figure 7. Brecon Cathedral: the ornate mid-fifteenth-century roof of the Priory chancel.

roof originally covered the chancel of the priory church with its famous rood. It was painted and studded with lead stars, originally painted gold.[17] This spectacular roof has been precisely dated by dendrochronology to 1443/44.

These two pre-Reformation roofs at Brecon Priory provide an instructive contrast between the utilitarian and the spectacular. At some point between 1300–1400 the roof developed into an expression of high craft if not a work of art. In Wales, almost every church roof was renewed in the later Middle Ages; there is only one known exception.[18] New decorative roofs were regarded as essential improvements for churches after 1400, as were rood lofts, wall-paintings and other features.

Houses of Manorial status

Are there any houses contemporary with the splendid roof at Brecon Cathedral? The most complete site is, of course, Tretower Court. The exceptional sixteenth-century bird's-eye view in the earl of Worcester's estate survey (1587) allows us to take a near-contemporary look at it (Fig. 8)[19] and we can identify the castle, courtyard ranges of the Court, and the village. In many respects the Court replaced the castle, although assemblies of tenants still took place on the green in front of the castle. Tretower was an ambitious manorial courtyard complex. A chapel (rebuilt in the nineteenth century) faces the gateway and embattled wall of the outer court. A very impressive barn (now reduced to footings) and

Figure 8. Tretower Court in 1587, as depicted in the survey of the Seignory of Crickhowell and Tretower. NLW, Badminton Volume 3

stable (later cowhouse) flank the east side of the outer court, and included some domestic accommodation with a fireplace in the stable loft. To enter the inner court the visitor had to proceed through the intimidating gatehouse past the scrutiny of the porter. The hall lay straight across the inner courtyard with the principal doorway aligned with the gatehouse. Guest accommodation lay on the right. The three-bay hall was suitably magnificent for the half-brother of an earl (Fig. 9). The high end of the hall with its table and screen was framed visually by the central archbraced truss of the hall decorated with a quatrefoil flanked by trefoils at its apex. There were three tiers of trefoiled windbraces and a moulded cornice. It was an early example of the regional vernacular with stone walls combined with magnificent timberwork, and the hall chimney on the lateral wall was present from the outset.

Figure 9. Tretower Court: interior of the great hall.

The dating of Tretower Court has been uncertain. Architectural historians have made its building history unnecessarily complicated by identifying many different building periods.[20] There has been much discussion about the relative phasing of the west (hall) and north (guest) ranges and their relation to other buildings. Tree-ring dating has simplified this by showing that the outer court buildings and the inner court ranges are essentially one prolonged building phase dating from the mid-fifteenth century and therefore attributable to Sir Roger Vaughan (Rosser Fychan). A precise felling date of 1455/56 has given a secure date for the hall, and felling-date ranges for the north wing and stable are consistent with this. Roger Vaughan must have begun work on his new Court soon after he was granted Tretower by his half-brother, Sir William Herbert of Raglan, in the mid-fifteenth century. Roger Vaughan was styled 'of Tretower' in 1457 and he enjoyed the Court until his unfortunate execution in 1471 at the hands of Jasper Tudor. Tretower, like Raglan, was a centre of bardic patronage but the poets have little to say in detail about its architecture although they appreciated the hospitality offered at Rosser Fychan's *plas*. A recent study suggests that 'more pressing political issues crowded out the house from the poetry.'[21]

Other high-status sites that are broadly contemporary with Tretower include Great Porthaml, possibly built by Roger, second son of Sir Roger Vaughan. Porthaml was the centre of a little lordship of the same name and had all the trappings of a great house. Porthaml of course means the capacious gatehouse and the "fair gate" seen by Leland in the 1530s survives, although the "strong waul embatelid" has gone.[22] Great Porthaml had a great open hall graced by a remarkable roof that was rediscovered by Jones and Smith. They made a roof crawl over the inserted ceiling and recorded a scissor-braced roof of great originality that has few parallels.[23]

The Gentry Houses of Breconshire

Tretower and Porthaml are essentially houses of manorial status. I want now to deal with the houses that belonged to the gentry, generally one or two in each parish. This was a class that was influential at a local level but participated in a national Welsh culture as patrons of the bards. Poetry and genealogy are a privileged source material for the historian of Welsh houses. Generally, with some archival effort, one can identify a family associated with a late-medieval gentry house. Medieval gentry halls show an unexpected capacity to survive. In Radnorshire, where exploration was thorough, we suggested that the fabric of some forty percent of medieval gentry houses survived in one form or another. Fewer gentry halls survive in Breconshire but some of the survivors are rather impressive, particularly the relatively early stone-walled halls. Thus Neuadd (Partrishow), which preserves its proportions and architectural detail (Fig. 10), captured the imagination of Jones and Smith as a building which, while relatively small, originally "must have presented a dignified and impressive internal appearance appropriate to an owner of some social standing".[24]

Figure 10. Neuadd (Partrisio): front elevation.

The plans of these gentry hall-houses are revealingly uniform and clearly shown in Stanley Jones' drawing of a typical example[25] (Fig. 11). These houses invariably have a two-bay open hall set between storeyed ends. They are instantly recognisable from the ornate central truss of the hall, which was invariably archbraced and often cusped, at once the pride and joy of the owner of the hall. There is still one building which conveys the proportions of the late-medieval open hall untouched by restoration or later use: this is Maestorglwyd Barn in Llanigon, first described by Jones and Smith.[26] Maestorglwyd Barn retains the characteristic downslope siting and much original walling, including impressive cross-passage doorways (Fig. 12). It seems never to have had a hall floor or

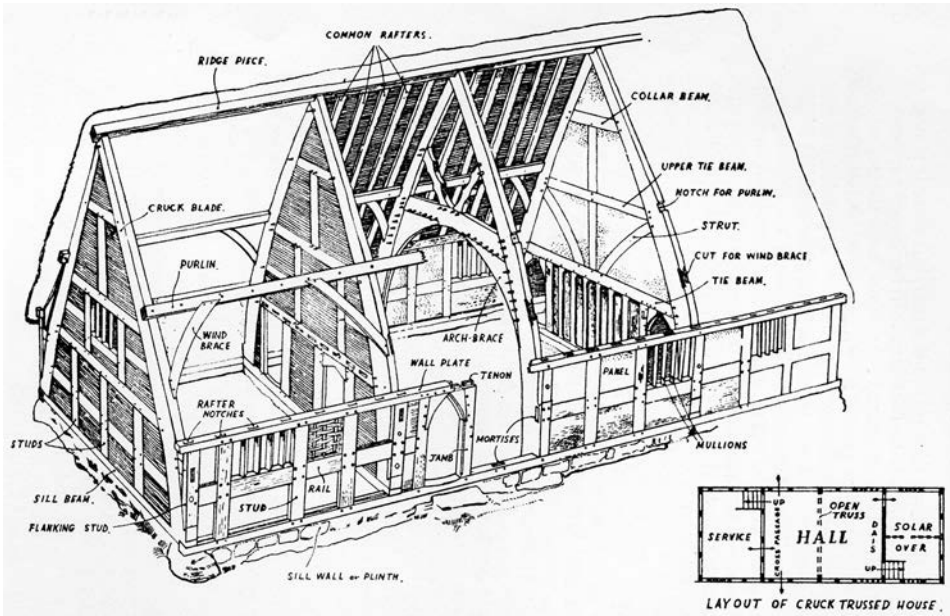


Figure 11. Reconstruction of a cruck-framed hall-house by Stanley Jones.

Jones and Smith 1963: Fig. 1

fireplace inserted, and it became an agricultural building still with the hall remaining open to the roof. To stand in Maestorglwyd Barn is to experience the aesthetic of the open hall and to glimpse (through the accumulation of agricultural implements) the architectural power of the heavily-bayed roof defined by the prominent cruck trusses (Fig. 13). The eye takes in the central truss and beyond it the dais seat where the bench and table were framed by the trefoiling of the dais-end truss.

Figure 12. Maestorglwyd Barn (Llanigon): detail of cross-passage doorway.

Figure 13. Maestorglwyd Barn (Llanigon): interior.

Maestorglwyd Barn remains to be fully sampled to provide a date. It is cruck-trussed, like many late-medieval halls, but it has features of construction not found elsewhere, notably the trefoiled dais-end truss. The masonry walls with pointed doorways of tabular stone are very probably original; certainly, the wallplate does not have obvious mortices for wallframing.[27] Jones and Smith suggested that it was a fifteenth-century hall-house. Certainly, the pointed profile of the cross-passage doorways and the archbraced central truss indicate a building date in the earlier rather than the later part of the century. The pointed archbracing at Maestorglwyd is closer to Llangwathen (1418), a few miles away in Hay (Cusop), both having cranked collars, than the more characteristic flattened or rounded arch of later gentry halls, beginning with Great House, Newton (1450).[28] Tree-ring dating elsewhere in Wales has shown that gentry halls generally date from the middle of the fifteenth century to the early-sixteenth century. There is one securely dated Breconshire example. This is Wenallt-isaf (Llanigon), another of Jones and Smith's discoveries. Characteristically it was originally built of timber, and later had a stone chimney built against the central truss, which sacrificed the original proportions of the hall for the comfort of the fireplace. Tree-ring dating shows that it was built about 1485.[29]

It is not only the appearance of these diminutive aristocratic houses that is remarkable but their steady accumulation during the second half of the fifteenth century. The poets celebrated these houses emphasising their lavish construction and hospitality. A recent overview lists well over sixty poems to Breconshire patrons.[30] Of particular interest are the poems of Hywel Dafi, a Breconshire poet who flourished between 1440–85 and sang to many Breconshire patrons in some 30 houses. Two of these poems celebrate the building of a new house and were probably recited in the house after it was completed.[31]

The first poem praises the new house of Morgan ap Rhys, the parson of Merthyr Cynog, which had been built next to the church. The vicarage was rebuilt in the nineteenth century, unfortunately, but one can still imagine the 'quartered' gardens ("vegetable beds extending in all directions") and see farm buildings pressing against the churchyard wall, all mentioned by the poet. The parson's wide new house was built of timber and lime-washed and, to the poet, resembled a ship. Remarkably it had a square chimney which, according to Hywel Dafi, was like those of houses in Paris (although "the French would not know half its cost!"), and inside there was a dressed-stone fireplace ("keeping us from fever"). The poet refers to the parson's table "with food of all sorts", his cupboard (where he kept the things for the table), and his bed, which was presumably in the inner parlour-bedroom.[32] These recall the three principal items of furniture which are discussed below.

Hywel Dafi's second house poem praises the hall of Gwilym ap Hywel of Argoed, a wooded area in Llanfihangel Fechan to the north of Brecon. The

poet compares Gwilym's hall at Argoed to Ehangwen, the legendary hall of Arthur, to the earl of Warwick's court, and the buildings of Bath. It is clear from the poem that the house is timber-framed with a roof of tile-stones. The great trusses with big purlins were quite capable of carrying a heavy roof of stone tiles. The house was undoubtedly lime-washed because the poet says its walls were white like houses on Anglesey. 'Rods' ran through the walls, a reference to the framing or its infill. The timber frame itself was described as like the houses of Warwick. This possibly means that the hall at Argoed was jettied like many town houses. Above all Argoed was a hospitable house. In the *mwd*—a rare word apparently meaning cellar—there was wine and mead.[33]

Peasant Halls and Longhouses

I want now to turn to another type of house—the peasant hall. This was the home of the majority of tenants in the lordship of Brecon. Whereas tree-ring dating has established that gentry houses were being built in the second half of the fifteenth century, we now know that peasant halls were constructed in the first half of the sixteenth century, particularly around the middle of the century.

The poets have some unkind things to say about peasants. They contrast the delights of the fair gentry hall with the wretched home-made houses with turf roofs of the peasants. This was part of an elite European literary tradition that generally mocked the rusticity of the peasants: peasants dressed differently, ate different foods, occupied poor dwellings, provided inadvertent amusement, and so on. Despite all this, some peasants became consumers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and their houses are an assertion of a freer identity.[34] The peasant with silver and even gold to spend was a novel and somewhat disconcerting figure. In early-sixteenth century Wales, including Breconshire, peasants chose to spend their money on houses. These houses were scaled down versions of gentry halls, smaller in size but with the same hierarchical plan. The characteristic peasant dwelling with a single-bay hall was first identified in Radnorshire but examples have been found in Montgomeryshire, and in north-west Wales. Most are fragmentary but can usually be identified from the cruck surviving at the back of the inserted chimney at the passage end of the house. The hall was reduced but the passage between house and cowhouse was preserved. Several examples were recorded by Jones and Smith that we can now identify as peasant halls.[35]

Thousands of peasant halls were built throughout Wales and they form the historic core of many of our farmhouses. They are readily recognisable from their siting: the peasant hall-house was characteristically downslope-sited on the hill side at the edge of the unenclosed land. Peasant dwellings, like gentry hall-houses, were generally cruck-trussed with blades fashioned from hillside oaks with strong lateral branches. Survey drawings of the Radnorshire

examples show how they were scaled down versions of gentry halls complete with high and low ends. Houses were inseparable from assertions of identity, and the peasant sitting in his own hall was very much his own man.[36]

The best Breconshire example is Llannerch-y-cawr in the Claerwen Valley (Fig. 14). It was one of the first houses that Jones and Smith examined and it made a deep impression on them as an authentic ('true') longhouse with intercommunicating house and cowhouse under the same roof.[37] This exceptional building preserves the core of a sixteenth-century longhouse in its unrelenting landscape setting of rocks, glades, and tumbling water. The landscape itself is associated with legend: Llannerch-y-cawr means the giant's glade or clearing and the name is traceable to the sixteenth century.[38] Llannerch-y-cawr presented characteristic problems of interpretation: what was the original plan, when was it built, was it first built with timber or stone walls, had the chimney been inserted?

Figure 14. Llannerch-y-cawr (Llanwrthwl) after restoration.

Two principal building phases can be identified along with several episodes of repair and modification. The first phase was a substantial stone-walled peasant hall-house with cruck trusses. There was a lofty single-bayed hall with a post-and-panel partition at the upper end and passage and cowhouse at the lower end. Llannerch-y-cawr has a marked resemblance to Nannerth-ganol in Radnorshire. Tree-ring dating has established that the timber used to build Nannerth-ganol was felled in 1555 and Llannerch-y-cawr must be broadly contemporary. Remarkably, the identity of the probable builder is known. In 1548, Lewis ap Ieuan Llewelyn Moythe is recorded as having bought Tir Llannerch-y-cawr, and probably built the hall-house. The second building phase came when his son, Edward Lewis, leased the house to William Edward in 1579. Several years later the chimney was inserted: the fireplace beam was shaped from oak felled in winter 1588/9. At this point Llannerch-y-cawr became a longhouse in the accepted sense of an intercommunicating house and byre range separated by the central chimney and cross-passage.[39]

As we have said, tree-ring dates are important for contextualising houses and for constructing narratives for houses that are mostly without a documented history. The dates already obtained for peasant halls suggest that they were built in the first half of the sixteenth century, particularly around the middle of the century. They assumed their longhouse plan-form a generation later, from about 1575, with the insertion of a chimney. These longhouses were the dwellings of relatively prosperous pastoral farmers. They were built from the profits of the cattle-rearing economy which took advantage of extensive upland

grazing. As there was cattle raising, so there was cattle theft. Cattle theft from afar was, in a sense, fair game but it was a dangerous game as it was a hanging felony. As one contemporary observer grimly put it, theft would never be eradicated from Wales as the daily experience of hanging showed. Cattle theft actually increased during the course of the sixteenth century before it declined in the seventeenth century. The longhouse, especially the strong stone-built longhouse, was not only a convenience for over-wintering prime cattle but a prudent architectural response to cattle theft.[40]

Proliferating Parlours

The longhouse was the characteristic vernacular house in seventeenth-century rural Breconshire. Jones and Smith tended to divide longhouses into several categories—true, false and vestigial, the latter type having lost the cowhouse. True longhouses retained clear evidence of the original plan with intercommunication between the dwelling house on the uphill part of the slope and the cowhouse further down. Some began as a hall-house and had a chimney inserted, later examples had a chimney from the outset. False longhouses—the majority— were those where the original arrangements had been disguised by later alterations. The false or (better termed) transformed longhouses are an interesting architectural phenomenon.

Transformed longhouses were to be found everywhere with the downhouse (the 'down slope' part of the building) converted from a cowhouse into domestic accommodation. The cowhouse was sometimes rebuilt as a kitchen but, most commonly, it became a parlour: the essential addition to the seventeenth-century vernacular house for anyone who was anyone or had pretensions to be somebody. This had wonderful consequences for the quality of architectural detail. The development of the parlour as a best reception or sitting room led to the widespread adoption of ovolo-moulded woodwork, decorative plasterwork, and wall-paintings, not to mention superior furniture and furnishings.

The farmhouse parlour became ubiquitous, but when did this desirable room arrive and where had it come from? Undoubtedly, it derived from the new storeyed gentry houses that were built in many parishes in Radnorshire, Breconshire, and Monmouthshire in the late-sixteenth century. The winged gentry houses of the Welsh Marches adopted a new type of planning, which reversed the hierarchy of the hall-house, so that the best room was near the entry and not in its traditional position beyond the hall. This was a revolution in planning: the projecting cross-wing of the new storeyed gentry house announced that this was a house with a new parlour.

One of the most illuminating examples is Llanddewi Hall, Radnorshire.[41] The Royal Commission's cutaway drawing shows the distinctive cross-wing containing kitchen and parlour with the hall on the other side of the entrance

Figure 15. Llanddewi Hall (Llanddewi, Radnorshire): cutaway reconstruction drawing of the storeyed house with parlour cross-wing at the entry.

Suggett 2005: Fig. 155

passage (Fig. 15). A novel aspect of Llanddewi Hall was that room use was announced by distinctive shaped doorheads. The parlour doorhead has an angel-like figure with diadem; the kitchen doorhead displays a rabbit's head. Rabbits were of course a rather high-status food before they escaped from the warrens. In Breconshire, College Farm (already noted for its 1576 date inscription) provides an early example of a storeyed house with parlour cross-wing, although now much altered.[42] Parlours proliferated in the larger gentry houses with seasonal (summer and winter) parlours as well as dining parlours, notably at Old Gwernyfed (1585/6), where there is not only a parlour between hall and kitchen but a parlour wing beyond the hall (Fig. 16).

Figure 16. Old Gwernyfed: front elevation with ruined parlour wing.

With houses of longhouse type (the majority), the introduction of a new parlour brought significant problems of planning. In some farmhouses, the parlour developed as a rear wing off the hall. This was trying to have the best of both worlds—to have a parlour and retain the cowhouse. Gilfach, Radnorshire is a good example where a parlour wing with eye-catching framing was built in the seventeenth century and the cowhouse retained in its traditional position. Cilewent, from the Radnorshire side of the Claerwen, but now re-erected in St

Fagans National History Museum, is a late example where the cowhouse was reconstructed in the eighteenth century (1732) but was still in range with the house and the parlour was housed in a rear wing projecting off the hall.[43]

Another and generally early solution was to enlarge the twin inner-rooms as a single large parlour. The best example of this development is a house significantly called 'Parlour' in Dingestow, Monmouthshire.[44] Clearly the new parlour was such a novelty that it led to the renaming of the house. The revealing name 'Parlour' occurs elsewhere in Wales, including Gwynedd. There are at least three examples on Anglesey and another three in Caernarfonshire, including the splendidly names Parlwr-mawr, otherwise the Archbishop's House, in Conwy. In the Dingestow example, a large room with fireplace and elaborated fenestration was added to the end of the hall. Large windows flank a fixed settle with panelled back. This arrangement serves to emphasise that the parlour was—above all—a room for sitting in rather than working in. Large parlours were created at the upper end of some Breconshire houses, notably at The Elms, Talgarth, where the parlour is almost as big as the hall and lit by a still-perfect four-light ovolo-moulded mullioned window (Fig. 17).[45] Tree-ring dating has established that the timber in The Elms was felled in 1622/3.

Figure 17. The Elms (Talgarth): parlour window with ovolo moulding.

In a longhouse, the rear parlour wing and the upper-end parlour all had problems of access in the sense that visitors had to traipse through the hall or working part of the house to get to them. The most convenient solution was to have the parlour at the entry by adapting the downhouse, even if this this meant sacrificing the integral cowhouse and building a replacement elsewhere. If proof for this were needed, it is provided by the fact that, at some sites, tethering beams have incongruously survived in the reconstructed downhouse. There are examples at Llangwathen (Hay) and Pen-y-bryn (Llangattock), the latter with two tethering beams (see below), and another at Aberhoyw (Llangynidr), which may have been reconstructed as early as 1617.

Transforming the Longhouse: Tyn-y-llwyn, Pen-y-bryn, and Trewalter

Houses regarded as traditional were in fact transformed twice between 1550 and 1650. First, came the transition from open-hall houses to storeyed houses, often as longhouses; secondly longhouses were transformed into parloured houses. The chronology of transformation is becoming clearer with tree-ring dating. Houses can be dated approximately from the architectural detail but

only tree-ring dating supplies the exact dates needed for a secure chronology, as the examples of Tyn-y-llwyn and Pen-y-bryn show.

Tyn-y-llwyn (Partrishow) makes an interesting case-study of the transformation of a house over several generations. Tyn-y-llwyn was clearly an important house and is dramatically downslope-sited, forming a striking grouping with Partrishow church. We are fortunate that Tyn-y-llwyn was documented in all its complexity by Pamela Redwood and Jenny Barnes in the 1980s.[46] I particularly appreciate their photograph of Len Parker, who devoted much time to the conservation of Tyn-y-llwyn, looking up at his distinctively sited farmhouse. The house has an extreme form of platformed siting that occurs only in late-medieval houses. The farmstead has become large and complicated but the core of the site is the downslope linear range divided into lower and upper houses by the central chimney and the hearth passage running behind it. The diagonally-set chimneys on the lower gable announce that this is the parlour end of the house. In addition, there is a residential wing, originally with separate ground-floor doorway and a first-floor heated chamber; this was "a house within a house", to use Fox and Raglan's phrase for a small but apparently distinct subsidiary domestic unit within the main house (Fig. 18).

Figure 18. Tyn-y-llwyn (Partrisio): elevation from the east.

Tyn-y-llwyn, like so many vernacular houses, has the combination of substantial stone walls and lavish internal timberwork that has the capacity to overwhelm the visitor with an impression of craftsmanship and continuity. It reminds one of Peter Smith's remark that there are many unforgettable farmhouse interiors behind rough and often unprepossessing walls: "heavy, dark, richly carved oak ceiling beams glinting here and there as mouldings catch the light, the substantial wooden partitions and the extraordinary massive oak door frames, all giving the impression of substance and weight, of being built by craftsmen larger than life".[47]

So, let us go into the house.[48] The visitor is immediately aware of a massive door-frame with an early plank door. This is the entrance to a cross-passage, fully five feet wide with heavy doors at each end, which are secured by draw-bars. Security was evidently an important consideration here. The wide passage that runs at the back of the chimney is the ubiquitous hearth-passage and doubtless occupies the footprint of the medieval cross-passage. Turning at the side of the fireplace, one enters the hall and is confronted by the solid oak post-and-panel partition and heavy beamed ceiling with a characteristic curved

stop and fillet at the beam ends. If, on the other hand, visitors turned right when entering the house, they went directly into the parlour. The parlour is dominated by the gable-end fireplace with its quasi-armorial decoration of two fleurs-de-lys set point to point flanked by gryphons corralled within a swag (Fig. 19). This has the distinctive ovolo moulding, which Fox and Raglan identified as essentially post-Elizabethan (*c.*1625–75), but more characteristic of the first-half than the second-half of the seventeenth century.[49]

Figure 19. Tyn-y-llwyn (Partrisio): detail of the parlour fireplace beam.

We know from an older roof line that the parlour range has replaced an earlier downhouse, presumably a cowhouse range. What date was the earlier range? Tree-ring dating has now established that the medieval house was rebuilt with timber felled in the late 1590s. The house is fully storeyed with attics. The roof timbers, no longer on show, retain bark edge so that several precise felling dates were obtained. Fifty years later, the splendid parlour range was built. Fortunately, we know when it was finished. In the right light a 1649 date inscription with initials can be discerned on the base of the cluster of diagonally-set chimneys.[50] The initials are repeated on the brackets of the fireplace. Despite rebuilding, the cross-passage has remained a constant of the plan and the late-sixteenth-century door-frames were retained during the mid-seventeenth century rebuilding.

The development of Tyn-y-llwyn is an example of alternate rebuilding, a process first described by Fox and Raglan and used by Jones and Smith to explain the plans derived from longhouses. We will look at one more Breconshire example of a transformed longhouse in which the interpretation has been informed by some precise tree-ring dating. Pen-y-bryn (Llangatwg) is another remarkable house first described by Jones and Smith, who drew attention to the different roof lines of upper and lower ends (Fig. 20).[51] It remains little altered from the survey in 1960s. One enters the cross-passage through a substantial doorway and turns into the hall at the side of the chimney (Fig. 21). The entrance is marked by a shaped doorhead set on an ovolo-moulded doorframe, both features characteristic of the first half of the seventeenth century. In the hall, a

Figure 20. Pen-y-bryn (Llangatwg): front elevation with stepped roof line.

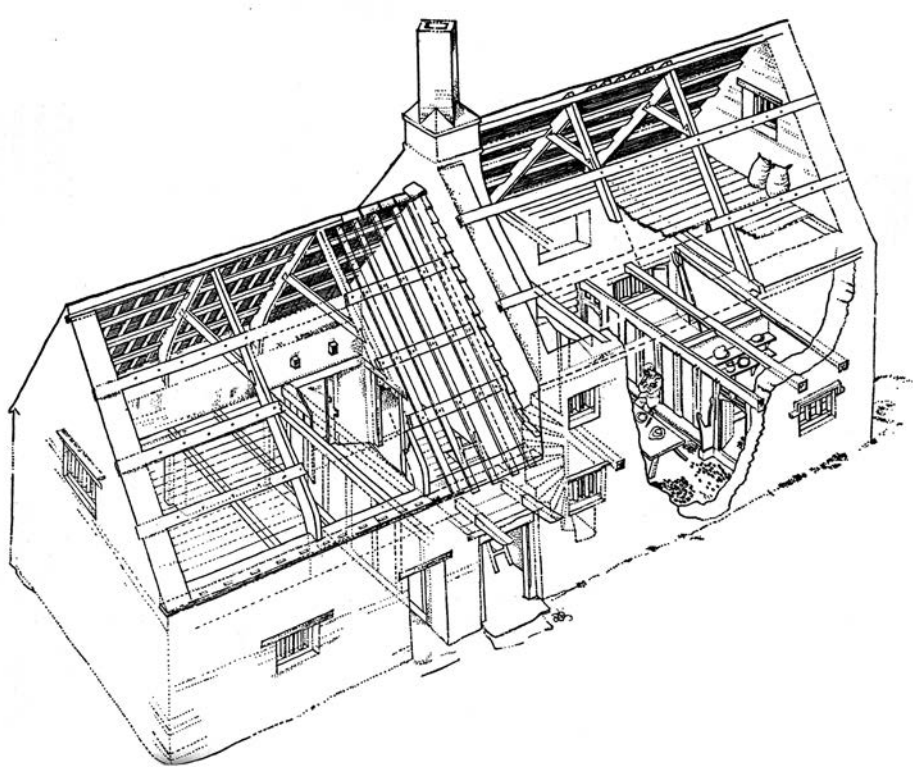


Figure 21. The C17th longhouse: a cutaway reconstruction by Stanley Jones based on Pen-y-bryn. Jones and Smith 1966-67: Figure 15

classic post-and-panel partition retains further shaped doorheads over the doorways into the twin inner-rooms. Not only does the dais-end bench survive between the doorways (in itself an extraordinary survival) but the seat retains a substantial bench end (compare Fig. 22).

If we turn to the downhouse, two tethering beams show that it was undoubtedly once a cowhouse. Tree-ring dating has established that Pen-y-bryn was built as a house-and-byre range about 1625/6. A small lateral fireplace shows that a parlour was constructed within the downhouse sometime later. When the downhouse was brought into domestic use, the beams were adjusted and the trusses raised. Nevertheless Pen-y-bryn still retained the distinctive dropped roof line of the (upper) house and (lower) passage and cowhouse ranges.

The adherence to the hearth-passage (longhouse) plan in Breconshire is impressive. Pen-y-bryn shows that classic ('true') longhouses were still being built in the early-seventeenth century. Conversion of the downhouse (cowhouse) to a parlour certainly occurs by the mid-seventeenth century, as

at Tyn-y-llwyn, creating the 'false' (transformed) longhouse. We can now return to Trewalter and see that it was built in the longhouse tradition but with the outer room planned from the start as a parlour rather than a cowhouse. The house has a continuous roof line unlike many transformed longhouses.

There is some revealing information about room use at Trewalter. It has already been established that Trewalter was built by William Lewis in 1653. By 1660s Thomas Lewis (probably William's brother) was living at Trewalter and he died there in 1680. His will and inventory have survived and we can follow (using Fig. 3) the appraisers from the "great parlor", where they must have convened, to the "entry" or passage (noting "two benches and an old cubbord") and the hall and twin inner-rooms (buttery and "little parlor") beyond. The kitchen, which was full of utensils, was a detached building in the yard. The appraisers proceeded upstairs using the fireplace stair and inventoried the chambers over the principal rooms, including the "wanscoate chamber" over the great parlour, and examined the contents of the old trunks in the garret in the roof space.[52]

What went on in these new parlours? They were certainly best rooms featuring large glazed windows, well-finished fireplaces, decorative plasterwork, and wall paintings—as at Trewalter. They were rooms for entertaining and were designed to impress. The parlour was for sitting in and might have quite a large assortment of chairs. At Trewalter there were 18 ("one dozen and a halfe") "Turk[e]y" chairs in the great parlour, presumably set against the walls, as well as four green chairs "whereof one is a greate chaire", andirons (fire-dogs) with other implements, and three green cloth carpets.[53] At Trewalter the "little parlour" with its standing bedstead was differentiated from the "great parlour". The little parlour was one of the twin inner-rooms beyond the hall and essentially a parlour-bedroom at the upper end of the house alongside a service-room. Early-seventeenth-century wills sometimes refer to the parlour bed: "the best bed where she lies in the parlour" (1610); the "standing bedstead in the parlour where I lye" (1612), and so on.[54] But these refer to an inner-room rather than the parlour at the entry. The inner parlour-bedroom lingered until the eighteenth century in smaller farmhouses. Indeed, Jones and Smith recorded one example at Blaensenni where a bed recess survived alongside the eighteenth century plastered parlour. Parlours at the entry were still being built in the eighteenth century. One recorded by Jones and Smith at Blaen-crai has the inscription "WGA Built this Apartment 1759".[55]

The development of the parlour is linked with privacy. In the grander Monmouthshire houses they can be rather like self-contained apartments. However, this privacy is not to be understood as the desire for the seclusion of a room of one's own (that came later) but as a kind of retreat from the activity

of the hall and routines of family and servants. The parlour was the place where the householder was at one remove spatially from the activities of the household and could meet and entertain social equals. The hierarchy of the hall was not maintained in the parlour as the proliferation of chairs shows (although there was occasionally a 'great' chair). The parlour was not a substitute for the hall; the dignity of the hall was maintained in the seventeenth century and, perhaps, enhanced by new furniture. The parlour was a place of entertainment and consumption. Evidence for consumption, on spending cash on luxuries, is abundant in the mercers' accounts of the period. Apart from fabrics, there were purchases of luxurious foods, including figs, currants, and sugar loaf. Presumably these were consumed in the parlour, as were the pipes of tobacco, which were sold by Brecon mercers from about 1610.[56]

The House and its Furniture

The vernacular houses of Breconshire were an investment in status by a class of substantial farmers, generally small freeholders (but sometimes tenants), usually styled yeomen but sometimes gentlemen. Farmhouses passed from father to eldest son but testators were clearly anxious not only to transmit the house but to preserve its furniture. Increasingly the house *and its furnishings* were inseparable as an assertion of status. Inventories suggest that the new storeyed houses of the seventeenth century were filling up with furniture, including clutter ('lumber'), in contrast to their predecessors, the rather empty hall-houses of the previous century where the hospitable reputation of an owner was enough to fill the hall. Wills and inventories provide good descriptions of this new world of furniture as well as insights into room use and hierarchy. New furniture was sometimes carefully described because it was valued: so, a 'chair of ashtree of joint work' or a chair of 'wainscott work' rather than simply a chair.[57] Testators in Breconshire, and also in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan, were careful to reserve 'the three principals' for their inheriting sons rather than their widows. These were the three best chattels or household goods (the *principalia* of the medieval manorial court) and they generally belonged to the hall. The three principals were 'standards', that is permanent standing (rather than readily movable) furniture. To give some examples. In 1612 a testator at Talyllyn left his household goods to his wife except the three principals which were to remain with his son. Another testator in 1612 declared that his "three principals or best utensils" were to be delivered to his son immediately after his burial at Talachddu. The principals specified most frequently were the great brass ("brazen") pans or pots, the principal bedstead with its furnishing, the cupboard, and the table and forms. The cupboard was an 'armoire' or 'almonry' (rather than a livery cupboard) on top of which were displayed pewter dishes and candlesticks.[58] It was considered an important if not indispensable item of furniture; so much so that one Penderyn testator

bequeathed the materials ("implements") for "building" a cupboard.[59] Beds were framed and sometimes "carved" and came with "appurtenances" or furnishings: sheets ("Welsh yarn sheets" are mentioned), boulsters filled with feathers, and coverlets.[60] Coverlets were much prized and, presumably to avoid ambiguity, were sometimes referred to by the specific Welsh term, *brethyn eddi*, i.e. a coverlet having 'a shaggy nap or fringe'. The coverlet was made from coloured thread. A testator from Cwm-iou bequeathed her best bed "where she lies in the parlour" with the black and red coverlet. A coverlet valued at 14s. stolen from a house on the Herefordshire border was coloured black and white. These patterned coverlets are a further reminder that our ancestors appreciated colour and design in furnishings and fabrics as well as in applied decoration.[61]

Particular importance was attached to the table-board in the hall, sometimes called the 'great' table, that stood in front of the partition (the former dais partition) that faced the fireplace. This table seems generally to have been covered by a carpet or table-cloth; the napery associated with the long table-cloth might include napkins, towels, and a cupboard cloth.[62] The great table-board was laid on trestles or a frame. The trestles allowed the table to be dismantled but in practice the position of the table was fixed. A testator in 1616 insisted that the table, form, and bench were not to be removed "from the place where they are" at Llangynidr.[63] The bench was indeed often a fixture with the seat and bench ends integrated with the post-and-panel partition as empty mortices often show. Several fixed benches with shaped bench ends survive from the seventeenth century in Breconshire (Fig. 22). At Pen-y-bryn (Langatwg) the bench and one bench end survive; another remains at Cwm-gu-fach (Llanfihangel Cwm-du); and a bench with both ends has been reinstated at Cefn-crug, Dyffryn Crawnon (Llangynidr).[64] These bench ends share similar profiles with bold, rounded terminals, which are related to the mouldings of the shaped doorheads characteristic of the first half of the seventeenth century.

Figure 22. Pen-y-bryn (Llangatwg): shaped bench-end.

Figure 23. The C17th great table in the kitchen (former hall) of a Llangatwg farmhouse.

Remarkably one great table still survives in a farmhouse in Llangatwg, where it has probably remained since it was made in the seventeenth century (Fig. 23). It still stands on the original trestles, which have reed-moulded splayed legs. The board itself is a single plank of oak measuring 12 feet by 3 feet and some 4 inches thick. It takes six men to lift this extraordinary table. The associated bench (form) also survives and is similarly moulded. Equally remarkable is the framed table that survived into the twentieth century at Llwyncelyn on the Llanthony estate, on the eastern (Monmouthshire) side of the Black Mountains. The fixed bench remains at Llwyncelyn and has a reed moulding on the margin of the seat and may predate the great framed table with which it was associated. The framed table is over 13 feet long and must have been assembled inside the house in 1690, the date inscribed on the frame. This great table was apparently taken by the Llanthony estate in lieu of rent and removal apparently involved the demolition of the hall window.[65]

The hall remained at the centre of the post-medieval house and the table was at the heart of the hall. It was there that meals were taken and financial and other transactions took place. Hall and parlour were the two principal rooms of the farmhouse. The hall was a direct descendant of the medieval hall but the parlour at the entry was a new room that developed in the seventeenth century and was still being added to houses of longhouse plan in the eighteenth century. Hall and parlour were complementary rooms rather than rival spaces. One was concerned with display; the other with the working household. To put the contrast boldly: the hall was at the heart of production; the parlour was more concerned with consumption.

Other Transformations

I have been discussing the planning dynamics of the vernacular house but several other seventeenth-century innovations must be noted, if only briefly. Particularly notable was the constructional shift from building in timber to building in stone. This seems to have been achieved relatively quickly and was prompted by the insertion of chimneys, which often replaced sections of timber walling, and by the related insertion of ceilings which created storeyed houses. Once started, the process of replacement was inexorable (if sometimes piecemeal) and the timber walls of cruck-framed houses were replaced in stone, and new storeyed houses were stone-built. This is readily understandable but,

perhaps more surprisingly, stone walls also became a preference for agricultural buildings and the timber walls of the principal farm buildings were also rebuilt in stone. This was a remarkable transformation: within two generations or so either side of 1600 the built landscape of Breconshire largely changed from timber to stone. The once characteristic cruck-trussed and timber-walled barn rarely survives (Fig. 24).

Figure 24. Maes-llech (Llanlleonfell): cruck-trussed and timber-walled barn.

A remarkable glimpse of this process is provided by a late-Elizabethan lease. It is clear from the document that landlords tried to offload the cost of rebuilding in stone to tenants and sometimes required a tenant, as a condition of the lease, to improve the house and other buildings. In 1582, Jenkin ap Edward of Llandefalle rented a tenement (Gwern Goed Owen) for 21 years at 26s. 8d. yearly, but the lease had certain covenants. The tenant was required to make "a chymney in the mansion or dwelling howse", presumably inserting a stone chimney into the old open hall. In addition, the tenant had to rebuild the walls of the (timber) barn with "a stone walle...one bothe sides of the barne there [and] a stone [gable] walle uppe to the ruffe one bothe ends of the said barne". The covenant includes the very interesting detail that the stone wall was "called in Welche a *syll*", i.e. a *syl* or foundation for the wallplate or roof formerly supported by posts.[66]

Although walls were rebuilt in stone, improvements within the house were generally in timber. Ceilings over the hall followed the insertion of the chimney. Tree-ring dates of 1574/5 (Hafodygarreg), 1588/9 (Llannerch-y-cawr), 1598/9 (Tyn-y-llwyn), and 1608–18 (Wenallt-isaf) provide useful markers of the process of conversion and replacement of open halls that extended over several decades from the late-sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century and beyond. Conversion created heated halls with usable first-floor chambers over them.

Stairs became more important as increasing use was made of upper floors. In the longhouses, they were typically tight stone stairs at the side of the fireplace. In the gentry houses they were more elaborate and seem to have been regarded as rather like a piece of built-in furniture. The framed stair replaced the timber 'mast stair' of gentry houses (as at Old Gwernyfed, 1585/6, or Allt-y-bela, Monmouthshire, 1599) which was modelled on the stone mural

stair (Fig. 25). The framed stair became ubiquitous in the gentry houses in the first half of the seventeenth century and dendrochronology has given some precise dating. The dog-leg stair at Y Dderw (Pipton) with its turned balusters and finials was added in 1630/31 to a house built in 1606. There is an early version of the dog-leg stair at Aberhoyw where the framed stair has treads of solid oak and replaces a fireplace stair. It was added in 1617 when the house was enlarged and replanned. The Three Tuns at Hay was fashionably refurbished in 1652/3 with a new framed stair with flat or splat balusters as well as a new parlour complete with shaped doorhead. The stair became the architectural showpiece of several Restoration houses. At Penpont, we must note the remarkable Restoration stair which rises to the attics graced with balusters, where the moulding is carved rather than turned and follows the angle of the stair.

Figure 25. Old Gwernyfed: a mast stair.

The seventeenth century was a period of investment, not only in farmhouses, but in associated buildings. These are not as well recorded and understood as the dwellings, though often of considerable interest, as fieldwork demonstrates. I recently visited Gwernybustach, a farm on the Monmouthshire border not far from Tyn-y-llwyn. The house is sited across the slope—a sure sign that it is a new-build post-medieval house (Fig. 26). Flanking the house are two more-or-less contemporary seventeenth-century buildings. On one side, a much-altered storeyed building served as a corn-drying kiln in the nineteenth century. However, the kiln-house is a conversion of a seventeenth-century domestic building as is shown by a fragment of decorative plasterwork in the reveal of the large gable-end window. Flanking the other side of the house is a relatively unaltered barn. This has an enhanced entrance

Figure 26. Gwernybustach (Partrisio): general view.

and the barn doorways on either side of the threshing floor have shaped doorheads with pendant ovolos much like a domestic doorhead of the same period. Barn doorways are almost invariably found altered, and the doorheads at Gwernybustach, so far as I know, are unique survivors that show that a decorative finish was thought appropriate for a principal agricultural building.

The kiln-house at Gwernybustach belongs to a class of secondary domestic dwellings that are relatively common in Breconshire but often heavily disguised. They were generally dual-purpose buildings serving as bake-houses or outside kitchens but with first-floor chambers. Some are quite large and adjoin, or even touch, the principal house but without intercommunication between them originally. Jones and Smith recorded some very striking examples of this 'unit system' where, in plan, two houses are physically joined but were socially separate.[67] This distinctive architectural arrangement is to be understood in terms of the developmental cycle of the family and examples are found throughout Wales, particularly in Snowdonia.[68] Marriage was an alliance as the two sets of initials in date inscriptions often demonstrate. The resources (dowry) that a wife brought to the farm often funded building. In return for the dowry the wife was entitled to a jointure or maintenance in her widowhood. When an heir with his wife succeeded to a farm, his widowed mother might stay on in a separate room but sometimes moved to a secondary domestic unit—a diminutive dower-house.

There is much documentary evidence about this distinctive arrangement which related to succession and inheritance. Bakehouse, kilnhouse, and kitchen were multi-purpose buildings that could become secondary domestic dwelling. In 1611/12, for example, Jonet Gunter agreed with John Sollers of Tyle-glas (Glasbury) to enjoy "all that lofte roome which is over the kitchinge house" and "halfe of the profits and comodities of all that one garden callen garth y killen [the kiln garden]". The relationship between the parties at Tyle-glas is uncertain but there were often disputes between widow and son about dower. The issues related to the accommodation of the widow, the income due to her, and the principal goods due to the son. One revealing Breconshire dispute was documented in 1617. Arbitrators, including Sir Henry Williams of Gwernyfed, resolved an inheritance dispute between (step)mother and son. They decided that the 'new' mansion house was to go to the son and the 'old' mansion house to go to the mother. There was a bakehouse, and the oven was to be shared. The household stuff was to be divided apart from the three principals, which 'by custom' were due to the son.[69] Several striking combinations of old and new houses in a unit system arrangement were recorded by Jones and Smith as well as examples of secondary domestic units and houses within houses.[70] The developmental cycle of the family, especially in relation to succession and inheritance, is inseparable from understanding the dynamics of planning.

Conclusion

In this article, as in the lecture, I hope I have covered some of the more important themes that Jones and Smith first discussed: the development of the hall-house, the significance of the longhouse, and the dynamics of planning. These demonstrate that the vernacular house, or house of regional type, was far from static but changed fundamentally in terms of construction (from timber to stone) and plan (from open hall to storeyed house, and from longhouse to parloured house). There have been great advances in our ability to date houses, especially through dendrochronology, and we now have some 'new' tree-ring dates. They are the first fruits of a partnership between the Brecknock Society and the Royal Commission. Vernacular houses are often houses without a documented history but they are far from being houses without history. Indeed, in many respects houses are a primary historical source and we should look after them as we look after irreplaceable documents. Jones and Smith revealed the architectural and social interest of the houses of Breconshire but we still have not identified all our historic houses. Indeed, we are still at a stage when it is possible not only to make discoveries but very significant discoveries, such as the ornate cruck-truss discovered at Hafodygarreg (Erwood), just a few years ago (Fig. 27). Hafodygarreg is a house without a documented history but the cruck-truss is the earliest yet found in Wales and was made six hundred years ago, from timber felled in 1402. It is clearly in a mature tradition but we have yet to find its predecessors. At sites like these, one is tempted to echo the words of Howard Carter at the tomb of Tutankhamun (as indeed Peter Smith sometimes did), "I see wonderful things".

Figure 27. Hafodygarreg (Erwood): cusped cruck-truss.

Appendix: summary of tree-ring dates

Those marked with an asterisk (*) have been dated by the Brecknock Society in partnership with the Royal Commission. This initiative is led by Dr John Gibbs, who coordinates a Breconshire Houses Group under the auspices of the Society.

889–893. Crannog, Llangorse Lake. Dated timber from the palisade; Campbell and Lane 1989.

1235–70. Deanery, Brecon Cathedral. (Fig. 6) A fragmentary smoke-blackened medieval roof of great interest, formerly part of the domestic ranges of Brecon Priory. Technically, this is a king-strut roof with braced collar purlin. Illustrated in RCAHMW and Dean and Chapter of Brecon Cathedral 1994: 38, 40.

1402 (Summer). Hafodygarreg, Erwood, Crucadarn. (Fig. 27) The felling date is for a single surviving cruck truss embedded in the back of the inserted chimney within a later C16th (**1574/5**) longhouse. The cruck-truss (which seems to have been at the entry to the hall) has a braced strut from tie-beam to archbraced collar, all impressively cusped. This is the earliest identified cruck-truss in Wales. Reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 35 (2004): 110.

1416/17 to 1418. Llangwathen, Hay Rural. (Fig. 28) A cruck-framed hall-house with box-framed solar cross-wing later encased in stone. The open (entry) truss has a notably pointed profile with archbraced cambered collar. Llangwathen was associated with the stewards of English Hay and its owners in the C16th were styled gentry; Lewes, F. 1995–96. The longhouse phase with inserted chimney remains undated. Plan and description in Jones and Smith 1964: 122-4, 160, figs. 22 (plan), 24 (sections); Smith 1988: fig. 110a. Reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 35 (2004): 110.

Figure 28. Llangwathen (Hay Rural): main elevation.

1443/44 (Winter). Brecon Cathedral (former Priory of St John the Evangelist). (Fig. 7) The dates were obtained from the chancel roof above the C19th vault. The roof is of remarkable quality with low-pitched principals with trefoiled arcading above cambered tiebeams. All the principal timbers are moulded and were formerly painted and decorated with lead stars. The roof is attributed to Prior Hamon whose name is painted on the wallplate in a fragmentary inscription. Reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 44 (2013): 106.

1455/56 (Winter). Tretower Court, Llanfihangel Cwmdu. (Fig. 8 and 9) Dates of 1454/5 and 1455/6 were obtained from the hall roof during repairs. This date supersedes the date range 1432–67 reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 26 (1995): 49. Additional date ranges included **1448–71** for the kitchen screen and **1450–80** for the former stable range. The date range of **1446–81** for the north (accommodation) range was not refined. These dates show that the principal ranges of the courtyard group all belong essentially to one building programme. Reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 41 (2010): 112.

***1475–1505. Old Gwernyfed, Felindre.** (Fig. 29) The dates derive from the medieval trusses reused over the hall range trusses. The trusses were formerly cusped (mostly cut back) and presumably are from the medieval predecessor of Old Gwernyfed rebuilt **1585/6**.

Figure 29. Old Gwernyfed: reused roof-trusses.

***c*.1485. Wenallt-isaf, Llanigon.** Cruck-framed hall-house of gentry type with

archbraced central cruck-truss. (For inserted ceiling beam see **1608–18**). Plan and description in Jones and Smith 1964: 126-8, figs. 22 (plan), 25 (sections); Smith 1998: figs. 31b, 39a. Dating reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 9 (1978): 32; 11 (1980): 22.

1510. Brecon Cathedral, Bell Chamber Floor of Tower. The floor of the bell-chamber was sampled when the old bell frame was removed and the bell-chamber floor adjusted. An inscribed date of 1417 (? =1517) was reported on one of the main beams. Dating reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 27 (1996): 106, 108.

1514/15. Deanery (Priory House), Brecon. Gallery over the cross-passage and associated joists. Illustrated in RCAHMW and Dean and Chapter of Brecon Cathedral 1994: fig. 55. Dating reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 44 (2013): 106.

1574/75 (Winter). Hafodygarreg, Erwood. Dates obtained from the inserted fireplace and hall ceiling modifying the cruck-framed hall-house of **1402**. The hall-house developed into a stone-walled house of hearth-passage type with the fireplace (including fireplace stair) inserted against the surviving cruck-truss. There are traces of a painted design on the beams of the hall ceiling. Dating reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 41 (2010): 111-12.

1576–96. Hay Castle Keep (refitting). The date was obtained from the first-floor fireplace and showed that the keep had been refitted in the late C16th. Reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 39 (2008): 141.

***1585/86 (Winter). Old Gwernyfed, Felindre.** (Fig. 16) Precise felling dates of Winter 1582/3, Winter 1584/5, Winter 1585/6 from trusses of wing, and Winter 1584/5 from attic joists of central range. Old Gwernyfed is an ambitious winged (E-plan), gentry house. The central hall range with lateral chimney and gallery is flanked by parlour (now gutted) and kitchen wings. The late Elizabethan felling dates show that the house is a little earlier than the Jacobean date proposed by Jones and Smith. The house incorporates the reused cusped roof trusses of the predecessor medieval house, **1475–1505**. The house is generally attributed to the lawyer Sir David Williams (d. 1613), MP for Brecon Boroughs (1584, 1586, 1589, 1597). Jones and Smith 1964: 88-90, 172, fig. 10.

1588/89 (Winter). Llannerch-y-cawr, Llanwrthwl. (Fig. 14) Llannerch-y-cawr is a classic stone-walled longhouse which has developed from a peasant hall-house. The cruck-trusses of the hall-house did not date but a precise felling date was obtained from the inserted fireplace beam. The house has been much discussed: Jones and Smith 1963: 6-10, fig. 2 and 3, pl. 1-2; Smith 1963: 423-4, 436-7. Plan and discussion in Suggett 2005: 189-93. Date reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 30 (1999): 111-12.

***1598/9 (Winter). Tyn-y-llwyn, Partrishow.** (Figs. 18, 19) Felling dates of Winter 1597/8 (principal rafter), Winter 1598/9 (principal rafter), Spring 1598 (beam beyond screen = ? inner-room), Winter 1597/8 (cross-passage doorway). Tyn-y-llwyn is a platformed house of hearth-passage plan type retaining much vernacular detail. Limited sampling in 2011 was successfully consolidated by further sampling. The house has been fully described by Jones and Smith as an example of a 'vestigal longhouse' where the byre has been replaced by a parlour with a quasi-armorial fireplace and diagonally-set chimney. The upper house has the hall with inner-rooms beyond the post-and-panel partition. The cross-passage retains very robust timber doorways with draw bars. The tree-ring dates showed that the hall was constructed in the late C16th. The parlour range is dated by inscription 1649 and tree-ring dating showed that the cross-passage doorways were retained when the lower house was reconstructed as a parlour. Plan and description in Jones and Smith 1966/67: 34-6, figs. 12 (plan), 13 (section).

***1600–30. Sgethrog Tower, Llansanffraid.** (Fig. 30) Tree-ring dating suggests that the tower, regarded as C14th/C15th in origin, was comprehensively refitted in the early C17th. The felling-date range derives from a purlin but one earlier purlin was sampled (**1553–83**). Jones and Smith 1965: 5-10, fig. 1 (plan).

***1606 (Spring) & 1630/31 (Winter). Y Dderw (Therrow), Pipton, Llyswen.** (Fig. 31) Felling-dates of 1606 (purlins and principal rafter) and 1630/31 from roof timbers. Dderw is a winged gentry

Figure 30. Sgethrog Tower (Llansanffraid).

Figure 31. Y Dderw (Pipton, Llyswen): principal elevation.

house with added stair wing. A U-plan, storeyed gentry house of widely-distributed type with wings at upper and lower ends of the central hall with lateral chimney. The habitable attics have collar-less trusses and gables on the front elevation. Other details include stop-chamfered beams. Tree-ring dating established that Y Dderw was built in the early C17th. In a second phase, a generation later, a stair wing was added at the upper end with turned balusters. The lower-end kitchen was extended with a capacious stone-built fireplace and with finger mouldings in the plasterwork alongside the beams. Therrow (as it was always called) was latterly associated with the Morgans of Tredegar House. Plan and description: Jones and Smith 1964: 86-8, 169, fig. 9 (plan); reconstructed plan: Smith 1988: fig. 99a.

1608–18. Wenallt-isaf, Llanigon. A longhouse derivative with the outer (cowhouse) bay replaced by a parlour in 1828. The felling date range is for an inserted ceiling beam. (For the primary phase, see **1485** entry) Related changes included the inserted stone fireplace and the replacement of timber walling with stone walls. Date reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 9 (1978): 32; 11 (1980): 22.

1610–40. Hay Castle Gate (replacement leaf). (Fig. 5) An early timber gate survives within the thirteenth/fourteenth century gateway and has two phases with different styles of carpentry. Tree-ring dating now shows that the north leaf is a seventeenth-century replacement; the possibly original south leaf with lattice-bracing failed to date. The later leaf is double skinned (rather than lattice-braced). The outer skin of thick vertical boards is nailed to the inner skin of horizontal boards butted together. There is a wicket gate (of the same construction) with Tudor head within the lower part of the door. Date reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 39 (2008): 141.

***1616/17 (Winter). Middle Maestorglwyd, Llanigon.** (Fig. 32) Felling dates of Spring 1616 (principal rafter) and Winter 1616/17 (headbeams of cross-passage screens, roof-truss collar). Middle Maestorglwyd is an innovative house with a screened cross-passage between parlour and hall with end chimneys, like houses of the Snowdonian plan-type. Much period timber detail has survived, including shaped doorheads, post-and-panel partitions, and ovolo mouldings on the hall beams (double ovolo), and fireplace beam. The outer bay always seems to have been one room. Latterly it was heated and its status as the parlour

Figure 32. Middle Maestorglwyd (Llanigon): main elevation.

indicated by a neat diagonally-set chimney. The Elms (1622/23) provides a less clear example of the plan-type. Jones and Smith1964: 109, fig. 19 (plan: 'Upper Maes-torglwyd').

***1617. Aberhoyw, Llangynidr.** (Fig. 33) Felling dates of Spring 1617 (hall beam, staircase treads and beam). This splendid house looks like a symmetrical Georgian farmhouse and the 1726 datestone with the arms of the Pryce family shows that it was a house of some pretension. There has been a proliferation of parlours here but the core of the range is a longhouse derivative. The cross-passage has survived between upper hall and lower kitchen/parlour but the far passage doorway has been blocked by an early wing with a substantial dog-leg stair with solid oak treads. Tree-ring dating shows that the stair incorporated timber felled in 1617. Sampling of the beams in the main range showed that these too were felled in Spring 1617. So, it seems that the house was refitted (ceilings and roof) when the stair was put in. The traditional arrangement of the hall was retained with dais seat and table cross-lit by the new ovolo windows, which replaced sunk chamfer windows (one survives). The outer room was given a domestic function (kitchen or parlour) but a tethering bean from the former cowhouse survives. Sampling of the fireplace beam (a huge baulk of timber) gave an astonishingly early date of **1508–10**. This timber is not obviously reused but further research is needed; it is not impossible that we have here a very early longhouse with hearth passage. Plan and description in Jones and Smith 1966/67: 41, fig. 16; detail of sunk-chamfer window: Smith 1988: fig. 161c.

Figure 33. Aberhoyw: front elevation with 1726 date-stone.

***1622/3. The Elms, Bronllys Road, Talgarth.** (Fig. 17) Felling dates of Winter 1622/3 (roof-trusses). The Elms (the historic name is uncertain) is essentially a hall and parlour range with central partition and end chimneys. The location of the original entry is uncertain; Jones and Smith classify it as a longhouse derivative, but a blocked central doorway gave access to both rooms alongside the hall side of the partition. The tree-ring date shows the growing importance of the parlour in the early C17th, which at the Elms is almost the same size as the hall but with an offset fireplace to accommodate a stair (removed). The Elms has an array of period detail including upper crucks, fireplace stair, post-and-panel partition with shaped doorheads, ogee stopped beams, and ovolo-moulded mullioned windows. Plan and description in Jones and Smith 1964: fig. 37 (plan).

***1625. Pen-y-bryn, Llangatwg.** (Figs. 20, 21) Felling dates of Winter 1625/6 (hall screen), Winter 1624/5 (first-floor beam). A former longhouse retaining significant period detail including shaped doorheads, a moulded post-and-panel partition with dais bench with shaped bench end. The cross-passage with former pentice divides the former cowhouse from the upper domestic range of two-and-a-half storeys. The upper domestic range was securely dated to the early-seventeenth century. It seems probable that the downhouse is contemporary but, unfortunately, the roof-trusses, which have been raised, did not date. The downhouse was certainly a cowhouse and retains two beams with sockets for tethering posts. Latterly it was modified as a parlour (with small lateral fireplace) and service range, and a kitchen/secondary domestic unit was added on the east side. Jones and Smith 1966/67: 36-9, figs. 12 (plan) & 13 (section); ceiling plan: Smith 1988: fig. 156a.

***1630–33. Aberyail, Llangynidr.** A longhouse derivative. The date was obtained from the end truss. Surviving detail includes a shaped doorhead illustrated in Jones and Smith 1966/67: fig. 31, with notes: 81**.**

1636/7. Hay Castle House. (Fig. 34) Felling dates of Summer 1636 and Winter 1636/7 obtained from the roof. Hay Castle House is a large sixteenth/seventeenth century house built within the medieval castle site and serving as the post-medieval manor-house. The house has a double-pile plan,

three-storeyed with shaped attic dormers on the seven-bay main front, and an impressive clusters of brick chimneys. The timber spine-wall, separating principal rooms from stair and service-rooms, was revealed by the disastrous fire of 1977, which destroyed the roof. Nevertheless, some good seventeenth century detail survives including ogee mouldings on the timber partition and beams, and distinctive stone ball-finials on gateposts and dormers. The great Jacobean stair (photographed by *Country Life*) was destroyed by fire. Date reported in *Vernacular Architecture* 45 (2014): 125-6.

Figure 34. Hay Castle House.

***1652/3. Three Tuns, Hay-on-Wye.** (Fig. 35) Felling dates: Spring 1651 (W beam), Spring 1652 (E first-floor beam, studs in S gable framing), Winter 1652/3 (studs to front), c. 1647–52 (stair). A lobby-entry house with large central chimney at the north end of Hay-on-Wye, probably built just outside the town wall. Tree-ring dating has revealed the complexity of this house. The earliest phase is represented by a single cruck-truss, with collar and removed tie-beam, which was sampled but did not date. The later C16th post-and-panel partition dated **1557–87** divides the outer bay but relates to the fireplace and may date the insertion of the chimney. In a third phase of rebuilding/reconstruction the parlour was modernised with, at the entry, a shaped doorhead with ogee detail, the dog-leg stair with splat balusters was constructed, and much of the first-floor framing was renewed giving a twin gabled front elevation. Jones and Smith 1964: 154, pl. XVIIIA.

Figure 35: The Three Tuns (Hay).

***1743/44 (Winter)**. **Kitchen Range, Penpont**. Felling dates of Winter 1742/3 and Winter 1743/4 from the roof of the kitchen range flanking a courtyard at the rear of the C17th Restoration house. Jones and Smith 1968/69: fig. 3 (plan), 25: pl. III.

Notes

NLW	National Library of Wales.
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are © Crown: RCAHMW.

[1] My thanks are due to the Council members of the Brecknock Society for the invitation to give this lecture on 18 March 2016 at Theatr Brycheiniog, and for their warm welcome. I have tried to retain the spirit of the original lecture, and am grateful to the editor for the opportunity to include many of the illustrations used then.

[2] Suggett 2005.

[3] Jones 2011: 15-17.

[4] Smith 1998: fig. 102.

[5] NLW, Gogerddan Map Vol. 40. The map was drawn by 'LP' from the original survey by John Withy. Another map by LP (or 'IP') includes a prospect of Maes-gwyn, Llandefalle, showing a fully storeyed house with end chimneys, central entrance, and attic dormers: NLW, Tredegar Maps 119/39.

[6] I am most grateful to Hilary Peters, NLW archivist, for the information about William Lewis and Trewalter. Trewalter was inherited through marriage by the Pryse family of Gogerddan and the deeds are preserved in the Gogerddan estate records, NLW.

[7] Henning 1983: *s.n.* 'Lewis, Sir William'. See the Lewis pedigree in Siddons 2016: 'Bleddyn ap Maenyrch', 7(A)/1.

[8] The doorhead is now preserved at the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery.

[9] Fox and Raglan 1953; 1954.

[10] Smith 1988: Map 41. Some shaped doorheads recently noted include a dated example of 1642 at Pencaeau (Cwm-du), and two shaped doorheads at Gwernybustach barn. The projecting central moulding of shaped doorheads can be cut back, as at Middle House, Tredomen.

[11] Jones and Smith 1963; 1964; 1965; 1966–67; 1968–69; 1972a; 1972b; Parry 1998–99; Redwood 2012.

[12] Smith 1988: Maps 48a and 49. The datestone at Castle Madoc (Lower Chapel) should be added: 'Ty Newydd. T.P. 1588'.

[13] Jones and Smith 1964: 90-93.

[14] See generally, Historic England's excellent *Dendrochronology: Guidelines on Producing and Interpreting Dendrochronological Dates* (English Heritage, 1998). Tree-ring dates obtained for historic buildings are published annually in the journal *Vernacular Architecture*.

[15] Campbell and Lane 1989: 675-81.

[16] RCAHMW and Dean and Chapter of Brecon Cathedral 1994: 33-5, fig. 51.

[17] *Ibid*: 17, figs 23-5.

[18] A pre-1400 church roof survives at Grosmont, tree-ring dated 1214–44, which resembles the roof at Brecon Priory.

[19] NLW, Badminton Map Vol. 3: A Survey of the Manors of Crickhowell and Tretower. A digitised version is available on the NLW website, https://www.llgc.org.uk/discover/digital-gallery/maps/estate-maps/badminton-estate/ (Accessed 5 February 2017).

[20] Emery 2000: 669-71; Scourfield and Haslam 2013: 586-8; Jones and Smith's study of Tretower is unpublished.

[21] Lewis and Owen. n.d.: 57. *Ibid*: 51 notes a reference to the glass-hued roof of Tretower (*lliw gwydr y to*), presumably a description of the variegated tile-stones.

[22] Toulmin 1906: 108.

[23] Jones and Smith 1964: 77-83.

[24] Jones and Smith 1966–67: 6-12. A visit in October 2015 revealed that the timbers were too fast grown for successful dendrochronological sampling.

[25] Jones and Smith 1963: 4.

[26] Jones and Smith 1964: 118-22. Called Middle Maestorglwyd, to which farm the barn was attached. At the time of survey the detached barn was known as 'Lower Tack' but is better described as Maestorglwyd Barn.

[27] But there are mortices for the door-posts. It seems that the cruck frame with wallplates (and doorposts) was erected first and then stone-walled. The cruck spurs would normally be integrated with timber walling.

[28] Jones and Smith 1964: fig. 24; Suggett 2005: figs 272-4 for the profiles of central trusses in gentry halls.

[29] Jones and Smith 1964: 119: fig. 22, 125: fig. 25, 126; Smith 1988: fig. 31a-b.

[30] Llwyd 1987.

[31] Lake 2015a; Lake 2015b.

[32] Lake 2015a: I: 96-7; Lake 2015b: 77-8.

[33] Lake 2015a: I: 70-71; Lake 2015b: 72-4.

[34] Suggett 2013.

[35] Examples at Talwrn (Llanwrthwl); Pen-twyn (Talgarth); Gilfach (Llangorse); Neuadd (Talach-ddu); Y Coed (Partrishow): Jones and Smith 1963: 22-3; 1964: 115; 1964: 166; 1965: 52-4; 1966–67: 22-26. RCAHMW fieldwork adds: Cwm (Llanwrthwl); Twynyronen (Llandyfalle).

[36] Suggett 2005: 84-111.

[37] Llannerch-y-cawr: Jones and Smith 1963: 6-10.

[38] Redwood 2012: 39-42; Grooms 1993: 64-6.

[39] Suggett 2005: 191.

[40] *Ibid*: 187-8.

[41] *Ibid*: 146-7.

[42] Jones and Smith 1964: 90-93.

[43] Suggett 2005: 206-10.

[44] Fox and Raglan 1953: 56-8.

[45] Jones and Smith 1964: fig. 37 (plan). Changes in the chamfered beams hint at social arrangements that are now not easily recoverable.

[46] Redwood and Barnes 1993; An album of photographs presented by Pamela Redwood is in the RCAHMW public archive.

[47] Smith 1953: ix.

[48] Tyn-y-llwyn: Jones and Smith. 1966–67: 34-6.

[49] Fox and Raglan 1953b: 47-8. Fox and Raglan's earliest dated house with ovolo-mouldings is 1637 but tree-ring dating at Middle Maestorglwyd shows that ovolo moulding was well established by 1616/17 in Breconshire. In Monmouthshire, the ovolo moulding follows the reserve chamfer, which is not well represented in Breconshire.

[50] Redwood and Barnes 1993: 66.

[51] Penybryn: Jones and Smith 1966–67: 36-9.

[52] NLW, Brecon Probate 1680/103 (Brecon).

[53] Turkey chairs were upholstered with fabric resembling oriental carpets.

[54] NLW, Brecon Probate 1610/29 and 1612/13.

[55] Jones and Smith 1968–69: 61.

[56] Mercers' bills are recited in the litigation over unpaid bills. Great Sessions 17/32/m.15d (*action v. Watkin Vaughan of Merther*): figges; sugar lofe (20s.9d.). Great Sessions 17/27/m.3 (*Peter Body v. Ieuan David, Devynnock*): 1611 mercer's bill including several purchases of tobacco at 3s.4d. an ounce and tobacco pipes at 1s. each. Compare: Great Sessions 17/28/m.20 (*Launcelot Herbert v. David Lloyd, Llandewyrcombe, gent.*): several purchases of tobacco in 1612 at 4s. an ounce, beginning with a small (trial) purchase for 6d.

[57] NLW, Brecon Probate 1612/3 (Brecon).

[58] NLW, Brecon Probate 1612/3 (Brecon) exceptionally refers to a livery (food) cupboard in an upper chamber.

[59] NLW, Brecon Probate 1611/2 (Penderyn).

[60] NLW, Brecon Probate 1610/3 (Brecon): "carvinge bed" bequeathed with appurtenances, viz. "coverlet", "fair sheetes", "bouster of feathers".

[61] Coverlets: NLW, Brecon Probate 1610/29 (Brecon) (Margery ferch John, Cwm-iou); Great Sessions 17/25/Rex m. (indictment against Lewis Jenkyn, Brecon). Compare *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: University of Wales Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (Cardiff, 1950-2002), *s.v.* 'brethyn eddi'.

[62] Compare the damask diaper napery of Hugh Powell of Talyllyn (1587); Redwood 1990–92: 57.

[63] NLW, Brecon Probate 1613/6 (Brecon) (Gwenllian ferch David, Llangynidr).

[64] Jones and Smith 1966–67: fig. 14 (Pen-y-bryn), fig. 21, pl. VIB (Cwm-gu-fach).

[65] The table remained at Llanthony until sold on 21 June 2014 by Nigel Ward & Co.

[66] *William ap Rees v. Jenkin ap Edward*, Great Sessions 13/19/3/unnumbered (1598). Compare *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru: University of Wales Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (Cardiff, 1950–2002), *s.v.* 'syl'. The sense seems to be that the stone wall was regarded as a foundation for the roof truss. My thanks to Andrew Hawke for a discussion of this word.

[67] Jones and Smith 1966–67: 53-6.

[68] Suggett 2007.

[69] Great Sessions 17/27/m.9d (*Jonete Gunter v. John Sollers*).

[70] Jones and Smith 1966–67: 54.

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THE INVESTIGATION OF THE BRECONSHIRE HOUSE DURING THE 1960s BY STANLEY JONES AND JOHN (J. T.) SMITH

JOHN GIBBS

Introduction

The research on the buildings of Breconshire undertaken by Stanley Jones and John Smith is regarded as one of the most important regional studies of traditional buildings carried out in the British Isles. This paper provides an account of how the work came to be done and pays tribute to those involved in its inspiration and execution.[1]

An account of the way in which the domestic architecture of rural Wales came to be studied and understood can be found in *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* by Peter Smith of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW).[2] A key figure in the story was Iorworth Peate, whose 1940 book *The Welsh House* identifies a number of house-types, building materials, and methods of construction.[3] The RCAHMW inventories of Anglesey and Caernarvonshire provided important information[4] and, as far as the south of the country was concerned, there was the publication between 1951 and 1954 of *Monmouthshire Houses* by Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan[5]; the research for this having been carried out between 1941 and 1948.

The Breconshire studies

The survey work in Breconshire had a rather different genesis. It owed its origin to an idea of the remarkable Deiniol Williams, Chief Education Officer for Breconshire from 1948–1972.[6] He decided that his primary school teachers should be taught how to appreciate the buildings of the county and hence become able to inspire their pupils with an interest in history that was, in many cases, literally 'on their doorsteps'. Deiniol Williams was a geographer by training and, in 1959, he attended a course on vernacular architecture organised by Birmingham University and run by Jones and Smith. At that time, Smith, a buildings archaeologist, was senior investigator for The Royal Commission on Historic Buildings in England, and Jones, a draughtsman, was assistant lecturer at Sheffield College of Art. (The two men had met at an archaeological dig in Cricklade in 1954). As people were about to leave, Deiniol Williams asked Smith and Jones if, in September of that same year, they would participate in a course for primary school teachers in Breconshire entitled 'Looking at Buildings'; this covering churches, castles, and houses.[7]

For the part of this course that dealt with houses, they joined forces with Peter Smith of the RCAHMW and because, at this time, nothing was known about the houses of Breconshire, two weeks were committed to reconnaissance

beforehand.[8] During this work, carried out across the county, measured plans were drawn up for forty houses and many photographs were taken.

As indicated above, vernacular buildings only occupied part of the course. John Smith remembered an interminable, highly detailed lecture on Raglan Castle, which "bored the pants off everybody". A day was also spent looking at Brecon Cathedral and its associated buildings. However, six days, from 9:00am to about 10:00pm, were spent looking at houses.

John Smith recalled later how, at the end of the September course, Deiniol Williams asked him and Stanley Jones if the two of them would consider giving a week-long course on vernacular houses for the primary school teachers of a particular education district.[9] To this they gave "exhausted and light-hearted assent". In the event, over a seven-year period, Jones and Smith gave courses on the houses of each of the seven education districts.

The surveys of the education districts

The pattern of activity was broadly the same for each course. In Builth in 1961, for example, there was field work during a week in June, and for three to four hours on each evening of the three-day course in July. Figs. 1 and 2 show the work in progress.

Figure 1. Work in progress on the Buildings of Breconshire at Penyrheol Cwm Du.

Figure 2. Work in progress on the Buildings of Breconshire at Tyn y Cwm, Llanbedr.

When working in the county, Jones and Smith would stay at a conveniently placed hotel: The Wellington or George in Brecon, and The Dragon in Crickhowell. There were large breakfasts and large lunches as "Deiniol Williams was a good trencherman!".

John Smith has described how a teacher or teachers took them to houses selected from those seen in the 'recce', identified by local knowledge, or from lists provided by Ministry of Housing and Local Government. He says that the visits "were often at shearing time, which caused some problems, but farmers

and wives took in their stride the appearance of four people, including two total strangers, asking to see the house from roof to cellar". He further said, "I recall arriving to do our work at a sizeable farmhouse at about 9.15pm on a dark rainy evening and, on finishing, we were invited into the kitchen where a large table carried a huge pile of home-baked cakes for the shearers next day; and we were plied with tea, cakes and conversation until getting on for 11:00pm". Sometimes there were surprises "One farmer went to an ancient cupboard and revealed a cocktail cabinet inside!".

Stanley Jones related a story about Y Dderw (Pipton), one of the grander houses of the county. When carrying out the measurements in the parlour, they clipped a very ornate lamp with their long tape and looked in horror as it started to fall. "We caught it and saved what would have been a most expensive day's work!".

Back at their hotel, they briefly discussed the essential features of what they had seen and retired to their respective rooms: Stanley Jones to draw some rather more finished plans based on the measurements had been taken, and John Smith to produce brief descriptions and propose dates for the different parts of the buildings. As John Smith said, "Knowing very well our respective strengths, we worked in tandem to advantage—teamwork at its best".

At this time, most of the houses in the countryside were occupied by farmers and their families. However, even then, they found some that had been acquired by new arrivals. John Smith commented, "One well-preserved former longhouse with an original newel stair flanking the chimney stack had been purchased by a Chelsea couple and redecorated in the current Chelsea-approved taste—ugh!".

Publication of the results

Starting in 1963, the results of the work were written up, district by district, with Stanley Jones as the lead author, in a series of articles for *Brycheiniog* (for a full bibliography, see Richard Suggett's paper in this volume). In these articles, the authors acknowledge their gratitude, first to Deiniol Williams, and secondly to a series of people, varying with the district, who made their cars and local knowledge available. Several people are specifically thanked for their photography. In total, detailed plans and descriptions are provided for some 400 houses, and around 1,500 individual buildings appear in the lists at the end of the articles. In many cases, valuable information on the history of the house is also provided.

The issues of *Brycheiniog* with the Jones and Smith articles are much sought-after and can be difficult to acquire. However, the journal is held in several libraries and all the articles are available via the 'Welsh Journals Online' website.[10]

The impact of the work over the last 50 years

What about the influence of the work in and on Breconshire? It is not easy at this lapse of time to assess the effect on primary school education of this bold and imaginative exercise, although I have met individuals who, as children, remember the excitement of a visit by Jones and Smith to their homes.

The information presented on the various buildings is constantly cited in house descriptions and planning applications. It has undoubtedly contributed to the survival and sensitive restoration of many houses that would otherwise have disappeared or been changed beyond recognition.

Then there have been various events to celebrate the research. In 1998, Pamela Redwood, working with David Moore, Curator of the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery, put on an exhibition called *Old Breconshire Farmhouses: Thirty Years On* (Fig. 3). This was based on photographs obtained by Jones and Smith, then, as now, held in the Museum, supplemented with recent photographs taken by Redwood of some of the houses in the Crickhowell district. Jones and Smith participated in the opening (Fig. 4).

The work has also inspired much detailed study on particular buildings and their history, this conducted by a variety of talented people and published in *Brycheiniog*. In 2012, Pamela Redwood produced an excellent and well-illustrated article bringing much of this work together, including her own research (referred to above).[11] More recently, on 18 March 2016, The Brecknock Society and Museum Friends was delighted to welcome

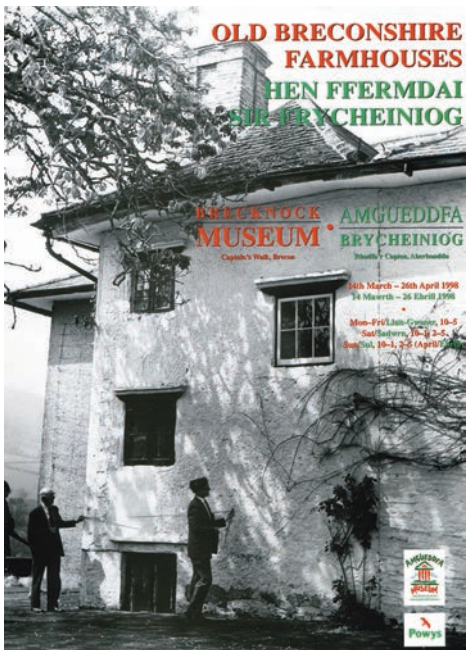

Figure 3. The Poster for the Brecknock Museum exhibition, based on a photograph of the survey of Scethrog house.

Figure 4. John Smith (centre) and Stanley Jones (right), with former Editor of Brycheiniog, Edward Parry, at the 1998 Buildings of Breconshire Exhibition.

Richard Suggett of RCAHMW to a packed Theatr Brycheiniog to deliver the nineteenth Sir John Lloyd Lecture on 'The Vernacular Buildings of Breconshire'. An article based on this lecture appears in this volume. An informal group on Breconshire Houses was launched at the lecture and this group has started organising a programme of talks and house visits under the auspices of the Brecknock Society (as I mention in my Chairman's Report).

Conclusion

Stanley Jones and John Smith became revered figures in the world of those who study vernacular buildings. I and several other Brecknock Society members had the pleasure of meeting both of them in 2011, at that time still very active in their chosen field. They would firmly say that it was not architecture as such that that they were investigating but social and economic history, and culture.

John Smith died in August 2016 at the age of 94. In his obituaries, he is described as an outstanding authority on the analysis of historic buildings.[12] In its way, this paper is the Brecknock Society's own tribute to both him and Stanley, and I cannot do better than conclude with a quotation from John's email of March 2016. He wrote "I once said that our Brecon work was the most exhausting, the most interesting, and the most satisfying work I have ever done".

Notes

[1] An oral version of this paper was presented as part of the Penpont 350 mini-conference on the Houses of Breconshire on 1 October 2016.

[2] Smith 1975.

[3] Peate 1940.

[4] RCAHMW 1937; 1954–64.

[5] Fox and Raglan 1951–54.

[6] Evans, I. R. 2017 [This volume].

[7] The descriptions of the course of events here and elsewhere in the paper come partly from the published articles by Jones and Smith, partly from notes taken by the author at a meeting with Jones and Smith in June 2011, and partly from emails sent by the two men to Richard Suggett in March 2016.

[8] Peter Smith only attended the first of these weeks.

[9] Education districts corresponded in area to the Rural Districts which, until their abolition in 1974, administered predominantly rural areas at a level below that of the county. Although the name suggests some autonomy, all authority for education lay with the County Education Officer.

[10] http://welshjournals.llgc.org.uk/ (Accessed 6 February 2017).

[11] Redwood 2012.

[12] Meeson and Alcock 2016; 2017; Smith, Smith, and Smith 2016.

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John Gibbs is a forest pathologist by profession but has a keen amateur interest in building design, especially the buildings of the Breconshire countryside. He lives in Llangynidr and is proud of the fact that he has spent some time in Breconshire in every year of his life but one! He is currently Chairman of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends.

DEINIOL WILLIAMS, CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER FOR BRECONSHIRE 1948–72: A VISIONARY IN ACTION

IEUAN R. EVANS

Introduction

Deiniol Gwyrfai Williams held the post of Chief Education Officer of Breconshire for 24 years from 1948 until his retirement in 1972 (Fig. 1). Throughout this period, he was responsible for many key initiatives which enhanced the scope and quality of education in the county. This memoir celebrates his life and work, in the process highlighting his major achievements. He was a remarkable man in that not only did he have inspirational ideas but also possessed the practical skills and dedication to ensure that they came to fruition.

In addition to formal records, I have drawn on information provided by those who knew him and his family, and on my own recollections as one who worked with him from 1961 until 1972.

Figure 1. Deiniol Williams. The photograph comes from a brochure produced for the opening of the Secondary Modern Technical School, Penlan, Brecon in March 1964.

Early years, education, and teaching career

Deiniol Williams was born on 20 June 1906 to Robert and Sarah Williams of Bryn Tegid, Bettws Garmon, Caernarfon. By the time of the 1911 Census the family was living at Tŷ Haf, Waunfawr, Caernarfon. This census identifies Robert, his father, Pen Teulu (Head of the family) aged 45 years, as a 'llafurwr amaethyddol' (agricultural labourer), and his mother, Sarah, aged 35 years as 'gwraig tŷ' (housewife).

Following attendance at the Central School Caernarfon, he was accepted at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. He graduated with a First-Class Honours Degree in Geography in 1927 and completed a post-graduate professional training (secondary) Certificate in Education in 1928, also obtaining the Board of Education Teachers' Certificate.[1]

Deiniol Williams commenced his teaching career in Liverpool. Whilst there, he took a Master of Arts Degree from Liverpool University, graduating in July 1932. His research thesis was entitled 'The Geographical Relations of Wales and Merseyside'.[2] In the same year he was appointed Geography Master at Aberdare Boys County School. The former pupils of this school maintain an excellent website[3] which, inter alia, has a series of photographs of the staff. The

1936 photograph is shown here as Fig. 2. His nickname was 'Guz' and he is described as follows:

> Mr. Deiniol Williams was our Geography master—popular rumour had it that his first name was Augustus (Gus for short) but as he always pronounced 's' as 'z', he was nicknamed Guz.
>
> In all the years I knew him he never lost his temper with us, and was always smiling with a cheerful grin. Yet we really hated it when he was assigned in charge of detention (where we were kept behind after normal school-hours)—a punishment sometimes meted out to an entire class for infringements such as undue foot-shuffling by just one boy. While Guz busied himself with marking his class assignments, he'd instruct us to copy from our atlas a map of the world, or maybe just a single country such as Germany, or perhaps Africa, and to mark on it all the MAJOR towns and rivers. As soon as anyone was done, he'd assure us with a huge smile, the student would be free to leave.
>
> In time, a boy would approach Guz with his very detailed map. Guz would give him an encouragingly benevolent grin as he cast a critical eye over it, with many comments of 'Yez, very, very, good!' or 'An exzellent map!' before suddenly dropping his bomb-shell with a remark such as 'Oh, but don't you think that Hoch Alteberg (or some such town) iz a major town?' We'd long-since learned not to disagree with Guz, so the boy would hang his head in shame and mumble 'Yes, Sir!' (all our masters were addressed as 'Sir'). 'Oh, dear!' Guz would sigh, at the same time giving him his usual great big smile, 'I'm zo zorry, but you'd better go back to your dezk and try again, hadn't you?' and he'd tear up the beautifully hand-drawn map

Figure 2. Photograph entitled Aberdare County School Staff 1936. Deiniol Williams is the fourth from the left in the back row. From the website http://www.abgs.org.uk

into tiny pieces and drop it like a miniature snowstorm into a nearby wastebasket. Only when Guz had completed all his own work, and was himself ready to leave, would our maps finally meet with his approval and we too would be permitted to go.

The call back to his roots in the 'North' was strong and in 1937 he was appointed as a lecturer in Geography at the Normal College Bangor, an independent teacher training college. In the summer of 1941 he married Elizabeth Ann (Betsan) Roberts, a nurse in a Liverpool hospital. She was living with relatives in Crosby, Lancashire, but was originally from the Holyhead area of Anglesey (Fig. 3).

Figure 3. Deiniol Williams, in his 'plus fours', with Miss Betsan Roberts in Liverpool in the 1930s. Robert John Williams

In the same year, Deiniol Williams was called up for War Service in the Royal Air Force. An entry in the London Gazette of 2 December 1941 includes him on the list of those to be appointed as pilot officers on probation (this being an 'emergency' Commission—not having gone through Cranfield). His son Robert recalls that his father did not say much about his War Service but occasionally would recount some humorous anecdotes: one day drilling a squad, he forgot to bring them to a halt, and they kept marching and left the parade ground. On another occasion, sleeping on a camp bed in a tent in the North African desert, he woke up to find that a snake had climbed into bed with him.

In September 1945, Deiniol Williams became Headmaster of Howard Gardens School, Cardiff (now Fitzalan High School) where he stayed until moving to Breconshire in September 1948.

Appointment as Chief Education Officer

The position of Chief Education Officer for Breconshire was seen by the Education Committee to be crucial to progressing and developing the provision of education within the county. A panel under the Chairmanship of Councillor Principal Joseph Jones of the Memorial College[4] met on 20 January 1948[5] to make the arrangements for the appointment and agreed that the successful candidate would:

1. possess first class academic qualifications,
2. have suitable teaching experience,
3. have experience in education administration,

4. have a thorough knowledge of Welsh,
5. be between 40 years and 45 years of age.

In accordance with the custom of the day, the appointment would only be open to males and would carry a salary of from £1,100 to £1,250 plus War Bonus.

The Appointments Committee consisted of representatives of all the Breconshire Education Districts. There were eleven applicants and four were short-listed.[6] From these, Deiniol Williams was selected and assumed duties in September 1948. He became both Chief Education Officer and Secretary to the Education Committee.

Deiniol Williams in post

As Chief Education Officer, Deiniol Williams' commitment to developing the scope and enhancing the quality of education within the county was absolute. He was instrumental in introducing many initiatives and was the principal driving-force in ensuring that they reached fruition.

On taking up his appointment, he realised he was working for an Education Committee of 72 members organised on a party-political basis—Conservative, Labour, Liberal and 'Independents'. Proposals brought forward might be acceptable to one party but opposed by the others. To avoid such controversy, he would advise the Committee that a particular topic was one that needed detailed consideration and suggest that a Special Sub-Committee be created comprising representatives from all parties and with the Chairman of the Education Committee in the Chair. With everyone having the chance to contribute to the debate, it was much easier to convince all members of the merits of the proposal, with the result that when the Sub-Committee's Report was presented to the main Committee there was rarely any dissent.

The Chairman of the Education Committee, CC David Lewis MBE, was a farmer from Cwmpadest, Crai, with whom Deiniol Williams forged an extremely close and happy working relationship—together they were a serious 'force to be reckoned with'. Lewis was totally committed to education and, once convinced of the value to Breconshire of a particular project, ensured that it was provided with finance and steered to success.

Among the Sub-Committees that were established were:

- Welsh Language and Culture,
- Adult Education (responsible for providing a county-wide Adult Education Lecture Service),
- Hymnals and Bibles (responsible for publishing Hymnals and Bibles for Schools).
- Museum and Local History.
- Reconstruction (this dealt with the Chief Education Officer's ideas for projects and formed his sounding board and 'think tank').

As will be seen later in this article, Deiniol Williams exercised a profound influence on the cultural as well as the educational life of the county through the working of these Sub-Committees.

In dealing with Committees, Deiniol Williams was a master tactician, always preparing his ground extremely thoroughly. He would brief the Chairman and Sub-Committee Chairmen (as appropriate) in private meetings in his office in advance, along with supportive Councillors, so as to ensure that his proposals would have the greatest chance of success. His two golden rules for education administration were:

(a) get a minute for it (see that every decision is minuted/recorded correctly),
(b) see that the minute is properly entered, as one never knew, particularly in a party politically organised Authority, when the action might be challenged.[7]

During and following deliveries of his Reports to Committees, he would, if challenged, immediately sit down and allow the Chairman to take over: his dictum being never to enter into a debate or confrontation with a committee member. His presentations showed confidence, clarity, enthusiasm and good humour, and his speed in delivering complex reports would often see Councillors sitting in awe and admiration of his style, warm-hearted enthusiasm, and mastery of his subject.

As a committed supporter of the Welsh language, Deiniol Williams would ensure that, where appropriate, advertisements for teaching or other posts contained 'Welsh essential' and invariably this would be amended by the appropriate sub-committee to "Welsh desirable". The advertisement for the post of headteacher for the first Welsh Medium School in Breconshire, Ysgol Gymraeg Ynyscedwyn, stipulated "Welsh Essential" and, when challenged by the sub-committee, his response was that Welsh was *'anhepgorol, angenrheidiol'* (absolutely essential).

Salaries of teachers and conditions of service were prescribed by the Burnham Committee.[8] Where discretionary elements were left to local education authorities to decide, the Committee would be advised to adopt a generous approach as "it is important that the Authority is able to recruit and retain able teachers for the benefit of the pupils of Breconshire". David Gedge, Organist at Brecon Cathedral and Head of Music in Builth High School (1966 to 2007) wrote in his autobiography that the teaching staff were so high-powered for such a small school simply because the Breconshire Education Committee paid Heads of Department very generous allowances. As one such head explained: "Why move to a larger school to work harder and take more responsibility only to be paid the same amount of money?".[9]

Working for Deiniol Williams

The Aberdare Boys County School pupil's description of Guz, "In all the years I knew him, he never lost his temper with us, and was always smiling, a cheerful

grin" rings true for him as a team leader. Throughout the time I worked for him in the County Education Department, I always found him to be scrupulously fair; always courteously formal and polite, referring to those with whom he came into contact either by their job titles or Mr/Mrs/Miss as the case might be.

Although a very private individual, he was always approachable and the greeting 'Bore Da Mr Williams, sut ydy'ch chwi'? (Good Morning Mr Williams, how are you?) would always bring the response 'Bore Da Gyfaill, llawn llafur o bob math' (Good Morning Friend, full of work of all kinds): this perhaps reflecting the many and varied facets of the education service which were his concern. There was no chitchat: the tasks would have been planned beforehand, and he was totally focussed on the day's agenda. He would work late and expect others to do so also. He never seemed to get tired. Steve Roderick, who was a Committee Clerk in the Education Department, recalled an occasion when Deiniol Williams told him that he was going to meetings somewhere and he would ring later in the evening for him to come to his house to go over Committee papers for the next day. "The call came asking me to report for 9:00pm and I was there until midnight". As a consummate professional he expected professionalism in all with whom he worked.

He expected his staff to be meticulous in the preparation of their committee documents and for any occasion where they would be representing Breconshire Education Authority. In 1962, I was delegated to attend Wales Young Farmers Clubs Annual Conference at Porthcawl at which Dr T. I. Davies, Senior Staff Inspector, responsible for Agricultural Education, was to be present. Prior to the event I was asked to visit Mr. Williams at home one evening at 8:00pm to discuss the main points which I was to convey to Dr Davies. At this time plans for the Rural Technical Institute (see below) were being formulated and the support of Dr Davies was essential in ensuring that Breconshire's proposals were looked on favourably by the Welsh Office. I pointed out that I would probably be meeting Dr Davies purely in a social capacity. However, I was told this was of no consequence as the opportunity had to be taken and the message conveyed!

Deiniol Williams was a gentleman and a 'gentle' man, most respectful of all. In discussion, I found him ready to listen carefully to thoughts and ideas, welcoming any debate which contributed constructively and positively to a consensus decision and a plan of action for implementation. Just occasionally however, this was not the case. Once, following his attendance at a national conference on Science in the Primary School (The Nuffield Project[10]), I was summoned to a meeting in his office and was told that as the only scientist on his staff I would, in addition to my other duties, be responsible for overseeing the introduction of the project to the county's primary schools. This would necessitate the establishment of Teachers' Centres in all the Education Districts

as well as overseeing a programme of development and delivery of science teaching. A major task to add to one's existing workload but one which was accepted, possibly not willingly, but without dissent!

One of his staff recalls a senior County Councillor approaching him after an evening meeting and referring to the Chief Education Officer said, "You young lads in the Education Office don't realise how lucky you are to be sitting at the feet of Gamaliel".[11] He left his influence on his staff and just being in his company was an education in itself.

Special achievements

The refresher courses for teachers

As Chief Education Officer, a key concern was to ensure that the county's teachers were equipped with up-to-date knowledge and information. To this end, Deiniol Williams organised refresher courses in local history, science and technology, engaging a range of experts to inform teachers of new developments.

An excellent example of this was 'Looking at Buildings'. This expanded into categories of Historical, Agricultural, Ecclesiastical, Industrial, and Vernacular and within the subject area for each course, suitably-qualified, nationally-acclaimed authorities would be employed as tutors. Fig. 4 shows one such

Figure 4. Teachers' Course at Tretower Court in September 1959. The speaker is almost certainly Ralegh Radford, the recognised authority on this important building. Williams is standing behind him holding the large folder. The audience contains a number of headmasters, other senior teachers, and some sixth form pupils. On the right-hand side (foreground) with notepad in hand, is Rev Prof D. J. Davies, the first editor of *Brycheiniog*. Robert John Williams

course in action. An eminent lecturer, invited to participate in a course on farm buildings, was Dr Ronald W. Brunskill who at the time was a Senior Lecturer in Architecture in the University of Manchester. His visits to Breconshire influenced his work to the extent that his two books on vernacular architecture contain examples from the county.[12]

The story of the courses on vernacular architecture has been told by John Gibbs in another article in this issue of *Brycheiniog*.[13] In brief, there was initially a course on domestic buildings across the county and this then led on to seven courses in seven years, one in each Education District. These courses were led by two architectural historians, Stanley Jones and John Smith, and in preparation for the courses the two men visited selected properties local to that particular area, undertook accurate surveys, and prepared detailed descriptions. This work was published in *Brycheiniog* in a masterly series of articles between 1963 and 1972. In the introduction to Part 1, the Builth district, Jones and Smith wrote "First and foremost we thank Mr Deiniol Williams, Chief Education Officer, who, in carrying out the wishes of the Education Committee, spared no pains to make our visits to the county as productive as they could be. Without his constant aid and encouragement, the fieldwork would not have been as intensive as it was, nor would this article ever have been written; it is in more than one sense inspired by him".[14]

For the survey work, Education Department staff and others would be detailed to act as chauffeurs and general assistants, providing services that would be required by the guest lecturers during their site visits. Eleanor Davies HMI recalls that among the staff delegated to act as chauffeurs was her father W. O. Davies (Headmaster Libanus CP School). Others were Basil Scutt (Headmaster Sennybridge School), Gerald Phillips, Mike Hicks, and John Bray (Education Dept. Admin Staff) and the author, who had the privilege of the company of Dr Brunskill for a few days visiting locations around the county. Others such as Ron Williams (Headmaster of Llangattock School) and Jack Pettican (Gwernyfed Secondary Modern School) provided photographic expertise, recording details of the sites visited. Irrespective of other work commitments, the provision of these services would take priority!

Revision courses for sixth form students

Enthusiasm for Deiniol Williams' own subject—geography—was evident. During the Easter holidays, students studying A Level Geography from all the secondary schools in the County were offered revision courses. These would be tutored by specialist lecturers who would cover specific aspects of the syllabus. Members of his staff, including the author, were delegated to oversee the courses. The Rev Christopher Brown (former pupil of Brecon Grammar School in 1966/67) recollects:

Deiniol Williams, the Chief Education Officer, took a personal interest in the Brecon Boys' Grammar School and assisted (directed?) with Geography Field Trips. Cliff Whittingham was Head of Geography at that time and he was a great enthusiast for promoting his subject. In the summer term we would be taken by coach to various locations in the Brecon Beacons and throughout the County to receive instruction from lecturers who were drawn from University departments in Swansea and Cardiff.

It represented a very significant initiative on the part of Deiniol Williams to broaden the academic horizons of Sixth Formers, especially those who were considering taking up University places; it certainly made us all feel that we were considered worthy to receive the very best which could be provided by the Education Department. Apart from the Geography Field Trips I recall being told on one occasion by Ray Morris who taught R.E. in the Boys' Grammar School that Deiniol would occasionally send to the school, books on Theology and Biblical Studies which he felt would be of benefit to those studying at A Level.

The crucial point which came across was that we, as pupils in the school, knew the Director of Education for the County. I wonder how many school children in Secondary Education today could say that!

Pasiant Y Plant (The Childrens' Pageant) – A Pageant of Breconshire 1958

During the Festival of Wales 1958, the Pageant of Breconshire was written at the request of the County Education Committee. The following description comes from the foreword of *Brycheiniog*, Volume 4:

The year 1958 saw the County of Brecknock celebrating, in manifold ways, the Festival of Wales. In the varied programme, there was one event of great significance and promise for the sponsoring and furthering of interest in the county's history. We refer to the Breconshire Historical Pageant, performed by the pupils of our schools. This Pageant was the outcome of a suggestion, made at a Teachers' Refresher Course in 1957, that the schools should take steps to trace their county's history and present its main features to the inhabitants of Brecknock. The suggestion was taken up with great enthusiasm by the Breconshire Education Committee, the teachers and the pupils, and in particular the Chief Education Officer was instrumental in ensuring the success of the project as he was most concerned to educate the children of Breconshire in their county's history. Helpful and sympathetic support was given by the Ministry of Education and H.M. District Inspector.

The bulk of this Pageant of thirteen episodes was written by the Brecon playwright, Mr. T. C. Thomas, whose contributions to the Drama Movement in Wales are so well known. Another stalwart of the Drama, Mr. Horace Morgan, Ystradgynlais, wrote the remaining two episodes, and the production was under the expert guidance of the County Organisers—Mr. Brinley Jenkins, the County Drama Organiser; Mrs Ogwen Thomas, the County Music Organiser and Mrs. P. Mackintosh, the County Organiser of Physical Education. The whole project fired the imagination of all concerned, and the public performances given by the school

children in their respective school districts were grand, thrilling experiences. The very titles of the Pageant's episodes are, in themselves, revealing: 'The Lake Dwellers of Llangorse Lake'; 'The Romans'; 'Brychan'; 'Cynog'; 'The Normans'; 'The Death of Llywelyn'; 'John Penry'; 'Sarah Siddons'; 'Camhuanawc'; 'The Methodist Revival'; 'The Industrial Revolution'; 'The 24th Regiment', and ending with 'The Noble 24th., 1689–1945 (South Wales Borderers)'.

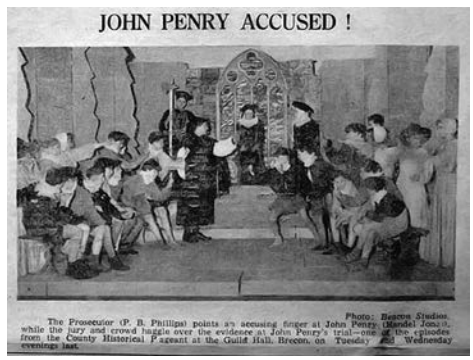

Figure 5. Scene from A Pageant of Breconshire.
Photograph taken from the Brecon and Radnor Express dated 29 May 1958

The thirteen episodes of the Pageant testified to the prominent role played by Breconshire in the history of Wales, providing the cradle for some of its most important cultural and religious movements. A particularly impressive feature was the fact that all the schools—primary and secondary—of the county were involved and that it was produced in all seven education districts: pupils and teachers taking part for their enjoyment and the challenge of public performance. Fig. 5 shows a scene from Episode 7 John Penry (1563–1593).[15] Mike Chappell, then a Sixth Form student at Vaynor and Penderyn Bilateral School, Cefn Coed, remembers playing the part of the Narrator and can still quote some of his lines!

The Pageant received such a warm welcome in the various centres that the Committee decided that every episode should be made available to schools in both languages. The task of translation was entrusted to the teachers of the county. It was also decided to purchase copies of the volume and place these in the Primary and Secondary Schools of the County.[16]

Atlas Brycheiniog/Breconshire Atlas

This Atlas, dedicated "To the children of Breconshire" was launched to coincide with the Autumn Fair (Ffair Galan Gaeaf) in November 1960.[17] It was produced in both Welsh and English and set out to narrate and record the life story of the county from early days to the present. Using maps, pictures, and text, it brought together the social and cultural history of the county, along with the influences of geology and geography.

The initial suggestion for this publication came in 1956 from Miss Cassie Davies MA, HMI Schools, during a stirring address to the Welsh Language and Culture Sub-Committee. The major task of producing the Atlas was achieved through setting up two panels, one from the Welsh Language and

Culture Sub-Committee and the other from teachers within the county; most of whom were either head teachers, heads of Welsh departments, or peripatetic teachers of Welsh.

Deiniol Williams was recognised throughout Wales as a man of vision, and his standing within the academic community was such that he was able to recruit as consultants/contributors such eminent people as Prof E. G. Bowen MA. FSA, Gregynog Professor of Geography and Anthropology, University of Wales Aberystwyth; Miss Norah Isaac MA Trinity College, Carmarthen; Prof William Rees MA DSc, Head of History, University of Wales, Cardiff, and Prof R. Alun Roberts BSc PhD, Department of Agricultural Botany, University of Wales, Bangor.

Following its publication by Gwasg Gomer, Llandysul, copies of the Atlas were distributed free of charge to every school in the county. The publication is still relevant today and some of the information contained in its appendices is unlikely to be found elsewhere.

Brycheiniog: *the journal of the Brecknock Society*

Brycheiniog was first published in 1955. Its origins are described in an article on the first fifty years of the Society by Rev Owain Jones and Onfel Thomas in the following terms:

> The major development of the post war years was the publication of *Brycheiniog,* the Journal of the Brecknock Society […] Breconshire Education Authority's Museum and Local History Sub-Committee examined the possibility of producing a Local History Journal. The Chief Education Officer, Deiniol Williams, exhibited great interest, becoming one of the Joint Editorial Secretaries, and remained an unfailing supporter, attracting to the County a number of distinguished scholars whose works were printed in *Brycheiniog*. Supported by The Welsh Church Acts Committee of Breconshire County Council, *Brycheiniog* was the offspring of a 'marriage' between the Brecknock Society and the Breconshire Education Authority and its Sub-committee.[18]

The founding of the journal has recently been described by Pamela Redwood in the following terms: "In 1955 the Brecknock Society bravely published the first volume of its journal *Brycheiniog* in response to repeated requests. The venture was strongly supported by the Breconshire Education Committee, especially by its inspirational and hard-working Chief Officer, Deiniol Williams, personally and through a Museum and Local History Sub-Committee…".[19]

Deiniol Williams' role as Joint Editorial Secretary was to last from 1955 until 1972, along with, initially, A. Leonard (Secretary to the Education Committee) and subsequently Hywel H. John. It was Deiniol Williams who visited the printers at Newport to discuss the work and, as he knew the Curator at the National Museum, it was he who was successful in gaining the services

of one of the Museum's cartographers for work on *Brycheiniog* in those pre-computer days.

Fig. 6 shows Ald Tudor Watkins MP planting a tree with, in attendance, some of the key figures in relation to the work of the Education Committee and the founding of *Brycheiniog*: Deiniol Williams (on the left), Hywel John and County Councillor David Lewis.

Figure 6. Some key people in relation to the work of the Education Committee and the founding of *Brycheiniog*. A tree is being planted by Ald Tudor Watkins MP. Deiniol Williams is on the extreme left, Hywel John is behind the unknown person holding the tree, and County Councillor David Lewis is on the extreme right (other people include County Councillor J. V. Like, and, behind Mr Lewis, J. A. McRobbie, County Architect, and Huw Williams, Assistant Architect).

Robert John Williams

The Rural Technical Institute at Brecon

I was appointed as County Agricultural Education Officer to Breconshire in 1961 and was responsible to the Chief Education Officer for the discharge of my duties, under the immediate oversight of the Further Education and Youth Officer (H. Prosser Roberts). These duties were to establish and develop a system of Agricultural Education for the benefit of sons and daughters of Breconshire farmers/farm workers implementing the recommendations of the

Report of the Committee on Post-War Agricultural Education in England and Wales,[20] as well as to contribute to the major project of establishing a Rural Technical Institute (RTI) at Brecon, which was to serve the whole county.

From the 1930s, discussions had taken place between Breconshire and adjacent counties of Cardiganshire, Montgomeryshire, and Radnorshire exploring the possibilities of establishing a Farm Institute for mid-Wales, but for various reasons this had not come to fruition. My task, along with other officers, was to prepare the foundations for the establishment of an institute which, as described by Deiniol Williams, "was to be the Polytechnic of mid-Wales", located on the campus of Penlan, Brecon. Many hurdles needed to be overcome to achieve this aim, not least opposition from Breconshire's own councillors, especially from the 'fringe' areas—Brynmawr, Cefn Coed, and Builth Wells—who regarded the development located at Brecon as 'too centrist' and not accessible to their constituents. Variously, the proposed institute was described as a "pink elephant with white spots" and I remember one particularly acrimonious committee meeting in which the Chief Education Officer was described as the "engine driver", the Chairman of the Education Committee as "the stoker", and the Chairman of the Further Education Sub-Committee as "the person running in front with the red flag".[21] Against this background, and one of financial constraints, the polytechnic idea shrank somewhat. However, following innumerable meetings between the Education Department's specialist staff on the one hand, and the County Architects' staff on the other, Breconshire's RTI, officially named Coleg Howell Harris,[22] eventually opened its doors to students on a cold wintry day in January 1965. It provided opportunities in further education for full and part-time students in Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Domestic Economy, Motor Vehicle Engineering, and Commercial Subjects, as well as evening classes in vocational subjects and leisure activities. Despite the earlier opposition, the Coleg did attract students from the four corners of the county and further afield, establishing itself as a major player in the provision of further education, and contributing substantially to the provision of suitably qualified staff to local businesses. Many of its students took advantage of the opportunities on offer to progress to Higher Education.

Life outside work

When Deiniol Williams and his wife, Betsan, moved from Cardiff to Brecon, they lived initially at 10 The Watton. In 1957 they moved to a new house at 4 Hawthorn Lane where they remained for the rest of their time in Brecon.

Betsan was the mainstay of the family: homely, very warm-hearted and generous of spirit. It was a tremendous blow when she died in 1967. The couple had two children: Glenys Mary, born November 1947 and Robert John, born 1951. Both children attended Mount Street School, Glenys going on to the Girls Grammar School[23] and Robert to the Boys Grammar School.[24]

Elizabeth Barlow, daughter of the late Rev Tom Richards, Kensington Baptist Chapel, remembers the warm welcome she received from the family when visiting to play with Glenys; since she was a Welsh speaker, her visit was doubly welcome! Robert recalls "that the family would sit down together for the evening meal and would 'catch up' on the day's happenings, following which Dad would retire to his study and, very often, staff would visit on work matters". An occasion clearly remembered by Robert was when they were living in No 10 The Watton, "Dad digging the garden in his 'plus fours' with Steve Roderick, asked to visit complete with clipboard and writing paper, taking dictated notes walking up and down keeping pace". Robert has also commented "For a fortnight each summer we would holiday on the Gower and during this time we had Dad's whole attention—all work having been left in Brecon. These were exceptionally enjoyable occasions".

Robert himself is fondly remembered by Anthony Jones, a neighbour living at 1 Hawthorn Lane, "Robert was a keen Boy Scout, who built a boat in the garden of 4 Hawthorn Lane". Following his mother's death in 1967, when he was only 15 years old, Robert was given a weekly shopping allowance to manage the household for his father and himself.

As practising Christians, the family worshipped at Bethel Methodist Chapel (the site currently occupied by Boots the Chemist), Glenys and Robert attending Sunday School. Deiniol Williams is remembered by former Bethel Sunday School pupil, Wynne Rees, as an Elder, Superintendent of the Sunday School and Announcer of forthcoming services and events.

> For the Welsh service on Sunday mornings, the Church Secretary might have had a telephone call from a visiting Minister to say that for whatever reason he couldn't fulfil his engagement for the following day. The Secretary would visit Mr Williams to see if he would be prepared to help out on that Sunday morning, invariably the answer was 'yes'. However, he did not take a text from the scriptures and preach a sermon but would give a talk about, for example, a well-known hymn writer from Anglesey who had, at some stage, moved to work and live in Cardiff. He would furnish details of the man's background and extol his achievements – 'not only had he done (a) (b) and (c) but also, in an ascending tone of voice (e) and (f)'. One could see that he had been a lecturer! His geography background came to the fore as well, as reminding the congregation that at that time Cardiff was far from being the biggest town in Wales, that honour would fall to Merthyr and he would include the statistics.

It might seem that Deiniol Williams had few interests apart from work, his family, and chapel. However, he was extremely widely read and in earlier life had been an enthusiastic cyclist and photographer. As Robert has said, "very few photographs of Dad exist as he was a very keen photographer and therefore always behind the camera!".

He remained a keen walker and quite often on Saturdays and Bank Holidays he would be seen walking up to Llanddew village then across the Honddu Valley joining the Upper Chapel road returning down Pendre to Brecon.

Retirement

Unfortunately, Deiniol Williams was not in good health when he retired on 31 August 1972. The minutes of the Education Committee record his valuable service to the Authority.[25] Thus, the Chairman, Councillor J. V. Like, (Hay-on-Wye) stated that, "throughout his service Mr Williams had been a conscientious and efficient officer and that he had carried out his duties with dignity and courtesy and had made a great contribution towards the development of the Education Service in Breconshire and Wales as a whole, that the post of Chief Education Officer was a difficult and demanding one and his success was evidence of his commitment to Education". Mr Like extended his warm thanks for his excellent service and his best wishes for a long and happy retirement, and other members supported the Chairman's appreciation as did Mr W. O. Davies (Headmaster Libanus CP School and National Union of Teachers (NUT) representative on the Education Committee) on behalf of all teachers and pupils of the County along with Councillor F. H. Jones as the Mayor of Brecon.

The Brecon and Radnor Express recorded that:

> A presentation was made recently to Mr Deiniol Williams who is retiring after 24 years as Chief Education Officer for Breconshire. Mr Onfel Thomas (Headmaster of Builth Wells CP School and County President of NUT) presented Mr Williams with a cheque and in doing so thanked him for his long and loyal service and wished him many years of happy retirement. Mr Williams suitably responded and indicated that he will purchase something that will remind him of his years in Breconshire.[26]

Very sadly, he was not destined to enjoy a long retirement as his health deteriorated so rapidly that he became an in-patient at the Mid Wales Hospital, Talgarth, where he died on 10 January 1974. The funeral service took place at Bethel Chapel on a Sunday evening, which was attended by Councillors, teachers and others from all parts of the County and beyond. The following day he was laid to rest alongside Betsan at Maeshyfryd Cemetery, Holyhead, Anglesey.

The Breconshire Education Committee minutes of 22 January 1974 recorded a vote of condolence in which the Chairman referred to the recent death of Mr Deiniol Williams following a long illness. Members stood in silence as a mark of respect for the deceased.[27]

Conclusions

This brought to an end a memorable period when significant developments occurred in the provision of education in Breconshire; these initiated, guided,

and brought to fruition by one man. Deiniol Williams' conviction was that, although the children of the county were growing up in communities, whether rural or urban, that were far from the major centres of power, they none-the-less deserved the best. And he would ensure that they got it!

Major changes have taken place in the 44 years since he retired, not all of them for the better. It is fortunate that Deiniol Williams was Chief Education Officer at a time when budget and curriculum constraints were not as stringent as today, also, that with a very supportive Chairman of the Education Committee, his ideas could be put into practice. The list of achievements recorded above underlines the importance of his contribution to Breconshire education but it is perhaps a reflection of the modesty of the man that the formal record of his input is thin and, until this article, has relied upon the memories of a few. It was a privilege to have known and worked with Deiniol Williams—Cawr o Ddyn ('A giant of a man'!)

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Glenys and Michael Halsey (daughter and son-in-law of Deiniol Williams) and Robert Williams (son) for much helpful information. Contributions from individuals are acknowledged in the text but I wish to make special mention of the help of my former colleague Stephen Roderick and Mike Churchill-Jones, Researcher on the TV programme, *Coming Home*. I would also like to thank the Archivists of Powys County Council, Brecknock Museum Staff, Tom Harman, Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, Powys County Council.

Notes

[1] Archivist, Aberystwyth University.

[2] Archivist, Liverpool University.

[3] The Aberdare Boys' Grammar School 1896–1978, http://www.abgs.org.uk/ (accessed 31 January 2017). (Interestingly, the chemistry teacher, Samuel Vaughan Evans, standing next to Deiniol Williams in the photograph, was the author's great uncle).

[4] The Memorial College was a Congregational college for the training of ministers in Brecon. It closed in 1959.

[5] Minutes of Breconshire Education Committee: 20 January 1948.

[6] Minutes of Breconshire Education Committee: 20 April 20 1948. It was a very strong field with candidates from many parts of Wales. At least one of the other short-listed candidates went on to take a senior educational post.

[7] Stephen Roderick, Llandrindod Wells.

[8] The Burnham committee—properly the Burnham Primary and Secondary and Burnham Further Education Committees—was responsible for setting teachers' pay in the UK from 1919 until the committees were abolished by the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1987.

[9] Gedge 2005: 237.

[10] The Nuffield Science Teaching Project was a programme to develop a better approach to teaching science in British schools: its use of discovery learning was influential in the 1960s and 1970s. The initial focus was on the course to 'O' level but a Junior Science Project on primary school teaching was added by 1966.

[11] Gamaliel was a first-century Jewish rabbi who is mentioned in the Bible as a famous and well-respected teacher; Acts 5:34–40.

[12] In Fig. 88 of Brunskill 1985, the author illustrates a house at Merthyr Cynog, which I have established is Fan Isaf, Pontfaen. In Brunskill 1982, Fig 46 is a stable at Cathedine, Fig 48, a farmyard with pigsties, is Llandegman, Tretower, Fig 69, granary interior, is Fenni Fach, and Fig 108, hay barn of timber and corrugated sheeting, is Llawr Llan, Crickadarn.

[13] Gibbs 2017.

[14] Jones and Smith 1963.

[15] John Penry was born at Cefn Brith, Llangammarch Wells, graduated from Peterhouse College, Cambridge, and as a result of his preaching and writings he was accused and found guilty of treason and hanged on 29 May 1593.

[16] This paragraph comes from the Foreword to 'Pasiant Brycheiniog - the Pageant of Breconshire' published in 1967 by Gwasg Gomer Llandysul.

[17] This dates back to the Middle Ages and is still held today!

[18] Jones and Thomas 1976/7.

[19] Redwood 2012.

[20] The Report of the Committee on Post-War Agricultural Education in England and Wales (De la Warr Report, 1958).

[21] Carmarthenshire, Monmouthshire and Glamorgan had already made provision for agricultural education.

[22] The name was chosen in recognition of the large part played by Howell Harris of Trefecca in establishing the Brecknock Agricultural Society, the aims of which were mirrored in this new college.

[23] Glenys went on to the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where she graduated with an Honours Degree in History during the summer of 1968, followed by research on 'Diplomacy in the Battle of the Somme' for a Master of Arts degree.

[24] Robert went to Barry Teacher Training College 1969 to 1972, after which he pursued a career in outdoor pursuits in Anglesey.

[25] Minutes of Breconshire Education Committee: 4 July 1972.

[26] Brecon and Radnor Express and County Times, 20 July 1972.

[27] Minutes of Breconshire Education Committee: 22 January 1974.

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Ieuan R. Evans is a native of Carmarthenshire, graduated from University College of North Wales, Bangor, began his career in Agricultural Education in Merionethshire, and was appointed as County Agricultural Officer for Breconshire in 1961 where he worked closely with Deiniol Williams. Over the years, he has developed a keen interest in the ceramics of South Wales, written a book (with his wife, Gwyneth) on Ewenny Pottery and lectures on Swansea Pottery and Nantgarw Porcelain, as well as being a keen collector of Welsh Art.

CULTURE AND CONSCIOUSNESS WITHIN THE MARCHER LORDSHIP OF BRECKNOCK

IVAN PRICE

Introduction

The invasion of Brycheiniog by Bernard de Neufmarché (anglicised to Newmarch) in 1093 irrevocably changed the Brecknock area in terms of political, economic, and social behaviours (Fig. 1). The aim of this article is to show that there was an existing culture, unique to pre-invasion Brycheiniog that was not eradicated by the invading Normans. Rather, it was appropriated by them within the lordship of Brecknock to justify and solidify their rule. This requires a consideration of culture and identity in Brecon during the twelfth century, and an examination of the consciousness of the inhabitants within wider Welsh and Anglo-Norman identity. This article also aims to provide evidence that the Anglo-Norman invasion enhanced this local identity, as ties between native and invader became stronger against outside incursion.

Figure 1. Bernard de Neufmarché (anglicised to Newmarch) from a carving in Brecon Cathedral.

Mike Williams

History of the Welsh Marches

The history of the Welsh Marches has been extensively documented.[1] However, many of these works, albeit devoting much space to Marcher lordship, have a broader focus, considering the Marches collectively as part of a wider review of Welsh history.[2] Accordingly, the Marches are treated as a single entity, which they were assuredly not. Medieval Brecknock fares better than others, and is documented separately in William Rees' paper 'The Mediaeval Lordship of Brecknock'.[3] In this seminal work, Rees chronicles the development of the lordship through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, emphasising both its political and economic history.

In recent years, David Stephenson has produced work that critiques much of the historiography of Marcher studies. Stephenson, in his important article for *Brycheiniog*,[4] gives a valuable insight into Brecknock in the twelfth century,

opposing the established view of the period, which is primarily viewed through an Anglo-Norman lens. He believes that such a view is too Anglo-centric and fails to account for any Welsh presence and active participation in events.[5] Through his writing, Stephenson rightly seeks to correct this stance.

Stephenson's conclusions suggest that, beginning in the twelfth century but particularly through the thirteenth century, there was a growing mutual acculturation of, what began as two very different, societies within the lordship.[6] He notes that there was a dual aspect to Brecknock in the twelfth century, a position also taken by Brook Holden, who notes the patchy quality of Anglo-Norman settlement.[7] Where Stephenson takes issue with Holden is the latter's insistence that the dual aspect of Brecknock manifested in the separateness of society and culture, where the native populations were ousted to the uplands on the periphery of Anglo-Norman lordship.[8] Holden implies an inherent division between the Welsh and Anglo-Norman invaders, which Stephenson views as merely following the stereotypical view of Marcher history, where the Welsh are an anonymous group only seen threatening from the fringes.[9]

This paper seeks a middle ground and suggests that the actual situation probably had aspects of both approaches. Whilst there appears to have been a distinct society within the lordship (Stephenson's position) it still carried elements of being 'dual aspect' (Holden's position) but, as this paper argues, held within the identity of individuals within society, rather than society as a whole. Both Anglo-Norman and Welsh inhabitants of Brecknock operated under a dual or fluid identity. It tied loyalties to the locality more and more tightly as the twelfth century progressed, as opposed to antecedent Welsh or Anglo-Norman identity. This occurred through an acculturation process that, as Stephenson identifies, has its origins in the twelfth century. However, this approach can be developed further. Not only did acculturation begin in the twelfth century, it is likely that it developed markedly in that first century of the lordship. The evidence of change and continuity within the lordship of Brecknock suggests that people simultaneously existed in both a separate and an intertwined society, with identities gradually mixing and producing something unique.

To analyse culture within the lordship, there are several categories of evidence: material; documentary; and literary. All are scarce for Brecknock in the twelfth century but careful examination of the data, such as exists, can give useful insights.

Culture within the lordship

Material culture is assumed to be broadly similar to other medieval finds in Wales.[10] But the evidence is more striking from its absence than its presence. The modern town of Brecon, for example, appears to be situated on top of an earlier settlement but little evidence remains from the medieval period, let

alone the twelfth century. An exception to this is the scant Romanesque architecture that can be found in St John's Priory (now the Cathedral), St Mary's church, and the castle.[11] The Priory was founded about 1110 by Bernard de Neufmarché, who also built the nearby castle, but remains of both are vanishingly small. In the Priory, only the font is of Anglo-Norman date (although it may be fruitful to speculate over the thickness of the walls, surely over-engineered for a fourteenth century rebuilding, and what they may contain at their core) (Fig. 2). The font is of the genre of the Herefordshire School of Sculpture and supports carvings that may have both local and foreign inspiration, with the eagle design, for example, possibly adapted from Byzantine silks.[12] St Mary's Church boasts a single column surviving from the Anglo-Norman period, although its very survival suggests it was revered for some reason; the existence of an aumbry for a patron saint may provide a clue (Fig. 3). Of the castle, also built by Bernard, little remains except the motte and its associated baily outline, preserved in the footprint of later additions (Fig. 4). Beyond the establishment of the castle, town, and priory in the twelfth century, it is very difficult to draw any firm conclusions from material remains.

Figure 2. The Anglo-Norman font in Brecon Cathedral. Mike Williams

Figure 3. St Mary's Church, Brecon. The Anglo-Norman column is nearest on the left. Wikicommons: Llywelyn2000

Figure 4. The overgrown motte from Bernard de Neufmarché's original castle in Brecon. Mike Williams

There is other evidence, however, that perhaps more clearly suggests a merging of societies and the formation of a culture unique to the lordship. The strongest physical evidence comes from the place names of Brecknock in the twelfth century. Bernard, for example, named the new central town of his lordship 'Brecon' after the legendary Welsh king, Brychan. Brecon was ostensibly a new town, not one taken over by the Anglo-Normans, but built by them. Whilst there is suggestive evidence for an existing 'llan' and pre-Anglo-Norman construction at the site of the priory church,[13] there is a distinct lack of documentary or physical evidence to suggest any other settlement at Brecon prior to Bernard's arrival (although it is possible that any remains have been buried underneath the modern settlement; speculation as to their existence remains moot). Yet Brecon is not named after the conqueror of Brycheiniog (Bernard) but after its former mythical king (Brychan). Although Bernard established a new centre for his lordship, a distance removed from the original centre at Talgarth, (and arguably establishing that something monumental had occurred) the use of Brecon as a name suggests an element of continuity and even allowance to the conquered population. Furthermore, and this can be seen across the entire lordship, original Welsh names of settlements were not generally changed by the invaders. The estates of Bernard's tenants, for example, show that the Welsh names for places were retained.[14] This is also evidenced by grants recorded in the Brecon cartulary.[15] It appears that the culture of the people of Brycheiniog was appropriated by the Anglo-Normans rather than overwritten. Moreover, the reasons for this can be traced to the earliest establishment of the lordship.

By 1088, Bernard's conquest of Brycheiniog had penetrated as far as Glasbury. Records of the Abbey of St. Peter's in Gloucester (an existing foundation reinvigorated by the Anglo-Normans) show that the church of Glasbury (dedicated to an important local saint[16]) was granted to them that year.[17] From here, Bernard progressed to Talgarth, the ancient seat of power of the kings of Brycheiniog, where he established a controlling motte, still forming the mound to Bronllys Castle. The conquest of the rest of the kingdom continued from Talgarth in the years up to 1093, by which time Bernard had reached Brecon and established his castle at the confluence of the Honddu River into the Usk.[18] Bernard went on to reign as lord until c.1125.[19] Strikingly, it is here that Rhys ap Tewdwr, king of Deheubarth, was killed by the Anglo-Normans of Brecon.[20] Rhys was a formidable power in South Wales and had to be overcome before the conquest of Brycheiniog could be completed.[21] Once conquered, Bernard established the borough of Brecon, along with St. John's Priory church.

The lord as king?

Brecon Priory is of particular importance in the context of the culture of the lordship. Once built, Bernard was persuaded by a man named Roger—a

Benedictine monk of Battle Abbey in Sussex, who was staying with him—to give the Priory and other lands to Battle Abbey.[22] Accordingly, Roger, and a fellow monk called Walter, established a Benedictine foundation at Brecon and received their first endowments of land, with Walter becoming the first prior.[23] But, for Bernard, the link with Battle Abbey may go deeper still. Battle Abbey was reputably built in penance to account for Christian lives lost during Duke William of Normandy's victory over Harold Godwinson and his Anglo-Saxon army (Fig. 5). Was Bernard, in giving Brecon Priory to this specific abbey, trying to position himself as a conqueror of Wales, emulating William's conquest of England? If so, the fact that Brecon Priory reputedly lies on the spot of the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, may be extremely significant.[24] The high altar at Battle Abbey was positioned over the reputed location where Harold fell and died (Fig. 6). The similarity of symbolism is striking. Moreover, Bernard's emulation of William, if this is what he was doing, reinforces the view that continuity was his aim. His self-proclaimed comparison to William not only enhanced his image as a conqueror, but as a conqueror of a *kingdom*. It suggests that Bernard replaced an existing king much as William had done in England. Bernard was acting to gain individual power, rather than bringing Brycheiniog into the orbit of the existing Anglo-Norman kingdom.

Figure 5. Remains of Battle Abbey, Sussex. The ruins of the eleventh-century Chapter House are in the foreground, with the remains of the twelfth-century monks' dormitory beyond. Mike Williams

Figure 6. The traditional site of the high altar at Battle Abbey. The text reads: The traditional site of the high altar of Battle Abbey founded to commemorate the victory of Duke William on 14 October 1066 | The high altar was placed to mark the spot where King Harold died. Mike Williams

Continuity, or an attempt at such, can also be noted by the presence of Fforest Fawr, the Great Forest of Brecknock. The Great Forest was directly controlled by the lords of Brecknock and, although there are few records for the forest prior to 1300, there is enough evidence for William Rees to describe the forest in the twelfth century as an area that covered the south-western border of

Brecknockshire, from the source of the Usk up over the highlands of the Brecon Beacons.[25] This provided good cover for game, which supplied fresh meat during the winter to supplement the salted domestic animals culled in the autumn.[26]

The forest was a unique feature of the Marcher lords; in England, a 'forest' was a strictly royal preserve with lesser lords having 'chases' in imitation of the monarch.[27] The differing names reflected a difference in status rather than any physical variation.[28] It is this careful naming that makes the *forests* of the March important; that they were specifically called forests was a symbol of how the Marcher lord defined himself. He saw himself as having wrested royal power away from its previous occupant and, as such, saw himself as a *de facto* ruler, not a sub-ordinate to an English monarch. Rather than erasing native Welsh culture, the Anglo-Norman lords were seeking to integrate themselves as a continuum of existing history in order to justify their rule.

There are limits to this approach. The Anglo-Normans who invaded and settled the Marches were not simply emulating the native Welsh and, in so doing, abandoning their English holdings or their outlook back into England. These were not Anglo-Normans becoming Welsh. At some level, they are conquering and settling Wales for the power and influence these additional lands could give them in England. What is unique to the Marches, and particularly Brecknock, is that the Anglo-Norman settlers in the twelfth century maintained a fluid identity that was matched by the native inhabitants (whose identity and culture will be discussed below).

The conquest of these lands by Anglo-Norman lords altered the dynamic of power in England in the twelfth century. Marcher lordships were not like English shires. They were privately owned land obtained through conquest, closer in form to the English manors.[29] As such, Marcher lands (which were much larger than most English territories) were outside the normal governmental structure of both England and Wales. All the land (except that in ecclesiastical hands) was the lord's and people tied to that land were answerable to him.[30] Being outside the jurisdiction of royal officials, the individual lordships were a potent power base for their rulers. This is evidenced by the influential positions that two Marcher lords held in England as a result of their holdings in the Brecknock area. Miles of Gloucester became key in the conflict between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda due to his holdings in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and, particularly, Wales.[31] William de Braose gained a powerful position as the favourite of King John, in part, due to the resources he could call upon within his power bloc in the March (comprising Builth, Radnor, and Brecon). This power could be helpful to the King of England and the rulers of Welsh territories but, as Max Lieberman points out, Marcher lords, even lesser ones like the lord of Brecknock/Brecon, could also prove to be—and frequently were—a constant irritation to both. The Marcher lords had an 'independent

spirit' and, while they lacked the number of knights to call upon than some of the great earldoms, the crucial difference was that the knights available to the lords owed service to them alone, and not to the king. This gave the lords a potent military backing to political ambitions.[32] The Marcher lordships effectively became autonomous units, which were controlled solely by the lord, with little external control possible by the King of England and none by the native Welsh princes (beyond attempting military intervention).

Religion and belief in the lordship

The effort taken by these independent lords to appropriate indigenous culture and maintain cultural continuity can be seen in the religious life of the lordship. Whilst the introduction of the Latin Church into Wales had a dramatic social impact, there is evidence that cults of the Brycheiniog saints remained strong, even after the establishment of the lordship of Brecknock. Many churches existing were founded to honour local saints, in particular Cynog and Cynidr, who were a son and grandson of Brychan.[33] The historical evidence shows that Brecon Priory went to some effort to stake claims to these churches, but, in general, local saints were not usurped by 'foreign' saints. (Although the prevalence of churches dedicated to St John the Evangelist—such as Brecon Priory—or St Mary—such as St Mary's in Brecon—suggest that such continuance was not universal. These saints were popular with the Normans and perhaps with Bernard personally). More reliably perhaps, is the evidence that local saints continued to be celebrated, as evidenced by Giraldus Cambrensis' witness of a feast day for St Eluned, daughter of Brychan, (alongside which, he also notes that many of the churches were dedicated to other sons and daughters of Brychan).[34] Giraldus was a gossip, and evidence from his work is limited to whatever caught his fancy, but there is just enough to imply that the Church, like the lords of Brecknock, were adapting to local culture as much as the local population were adapting to the social transformation of the area. An individual regional identity was being created.

As intimated earlier, the Priory obtained control over many of the churches within the lordship during its early years, including the churches of Hay, Llanigon, and Talgarth.[35] Even the monks themselves appear avaricious. For example, they claimed the church of St Paulinus at Llangorse, despite protests from the bishop of Llandaff (as by claiming it, the church would pass into the diocese of St David's, of which Brecknock was part).[36] In addition, they also acquired the chapel of St Eluned, just outside Brecon itself (Fig. 7).[37] That they gained these churches, apparently with the consent and even encouragement of the bishop(s) of St David's,[38] supports the view that the Priory was a consciously transformative social force within the lordship's parochial system. The Priory and its monks actively sought to bring ancient churches into the orbit of the monastic order.[39]

The monks' relationship with the laity, both inside and outside the town, is a subject that remains conjectural. The rule of St Benedict defined the monks, but how far did they exist within the wider communities of which they found themselves part? In general terms, monasteries within towns provided benefits for both parties, as they could depend on each other (the monastery gaining physical and legal protection from the town and the town gaining prestige, intelligentsia, and consumers from the monastery).[40]

Figure 7. St Eluned's Chapel lay to the right of the tree. Eluned's martyrdom happened just a little further down the slope. Mike Williams

It is unclear in Brecon how far the monks were involved at a parochial level; sadly, the twelfth-century evidence is not substantial enough to draw any firm conclusions. However, from their many acquisitions, it seems that the Priory did not remain a purely economic force in the lordship, but had an impact within the parishes. Also, the Priory received grants of burgesses within the borough itself, meaning that it could exert influence, both socially and economically, within the urban environment (although the presence of the Benedictine Priory within the vicinity of the town contrasts sharply with later Cistercian foundations, despite adhering to the same Rule).[41] As an institution based on its location and acquisitions, Brecon Priory came to preside over the religious lives of the people of the lordship, both Anglo-Norman and Welsh; this undoubtedly created a cultural tie between the founder lord and the people he ruled. The fact that not all local cults were replaced, even as the ecclesiastical structure changed, shows that the Church did not alter the culture of twelfth-century Brycheiniog out of all recognition.

Administrative and economic change

There were further changes to Brecknock during the twelfth century. Social change was matched by changes with Anglo-Norman administrative and economic practices. However, even here, acculturation between the invaders and the invaded seems likely.

In the aftermath of the establishment of the lordship, the productive arable lands of the river valleys were more readily exploited. Returning to the anecdotal testimony of Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Journey Through Wales*, describes Brecknock as "produc[ing] a great amount of corn", presumably from the exploitation of river valleys.[42] But, tellingly, he also adds that there is "ample pasture…full of cattle".[43] This is probably a reference to the upland areas of the lordship, where pastoralism prevailed (arable farming being less

productive at higher elevations).[44] Moreover, it was these upland pastures that were occupied by the native Welsh population.

The importance of cattle to the lordship can also be inferred from another of Giraldus' lively commentaries. He describes, during his journey across Breconshire, an occasion of spiritual frenzy at the chapel of St Eluned (which we saw had been acquired by the Priory), during which people imitated their jobs in life. The professions that stand out for Giraldus are the ploughman, the cowherd, the cobbler, and the tanner.[45] Can this be coincidence or is it inferential that the production of leather products was important within the lordship, both perhaps for the lord's revenue and for trade within the town? Certainly, during the twelfth century, the lordship of Brecknock was beginning to flourish economically. If these tenuous links hold, there must have been interplay between the predominantly Welsh upland population and the settled population of the town, which contained a higher proportion of Anglo-Normans. The borough was the place where trade would have taken place and the incomers and natives must have co-existed with tolerable equanimity. Rather than integrated or separate societies, there was, perhaps, one intertwined society.

When the ruling Welsh dynasty was replaced, a new trend of ownership was introduced. This necessitated enactment of new administrative powers. But these changes took time to come into force. This restrained pace may result from the strength of independent culture surviving in the uplands of the lordship. During the twelfth century, populations in the uplands retained many customs and features of the preceding Welsh administration. The system of cantrefs and commotes, for example, had been in place before the Anglo-Norman invasion and remained in place throughout the twelfth century.[46] It is here, perhaps, that the once independent culture of Brycheiniog was kept alive. Elsewhere, as we have seen, the evidence is different. The co-existence of two forms of administration shows a dual and—since we have seen that there would have been much interaction between these two forms—moreover, a fluid identity distinct to Brecknock.

Literary sources

There are several literary sources that discuss twelfth-century Brecknock, together with stories about the former kingdom of Brycheiniog. Most notably: Walter Map's *De Nugis Curialium* and Giraldus' *Journey Through Wales*.

Map's *De Nugis Curialium*, contains three tales of people in Breconshire. The first is about an unusually pious member of William de Braose's retinue, which Map, perhaps mischievously, calls 'very uncommon'.[47] The second tells the tale of King Brychan and an invasion of Brycheiniog by men of Deheubarth; Brychan is described as emerging victorious over the boastful enemy, despite his vicious temper.[48] The third tells of how a boy from Hay provoked the anger

of two men from a neighbouring kingdom (or lordship; the date is not specified), only for the two pursuers to turn on each other.[49] Map's tone is strongly moralistic and he uses these tales to highlight, what he sees, as the negative aspects of existing Welsh society. This may be because Map, who despite being reputed to have lived in the March of Wales, was Bishop of St Asaph during his lifetime. As a member of the Anglo-Norman Church, Map was perhaps attempting to demonstrate the barbarity of the Welsh in order to justify Anglo-Norman conquest.[50] Of course, by unintended coincidence, such criticism has preserved the stories of the old kingdom and with them a distinct regional identity for Brecknock.

The independence of culture is also reflected in Giraldus' accounts of his home county. Despite the reservations outlined earlier, Gerald's two works, *The Journey Through Wales* and *The Description of Wales*, both produced c.1194, are the most valuable sources existing about Wales and its people in the twelfth century. Giraldus was Archdeacon of Brecon during the twelfth century and possessed a residence in Llanddew, only a mile or so from Brecon itself.[51] He is the only contemporary source that directly talks about the lordship of Brecknock and its inhabitants.[52] Giraldus devotes a whole (albeit short) chapter of his *Journey* to the lordship of Brecknock; he describes the history of the conquest, and the inheritance of the lordship from Bernard to his own time, when William III de Braose was lord.[53] Of particular interest are the stories that Giraldus tells of religious and mystical experiences that have occurred in the lordship (we have already seen his tales associated with St Eluned's chapel). Another location for many of Giraldus' stories is Llangorse Lake. Llangorse, like Talgarth, was a royal centre for the kingdom of Brycheiniog, as the discovery of a crannog on the lake demonstrates (Fig. 8), and the presence of the lake in these stories suggests that its memory and significance was still current in the twelfth century.[54] The history and culture of Brycheiniog was being conserved even after the establishment of a new Anglo-Norman lordship. Moreover, like Map's work, Giraldus shows how the invaders adapted to local tradition. Giraldus himself is part of this invasion, of course; despite being part Welsh, he is part of the Latin ecclesiastical structure. But he, like the people he wrote about, seemed to live in a place that was both ancient Brycheiniog and new Brecknock.

Figure 8. Llangorse lake crannog.
Mike Williams

The evidence so far leans towards there being a distinct regional identity present in the lordship of Brecknock in the twelfth century. There are local

saints, local history, and local superstitions that are unique to Brecknock and they form a shared identity between the indigenous and Anglo-Norman invaders. If anything, the unique culture within the lordship was based in the kingdom of Brycheiniog and not in the origins of the Anglo-Norman invaders (allowing for Bernard's individualistic placement within recent Norman history). However, this cultural integration did not necessarily lead to physical assimilation; the Welsh of the lordship were still differentiated from the Norman lords in terms of location and socio-economic identity. But this suggests something more. For the Welsh, identity was taken from a shared Brycheiniog/Brecknock model but also from wider Welsh distinctiveness. This second identity must now be explored.

Identifying 'Welsh'

It seems clear that people who lived west of Offa's Dyke (to adopt a colloquialism) did indeed think of themselves as belonging to a collective culture before the twelfth century. The people of Brycheiniog were part of a wider 'Welshness' with a common story, and, indeed, continued to be so after the establishment of the lordship of Brecknock and throughout the twelfth century. As such, we can, to an extent, talk of 'the Welsh' as one people, even though their experience varies, sometimes considerably, over the breadth of Wales. Once again, the lack of material culture is a hindrance, but, there is a common literary culture to compensate for any paucity of actual artefacts. This common culture is apparent, for example, by the completion in 1136 of the *History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth.[55] Geoffrey, somewhat ironically, was probably of neither Welsh nor Norman decent but may have been born of Breton parents, who formed part of Duke William's entourage in 1066.[56] Yet Geoffrey's 'history' is a useful barometer of pre-Anglo-Norman Wales and, by extension, of Brycheiniog.

In his 'history', Geoffrey portrays the story of the Britons, who are presented as, somewhat confusingly, the non-Anglo-Saxon ancestors of the Welsh. Geoffrey even provides an origin myth for these Britons, stating that they descend from a survivor of the fall of Troy, one Brutus (from whom the Britons supposedly get their name).[57] By implication, he associates Welsh identity with that of the original indigenous inhabitants of the island of Britain. This position is consistent with other Cambro-Latin texts up to the twelfth century.[58] A separate 'identity' and origin was a persistent mentality for, what would become, the Welsh people and, for the purposes of this paper, the original inhabitants of Brecknock.

The twelfth century saw the use of the words 'Wales' and 'Welsh' replace the use of 'Britain' and 'Britons' as descriptions within Latin texts. Both Geoffrey and Giraldus saw this as a loss of status and, indeed, Giraldus used the term 'Cambria' to refer to *his* Wales.[59] In more recent times, Huw Pryce has

interpreted this change not as a loss of status, but as a change to more accurately place the Welsh, not just in relation to the past, but within a specific geographic context as well.[60] The change reflected the ability to express in Latin the change that had already occurred in the Welsh language, where, by 1100, *Cymry* had become the root term for Wales and the Welsh.[61]

The Welsh were given a common origin story by Geoffrey. Taking advantage of Giraldus' reputation as a gossip and repeater of tales, the independent spirit of Welsh consciousness comes across throughout his work; Giraldus portrays the Welsh as fierce warriors, from the top of society to the bottom.[62] Giraldus also gives an account of Welsh "nature, manners and customs".[63] He praises Welsh hospitality and intelligence, their wit and boldness.[64] However, he also criticises the Welsh and does not shy away from describing their less admirable qualities. According to Giraldus, to be Welsh is to be "fickle" and to never to be able to keep your word, in fact the phrase "to welch' [renege] on a deal' arises from these comments.[65] Giraldus also condemns the Welsh greed for land and the resultant feuds that frequently erupt between family members.[66] It is this feuding quality, specifically, that Gerald marks out as a trait of the people of the lordship of Brecknock in the twelfth century;[67] a tantalising insight into the character of Brecknock people. Unfortunately, and rather damningly for his home county, this is all Giraldus mentioned about them.

But Giraldus is not without bias towards his native neighbours; he spent his life attempting to get the bishopric of St David's recognised as a metropolitan see by the Pope, thus making it independent of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[68] Whilst grinding this axe, he may be guilty of exaggerating the generosity and piousness of the Welsh.[69] Certainly Walter Map, who called Welsh piety 'uncommon' and finds just one pious Welshman unusual enough to be worthy of note, may disagree.[70] Giraldus may even be accused of being overly patriotic; born to a Norman father and a Welsh mother he may have identified as, at least in part, Welsh himself.[71] This patriotic attitude may account for the final chapter of his *Description*, where Giraldus describes how the Welsh should resist the Anglo-Norman encroachment of Wales.[72] His father may not have agreed. Moreover, in the penultimate paragraph of the *Description*, Giraldus specifically counter-points the Welsh to the Anglo-Norman invaders in a statement that perhaps shows his affection for Wales best, "the English", he states, "are fighting for power, the Welsh for freedom"; a view that was alarmingly prescient.[73]

Giraldus' image of the people of Wales is supported by Walter Map in his work, *De Nugis Curialium* (although how independent these views were of each other is open to question). He, like Giraldus, notes the hospitality of the Welsh, but also describes how violent they can be. This was not directed towards the Anglo-Norman invaders as brave and courageous freedom fighters, but towards each other in feuding and brutality.[74] For Map, like Giraldus, the

Welsh are a people that are culturally different to the English. However, unlike Giraldus, for Map, the inference is that the difference lies in the apparent lack of a civilising influence on the Welsh.

Cultural consciousness

These sources, however sketchy, provide an insight into the cultural consciousness of the Welsh in the twelfth century. This is what gave the indigenous people in the lordship of Brecknock their additional cultural identity. The evidence, as analysed, shows that the Welsh people of Brecknock fitted into Wales as a cultural group; they shared mannerisms and history. However, they also had a definite Anglo-Norman-Welsh regional identity that separated them from other Welsh people. The Welsh of Brecknock did not necessarily have a political loyalty to 'Wales' as we think of it today; the concept of fighting for a 'Welsh nation' is one that emerges later than this period. Although princes such as Rhodri Mawr and Hywel Dda had managed to unite large parts of Wales in the centuries before the Norman conquests,[75] there was no 'Prince of Wales' figurehead (as there would be in the thirteenth century) for people to rally behind. This may due to a crucial concept in the formation of Welsh 'identity'; belonging to a *gwlad*. Glanmor Williams translates this, not as country, as we might have it, but as a region or locality.[76] He argues that even in the twelfth century, when the opposition of a common enemy had put a 'sharper edge' on the sense of Welsh identity, Welsh people still did not conceive themselves as fighting for a country.[77]

The evidence all points to the Welsh population of Brecknock having a fluid identity and of their regional loyalty being strong. But this cannot be allowed to overreach itself. It is significant to bear in mind Stephenson's evidence, collated from the *Brut*, that highlights how insecure the lordship was in the twelfth century, in contrast to the stability often portrayed in the historiography.[78] There were many conflicts between the Anglo-Normans and the Welsh in Brecknock during this period. However, it is important to note, as Stephenson does, that these attacks and invasions arise primarily from populations outside the lordship, rather than internal uprisings.[79] They were led, not by a displaced claimant of the old kingdom of Brycheiniog, but by dynasties of other Welsh kingdoms. It is impossible to say how far the native population of Brecknock were involved in these conflicts. Did they support or even join the Welsh dynasties from outside in attempts to 'retake' Brecknock, and specifically Brecon, for the Welsh? Or did they support their Anglo-Norman lords? Or neither? These are questions that are impossible to answer reliably, but there is one incident that is telling. In 1194 Giraldus records the exploits of the Lord Rhys, a powerful ruler of West Wales, stealing a torc of St. Cynog,[80] an important Brecknock saint.[81] It was an object clearly given great significance by the people of Brecknock,[82] and there are several reasons why Rhys might have attempted

to take it. Whilst certainly a demonstration of Rhys' martial power and prowess, and a strong statement of the fragility of the Anglo-Norman lordships[83] (it suggested to contemporaries that he can maraud un-molested through their territory), it could also hold a third purpose. Why specifically this torc? Could it have been an attempt by Rhys to claim some form of ancient right to Brecknock (Celtic kings wore such torcs), and so claim the loyalty of the native Welsh?[84] If so, it would imply that he could not automatically rely on their support as fellow countrymen; they were of Brecknock first and Wales second.

Conclusion

People who lived in the lordship of Brecknock during the twelfth century possessed a culture specific to that lordship. The indigenous population, whilst sharing common ground with the rest of Wales, were people of Brecknock and not simply Welsh. Being Welsh was part of, but not their whole, identity. Their full identity was founded in a shared Brecknock history and was added to by the Anglo-Norman invaders. The Anglo-Normans changed much when they created the lordship of Brecknock; but the very fact that we know so much about the kingdom of Brycheiniog proves that native culture survived, indeed, it was merged into that of the Anglo-Norman lordship. The fact that so much survives to this day, makes the case for the culture and identity of the people of Brecknock—Anglo-Norman or Welsh notwithstanding—being strong, independent, and entrenched.

Notes

1 For example, Davies 1987; Lieberman 1947; Rees 1924.
2 Lloyd 1912.
3 Rees 1915-16.
4 Stephenson 2013.
5 *Ibid*: 39.
6 *Ibid*: 40.
7 Holden 2008: 43.
8 *Ibid*.
9 Stephenson 2013: 39
10 Fox 1940.
11 Thurlby 2006.
12 Thurlby and Coplestone-Crow 2013.
13 Evans 2009: 88, 91-4.
14 Jones 1909: 61.
15 Banks 1882; 1883. For a full list: 3: n.10.
16 Lloyd 1912: 272.
17 Hart 1863: 80.
18 Rees 1915-16: 8.
19 Lloyd 1912: 436.
20 Jones 1955: 33.
21 Lloyd 1912: 392.

[22] Searle 1980: 87.
[23] Lloyd 1912: 437.
[24] Burton 2013: 24.
[25] Rees 1966: 6.
[26] *Ibid*: 7.
[27] *Ibid*: 4.
[28] Langton 2011: 266-267.
[29] Barrell, Davies, Padel and Smith 1996: 262.
[30] *Ibid*: 263.
[31] Walker 2004: 5.
[32] Lieberman 1947: 5.
[33] Wade-Evans 1910: 35-46.
[34] Gerald of Wales 1978: 92.
[35] Banks 1882; 1883 for full list of Brecon Priory's grants.
[36] Lloyd 1912: 272.
[37] Banks 1882; 1883: 47
[38] Burton 2013: 27.
[39] *Ibid*.
[40] Röhrkasten 2013: 56-7.
[41] *Ibid*: 55.
[42] *Ibid*: 93.
[43] *Ibid*.
[44] Walker 1999: 59.
[45] Gerald of Wales 1978: 92.
[46] Rees 1915-1916: 35.
[47] Hartland 1923: 76.
[48] *Ibid*: 77-82.
[49] *Ibid*: 109-10.
[50] *Ibid*: 105.
[51] Jones 1986-7: 16; Butler 1937: 49.
[52] Bartlett 2006.
[53] Gerald of Wales 1978: 88-90.
[54] *Ibid*: 81, 93-6.
[55] Geoffrey of Monmouth 1969: 9.
[56] Roberts 1991: 98.
[57] *Ibid*: 53.
[58] Pryce 2001: 777.
[59] Gerald of Wales 1978: 231.
[60] Pryce 2001: 796.
[61] *Ibid*: 778.
[62] Gerald of Wales 1978: 233.
[63] *Ibid*.
[64] *Ibid*: 234-45.
[65] *Ibid*: 256
[66] *Ibid*: 260-1.
[67] *Ibid*: 96.
[68] Butler 1937: 20-21.
[69] Gerald of Wales 1978: 253-4; Bartlett 2006.
[70] Hartland 1923: 76.
[71] Butler 1937: 35.
[72] Gerald of Wales 1978: 273-4.
[73] *Ibid*: 274

[74] Hartland 1923: 99, 109-10.
[75] Lloyd 1912: 324-6, 337.
[76] Williams 1979: 5.
[77] *Ibid*: 6.
[78] Stephenson 2013: 39.
[79] *Ibid*: 30.
[80] Gerald of Wales 1978: 171.
[81] Elias 2006.
[82] Gerald of Wales 1978: 86.
[83] Stephenson 2013: 31.
[84] Elias 2006: 43.

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LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY AND HENRY VAUGHAN

JONATHAN NAUMAN

> This morning's post brought me your delightful letter: I still call it delightful though it scolds me roundly in the name of "Herbert's child"! Every word is sound, though it isn't all applicable, for indeed my thoughts, heart, withers, &c. *are* exclusively bound up with H.V.[1]

Introduction

The progress of Louise Imogen Guiney's literary and scholarly reputation through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first has few equals for anomaly and paradox (Fig 1). She died aged 59 at Chipping Campden on All Souls Day of 1920, an itinerant librarian and freelance writer whose poems, essays, and literary editing had gained considerable respect in the United States and British Isles; and her passing was marked on both sides of the Atlantic by the publication of adulatory biographies (Fig. 2).[2] A two-volume set of her *Letters*[3] also soon emerged: Guiney had been an avid epistolist, and her correspondence revealed "many facets of a personality of great vigour, and the flashing humour of a mind that was alert to the comic overtones of this human drama".[4] The Gregynog Press released a selection from the poems of Henry Vaughan dedicated to the memory of Guiney.[5]

After this wave of early-twentieth-century celebrity, Guiney's reputation fell quickly into obscurity, a process probably hastened by the rise of the Modernist movement in poetry and

Figure 1. Louise Guiney. From a photograph taken in Boston 1899, aged 38. Letters II: plate opposite page 206

Figure 2: Westcote, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire where Guiney died on 2 November 1920. (The house can be identified by the third chimney from the left.) Letters II: plate opposite page 256

criticism. The poets and novelists of the new era—figures including T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf—were eager to move away from the assumptions and techniques of the Romantics, whose work had been the matrix of Guiney's poetic sensibility.

Guiney's personality and achievements have nevertheless gained some renewed currency through the turn of the millennium in virtue of her lifelong contributions to the study of the Anglo-Welsh devotional poet Henry Vaughan, whose standard biography was largely redacted from unpublished manuscripts prepared by Guiney and her collaborator Gwenllian Morgan. Guiney's final failure, and the ensuing failure of Morgan, to deliver a biographical Vaughan edition, has long been notorious in seventeenth-century studies. What sort of edition would Guiney and Morgan have produced, if they had succeeded; and how might it have differed from the current standard biography[6] that Francis Ernest Hutchinson assembled mainly from their researches? What precisely enabled the two women to generate their "many notebooks, files, genealogies, [and] copies of legal documents"[7] and yet disabled them from finally producing the work that they had confidently and repeatedly announced? The inquiry is especially curious regarding Guiney, an accomplished poet and essayist who authored or translated, edited or aided in the editing of more than twenty books from 1894 to 1920, the period of her life during which the Vaughan edition was fulminating. Morgan's ground-breaking political career as temperance activist, suffragist, and first woman mayor in Wales was already well underway before the two women began their correspondence, and it left only variable spare time for her literary and antiquarian interests. But Guiney's remarkable assiduity and productivity, her edited selection from Vaughan's devotional prose and her publication of several articles relevant to Vaughan studies, make her failure more perplexing. The paper offered here, excerpted from a longer project,[8] recounts Guiney's career from the perspective of Vaughan studies, appraises the nature and importance of her scholarship, and offers some explanations for why much of it remained unpublished during her lifetime.

Discovering Vaughan

Guiney's interest in the seventeenth century, and especially in its cavalier poets, emanated in part from her admiration for her Civil War general father, Patrick Robert Guiney, a first-generation Irish Catholic immigrant. This man's life and early death from the after-effects of a disfiguring head wound modelled, for his daughter, an impassive martial acceptance of misfortune, a courage that countenanced mortal danger and fatal injury without loss of poise or principle. Guiney's rigorous high school education had been taken at an American-branch convent of the French Order of the Sacred Heart, whose founding members included "the Comtesse de Grammont, who had been a Dame

d'Honneur at the Court of Marie Antoinette"[9]: this introduced her to a learned enthusiasm for nobility and lost causes that preoccupied much of her literary career.[10] During her twenties and thirties, Guiney enjoyed some celebrity as a poet and essayist in Boston circles (Fig. 3), and supported herself and her widowed mother by post office, library, and literary work, including the easy composition on demand of odes commemorating Union generals. "I am to hand in that wretched Sherman jingle by Thursday", Guiney wrote to Boston Athenaeum librarian Charles Knowles Bolton on 7 May, 1891,

> and you will believe me a calm Stoic when I tell you I have not so much as thought yet of one syllable towards it, not even the measure. I sit to it on Monday, and may the Lord have mercy on my soul![11]

Figure 3: Louise Guiney. From a photograph taken in Boston 1893, aged 32. Letters II: plate opposite page 66

Like many other literary New England intellectuals of her time, Guiney found antiquarian and European interests increasingly consuming. During her first visit to the British Isles,[12] in company with her mother and later with her friend and publisher Fred Holland Day (the only man whose relations with Guiney have led to courtship speculations[13]) Guiney established English literary contacts and got her first taste of the old country's rich store of archives, and especially of the library reading rooms in Oxford and London in which she was later to pursue years of research for profit and pleasure. It was also on this trip that she began her inquiries into the poetry and life of Henry Vaughan.

Guiney's initial Vaughan study, published in the *Atlantic Monthly*[14] and then combined with other literary essays in *A Little English Gallery*,[15] was derivative insofar as it largely depended on the work of Henry Francis Lyte and Alexander Balloch Grosart, Vaughan's first modern editors. It was also strongly coloured by Guiney's own early poetic debts to Keats and Shelley. Nevertheless, its fascination with and enthusiasm for Vaughan's cavalier militancy and royalist partisanship marked an important turn in current criticism, which tended to depict Vaughan as a strict pacifist or even as a careless Epicurean in his attitude toward the English Civil War. Guiney found the royalist belligerence of Vaughan's devotional and non-devotional verse so striking that she could only

imagine the poet abstaining from the fight because of incapacity; therefore, she retroactively extended the debilitating illness that Vaughan is known to have suffered in the 1650s[16] to cover most of the 1640s as well.[17] By the turn of the century, Guiney had abandoned this contention (and others advanced in this article)[18]; but her ardent depiction of Vaughan as a cavalier probably helped to influence Vaughan's next modern editor, who allowed that the poet might have seen military action after all.[19]

During the publication year of her first Vaughan study, Guiney visited the British Isles again, this time for a walking tour in the company of her author friend Alice Brown.[20] In Breconshire, the two women made it a point to visit Vaughan's grave at Llansantffraed parish (Fig. 4); and the neglect and disrepair of the tomb and site provoked Guiney to begin a campaign for the restoration of Vaughan's grave.[21] It was this campaign that brought her into correspondence with Gwenllian Morgan,[22] who had already done some good localist biographical work on Vaughan.[23] Morgan coordinated the 'Henry Vaughan, Silurist, Memorial Fund' in conjunction with the Rector of Llansantffraed[24] and was able to announce—after two years' recruitment and some local and national journalistic humour and controversy—that sufficient funds had come in to enable, *inter alia*, the removal of an ash pit that concealed part of Vaughan's tombstone.[25]

Figure 4: Henry Vaughan's grave, Llansantffraid Church, Brecknockshire.
Hywel Bevan

Thus began the first and briefest phase of the Guiney-Morgan Vaughan collaboration. Guiney had already done much groundwork for an edition of Vaughan's poetry,[26] and Morgan had already written her lengthy study in local colour. Little more seemed to be needed, other than combining work well underway, to produce a good volume along conventional nineteenth-century lines. Furthermore, Guiney's friendship with Fred Holland Day made the publication of an attractive American edition immediately possible; and, as no complete American edition of Vaughan had yet appeared, the market looked promising as well. Guiney planned a full presentation of Vaughan's verse, both devotional and non-devotional. Already she had collated copy against original editions;[27] probably she had also started to consider policies for following or differing from Lyte's and Grosart's emendations of Vaughan's texts.[28] Copeland and Day, Day's company in Boston, announced a Vaughan edition in preparation "with a critical study, a biographical-topographical essay, and notes, by the editors, Louise Imogen Guiney and Gwenllian E. F. Morgan".[29]

But this easy combination of accomplished work was not to be. Guiney and Morgan were forestalled by the emergence of Edmund Kerchever Chambers' Muse's Library edition of Vaughan's poems, a complete anthology published simultaneously in London and New York. Moreover, Chambers made numerous references to Morgan's Vaughan work; and evidently, he had corresponded with her, though it seems unlikely that she was aware of the full scope of his forthcoming publication.[30] The end of the century brought a second blow: the folding of the Copeland and Day publishing firm.[31] Neither Guiney nor Morgan was inclined to treat these setbacks as final; but their project was forced into a new and prolonged phase, during which their emphases shifted toward a biographical study based on further discoveries of primary documents and a careful tracking of topical references within the poetry.[32] Their hopes in this quarter were buoyed particularly by their discovery, during the very year that Chambers' edition emerged, of a record of Vaughan's having died intestate, with administration granted to his second wife.[33] Evidently there was potential for considerable elaboration of Vaughan's biography by careful tracing of legal and local records relating to the poet and his connections. Moreover, both Guiney and Morgan believed themselves advantaged by personal sympathy for the Welsh cavalier poet, whom they perceived as a passionate partisan with strong but not always consistent self-restraint, a man whose artistic unworldliness emerged from disciplined aristocratic forbearance. Their readings of contextual Civil War and interregnum documents, and their detection of allusions in Vaughan's poems to these contexts, led them to question earlier characterisations portraying Vaughan's temperament as naturally that of a mystic. Rather (they thought) Vaughan's aesthetic detachment, sincere as it was, came from a constant, laborious, and variably successful effort to suppress strong worldly interests that remained residually present in most of his texts. Vaughan's mystical religious detachment was, like his early aestheticism, genuine; but "part of his conversion was that it tended to detach him (no easy thing) from interest in politics".[34] Guiney and Morgan admired both perceived aspects in Vaughan: the partisan animus and the commitment to transcendent restraints; but their efforts during the long twenty years of this second phase of their collaboration were dedicated especially to demonstration of what they thought was rhetorically lacking in current criticism: detailed recognition of Vaughan's political engagement as a royalist.

Towards a "Record and a Study"

Guiney was very busy with other projects during the final years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth, but by 1902 she found time and opportunity to edit a volume of selections from Vaughan's prose for Oxford University Press (Fig. 5).[35] In its preface she announced that

the same Press had agreed to issue an "edition of Vaughan's poems", including six discovered manuscript letters[36] and many other "fresh documents of biographical interest" compiled by Morgan and herself.[37] Earlier that year, Guiney had published some of her work in progress in the *Athenæum*, in the form of an essay detailing some hostile references to Cromwell and the Roundhead party, which she believed she had detected in Vaughan's poems. She also included an excerpt from a manuscript translation signed "H.V.", which she had just discovered in the Bodleian, and that was (so far as she could tell) written in the same hand as Vaughan's letters.[38] She acknowledged that her readings of the "darksome States-man" in 'The World' and of Vaughan's royalist innuendo in 'Servilii Fatum' were elaborations on notes in Grosart's and Chambers' editions, but Chambers (to whom the note seems to have been submitted for refereeing) arranged to have a note of his own printed, immediately following Guiney's; and this note, unfortunately, rejected her readings in terms that savoured of contempt and patronisation. Guiney's proposals did need questioning: her tone and identifications were over-certain, and Chambers had a better suggestion for the identity of the figure attacked in 'Servilii Fatum'; but Chambers was, in his own turn, over-certain that Cromwell would not have stood out for Vaughan as the preeminent Roundhead statesman at the end of the 1640s,[39] and he demonstrated too dismissive an attitude toward the Guiney-Morgan angle on Vaughan, which had, after all, just induced him to an original annotation that he had not provided earlier. Guiney and Morgan were indignant at the rebuff,[40] but not demoralised, for Chambers also had taken opportunity in his note to communicate his own advances in Vaughan studies since the emergence of his edition. His retreat from his earlier opinion that Vaughan had not been a student at Oxford and his mention of one autograph letter from Henry Vaughan to John Aubrey, implied that the women's biographical researches were on track and well ahead of his own.

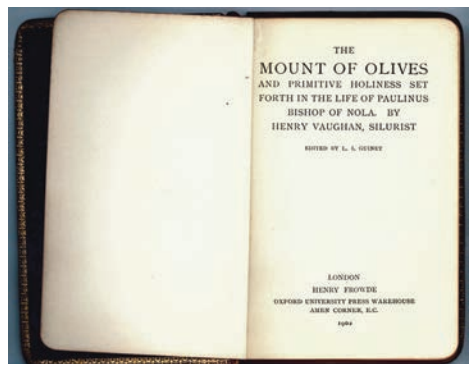

THE
MOUNT OF OLIVES
AND PRIMITIVE HOLINESS SET
FORTH IN THE LIFE OF PAULINUS
BISHOP OF NOLA. BY
HENRY VAUGHAN, SILURIST
EDITED BY L. I. GUINEY
LONDON
HENRY FROWDE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE
AMEN CORNER, E.C.
1902

Figure 5: The title page for Guiney's Oxford University Press selection from Vaughan's devotional prose, published in 1902. Jonathan Nauman

However, the situation was complicated in 1904 and 1905 by the emergence of Vaughan collections in two established literary series, Edward Hutton's Little Library *Poems of Henry Vaughan* and W. A. Lewis Bettany's Red Letter Library *Silex Scintillans*. Guiney was not impressed with the notes and helps in

either of these new editions, but the market for Vaughan texts was perhaps beginning to look flooded, and sometime during the first decade of the twentieth century the Oxford Press seems to have retracted its offer to print the Guiney-Morgan book. Early in 1908, Guiney was corresponding with Arthur Henry Bullen of the Shakespeare Head Press in Stratford in hopes of his sponsoring her Vaughan work.[41] Nothing seems to have come from this overture.

The loss of Oxford Press sponsorship was probably counterbalanced for Guiney and Morgan by an event that seemed to bode well for their project: the publication of another innovative seventeenth-century scholarly edition, the three-volume *English Works of George Herbert*[42] by Harvard professor George Herbert Palmer. This edition—with its sumptuous helps and illustrations, its novel attempt to order Herbert's poetry chronologically as a biographical record, its impassioned preface calling the book "a box of spikenard, poured in unappeasable love", and "a costly monument to [Herbert's] beneficent memory"[43]—seemed to model perfectly what Guiney and Morgan themselves felt able to do for Vaughan. Guiney highlighted a reviewer's admiration for Palmer's "annotations facing the poem on each page",[44] and began to recast the shape of her projected Vaughan work confidently. Her completion of editing a selection from minor seventeenth-century poet Thomas Stanley for John Ramsden Tutin (1907) and of a biography of Edmund Campion (1908)[45] left her comparatively free, and she accomplished a remarkable round of Vaughan researches[46] before heading back to Boston, probably at the behest of her mother, early in 1909.[47]

Meanwhile, and unfortunately for the Vaughan project, Morgan's political career had taken another successful turn in 1907, at which time she became the first woman in Wales to be elected a Town Councillor; and during 1909 she was amid a political show-down with Breconshire brewers, who did not approve of a lady temperance activist gaining power in the borough.[48] Public duties, although not preventing her from dedicating an hour or two now and then to research, would not allow sufficient leisure for serious writing; still, remarkable things turned up when she could look, and she could communicate to Guiney the name and death date of Vaughan's brother William[49] not long after Guiney's return to Boston. Morgan had also told Guiney that she had reason to hope that her friend Edwin Davies of the University of Wales Press would be willing to publish their Vaughan work. Guiney, meanwhile, was to make use of her time in Boston by consulting with Palmer about Herbert and Vaughan.[50] By now she was billing the forthcoming work along Palmer's lines, as "a Record and a Study" rather than as an edition. Morgan concurred with this strategy in the same letter that announced the discovery of William Vaughan's name:

> I wholly agree with you as to not attempting a rival edition, but have only the best of the poems chronologically placed—as you say, Grosart and Chambers are complete, and anyone who cares can get the latter. We must call it, and give the impression that it is, a new *Biography* of H.V., with any amount of new facts.

With Palmer's example and support, with their mastery of local and royalist history, with their unpublished letters—not only the Aubrey and Wood correspondences, but also documents engendered by legal affairs early and late in Vaughan's life—Guiney and Morgan reached what was perhaps their peak of confidence about their work.[51]

A foreboding check came in the early months of 1910. Guiney came down with a bladder infection that required an operation; and, although the operation itself went well, "the fun began after. They had stuck me full of cocaine, and cocaine and I didn't hit it off".[52] Convalescence was further interrupted by a crisis in her mother's health: Guiney went to Salem over the alarm and suffered "days of complete prostration after".[53] Then news came that her mother, Janet Guiney, despite a rebound during Louise's visit, had died on 5 February. During this "double knockdown of body and spirit",[54] Guiney's friends, especially those connected with Annie Adams Fields,[55] stepped in to make sure that she had sufficient finances for a full, relaxed recovery.[56] Guiney's health had never been as strong as her enterprise, energetic spirit, and will; and she was liable to emotionally-related breakdowns[57] in addition to recurrent neuritis and chronic ear inflammation. In this severe case of 1910, and probably in other cases as well, emotional prostration could reinforce or trigger collapses of her health.

But in this crisis, the state of affairs with Vaughan work buoyed Guiney. Before the operation, she had finished a Vaughan article;[58] and during the very depths of her illness, when she could scarcely hold a pen steadily enough to write, a note arrived from London with a newly-discovered manuscript letter by Vaughan enclosed! Guiney wrote to Fields,

> I have of course no plans of any kind in my empty head at present. But as I used to talk to you sometimes about my Vaughan hobby, I enclose a sweet letter from Gwenllian Morgan, my colleague on that topic, referring to her equal desire to get the work finished. The very same day a London learned friend, Mr. Alexander Abrahams, who writes much for *Notes and Queries*, forwarded for me to look at and verify, a genuine letter of Vaughan's to Wood the antiquary, unpublished of course, picked up in a grimy bookshop in or near Red Lion Square—of all places! This makes ten letters now in our hands, all unknown to the public, and it gives us one clue which we have wanted for years! I can easily persuade Mr. A.A., I know, to give it to the Bodleian, which possesses the whole MS correspondence to which it belongs. You don't know what a cheerful episode this has been. I do my best not to feel discouraged at my unexpected slowness in pulling up after a double knockdown

> of body and spirit. But I get great help from externals, I find, as it is in the Providence of God that at such times we should.[59]

Prospects were better than ever that the fifteen-year project could be pushed to a successful conclusion. And once the initial emotional impact of Janet Guiney's death faded, secondary implications of that loss became clearer—implications of freedom. The poetic career was over,[60] family responsibilities had changed and lessened;[61] the way was open, in short, for the permanent move to England that she had desired for years.

Guiney's funds were, as always, limited; but she evidently had enough saved—perhaps from the 1909 sale of her cottage in Maine[62]—to give her a free year for literary work. In May 1910, she said farewell to Fields and her other friends and family, and sailed from Massachusetts for the last time. Once in England, she arranged to return to her haunts in Cornwall, far from the social distractions of London and Oxford. There she could finally synthesise her voluminous notes and annotated texts to produce the "costly monument" itself.

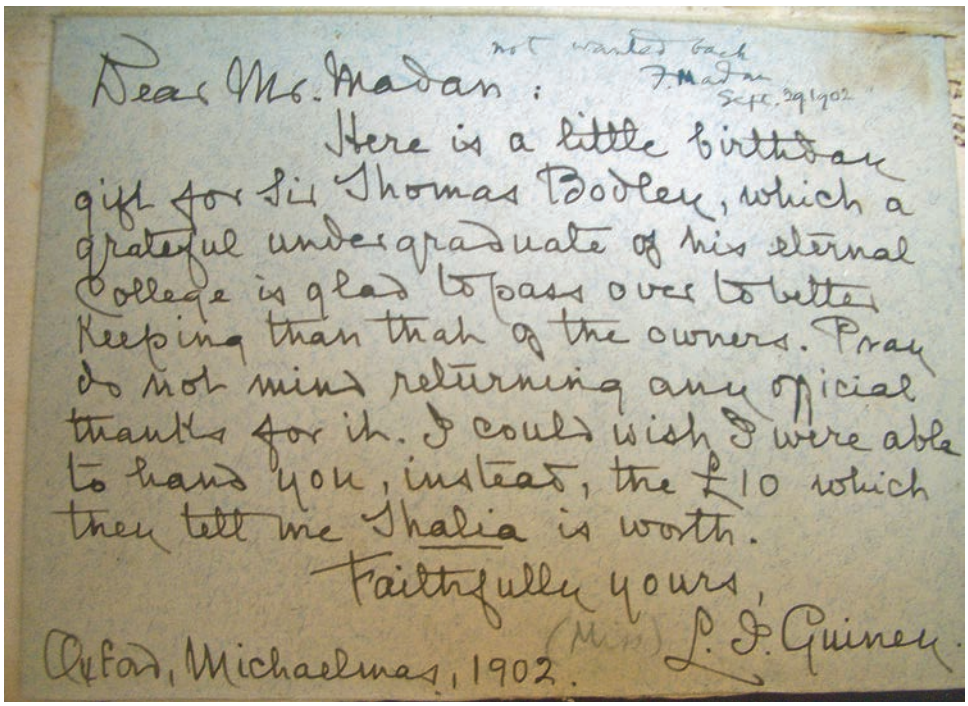
Or, at least, her portion of it. In November, Morgan was elected Mayor of Brecon and both collaborators saw that this would, of necessity, halt any concentrated efforts on her part. Guiney, however, retained her optimistic view that the decisive bulk of the work could be done that winter. As recently as early in 1909, Guiney had called biographical aspects of their work "your line" in corresponding with Morgan;[63] and she continued to profess this division of labour well after her intensive Vaughan work in Cornwall;[64] but the distinction was effectively superseded by the change in nature of the Vaughan project after she and Morgan cemented their alliance with Palmer. From Palmer's point of view, after all, editing *was* biography: his construction of Herbert's poems as a record of a soul had thoroughly confirmed (indeed, probably over confirmed) Guiney's and Morgan's emphases on the elusive royalist poet behind the poems. Topicality, allusion, the psychological history of Vaughan's royalist militance and endurance of the interregnum: by arranging the poems on the strength of her own learned detection of these resonances, Guiney seems now to have intended to produce the full biographical sequence herself, with Morgan enriching it afterward with localist details and (if possible) further primary discoveries.

New ideas and new delays

Work in Cornwall began a bit late because of a surprise ghost-editing job on the posthumous essays of Lionel Johnson.[65] But once this was dispatched, Guiney wrote to all correspondents that her work was going forward "swimmingly". A constant stream of notes went back and forth between Falmouth and Oxford (Fig. 6), where Guiney's friend Florence Crocker worked as an assistant to Sir James Murray of the *New English Dictionary*; and

introductory chapters and helps for Vaughan's early poetry were written. In late January, Guiney wrote to Palmer the most full and detailed account that we have for the projected work in any of its phases.

> This is our idea: a straight biography, with a weaving in chronologically and all along, not only of every poetical passage which has any historical bearing, (there are hundreds of these), but of every whole poem which can be assigned to a certain period: excluding, however, the valueless ones, neither good autobiography nor good literature, which we mean to print at the end of that particular chapter, by themselves. Then a second appendix to that chapter, containing all the textual notes. And so on, uniformly, with the rest. No Latin poems nor translations to be used, unless where (and that is not seldom) they mirror contemporary events. At the end of the whole, many original documents in extenso, a full bibliography, a good index, &c. The conventional *order* of the poems will be altogether upset. We know pretty well when each was written: in fact, dates, proven dates, are our strong point. And you will find that thus set in sequence, the poetry is, after all, about as much "the history of a soul" as Herbert's own work. Vaughan was a terror for altering and retouching; he messed up even his elegies in a maddening way: he writes a thing in 1646, prints it in 1678, and lets it stand with certain references to the political


not wanted back
F. Madan
Sept. 29/902

Dear Mr. Madan:

Here is a little birthday gift for Sir Thomas Bodley, which a grateful undergraduate of his eternal College is glad to pass over to better keeping than that of the owners. Pray do not mind returning any official thanks for it. I could wish I were able to hand you, instead, the £10 which they tell me Thalia is worth.

Faithfully yours,

L. I. Guiney.

Oxford, Michaelmas, 1902.

Figure 6: A note by Louise Guiney donating to the Bodleian Library her copy of Vaughan's Thalia Rediviva (1678), which she found at a used book shop in Boston.

The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Antiq.f.E.4(2))

> outside world which could be true only in 1653![66] so that the historical method, "marchin' forrard in order", is the only one to clear matters up. Material is so rich that I only hope the thing won't get over-annotated. And the text, if I may say so, will be the best ever, by far. I shall have to refer constantly to the Muses Library edition, 1896, and peck at it "as if I loved it", which I don't. But when all is said and done, it won't be a patch on your unapproachable Herbert! You know that.
>
> My room here is littered from end to end with H.V.'s belongings, and I hate to leave them even for my daily walk. We have kept up researches for years, and now have stopped them, though, alas, with some important points still hanging fire. I rather fear there must be two volumes. One huge volume is too fearsome to contemplate. The publisher will be Davies of Brecon, an experienced painstaking man, who has some 400 names to start the subscription list: 1000 copies, I think, are all he aims at. It seems he thinks of doing it all out of his own pocket, and then paying himself later. We shall have nothing out of it except the fun and everlasting satisfaction. Miss Morgan's, a clearer head than mine on practical matters, sees to all this: but I am to do every scrap and tittle of the proof-reading. You see plainly how no closer approximation to your ideal and taxing Herbert plan could have been followed, unless I were the one who lived in Brecon! But I am tied to places which have good Libraries. You may be absolutely sure I am not getting wrecked among divided interests: H.V. is the thing, and the only thing, in my foreground, so far as my own will can regulate that.[67]

This letter clearly implies not only that Guiney had accepted Palmer's Herbert as a legitimating model and scholarly precedent for her own angle on Vaughan, but also that Palmer himself had a strong interest in the completion of her edition, an interest approaching sponsorship. This impression is reinforced in Guiney's next letter to Palmer, which replies to a suggestion of his that she change her format to one even closer to his Herbert, "massing the complete poems, with their textual notes" after the interpolated biography.[68]

It was just about when Guiney was composing the latter reply that a crisis occurred that was to prove, in her own view, pivotal for her inability to complete her Vaughan work. She came down with an ear infection, had to go up to London for a minor operation, and found herself mentally unable to do intensive literary work for more than a month afterward.[69] The incident was not without parallel in Guiney's life, before and after; and the explanation could be viewed as sufficient were it not for some hints in the correspondence that point potentially to another direction as well. In her January letter to Palmer, after her confident exposition of format and prospects, a curious note is added: "Lastly, the least obstruction has a quite diabolical trick of paralysing what I am pleased to consider my brains. These be infirmities to fight, you see". In the context of Guiney's respectable previous literary output, this statement seems unduly apprehensive. Stranger yet is another statement made in her letter a month later, when it became plain that the difficulties with her ear were halting her project: "Isn't it funny, when you are dead sure of a thing,

a thing *not* 'bien documentée,' how foxy you have to be in gently and absent-mindedly hinting that it may possibly be so-and-so, though far be it from *you* to be crass and positive?". It seems clear that, despite her considerable readings and researches, and despite Palmer's support and Morgan's help, she had deep apprehensions about whether she really could say what she believed that she ought to be able to say about Vaughan and his poetry. And these apprehensions may have been deep enough to help bring on the crisis that interrupted her work.

Guiney's sensibility as a scholar was a curious amalgam: she had an absolute commitment to idealism in her historical work, to an engaged tone and a romantic portrayal of her subjects; on the other hand, she had also an absolute commitment to truth, and to inclusion of all relevant details in a historical case, including those that might tend to compromise her ideal scenarios. This combination did not manifest sentimental indulgence or laxity about the relations between general judgments and details of evidence, but rather a reasonable conviction that examples of heroism and integrity deserved to be passionately appreciated, and that fair appreciation could flourish even amidst the complexities of all the available historical evidence. The vision endured the most meticulous attentions to available fact, and thus became stronger.

A study of Vaughan, however, presented an unusual problem for Guiney as a biographer. Here she wished to treat a personality that emerged in hints embedded in prose, translations, poetry, and sparse primary evidence. Instead of deflecting the possible cynicism that could attach itself to a well-documented personality, and instead of fearlessly countenancing all the facts that might undermine a hero's status, she found herself obliged to establish the very existence of the headstrong, disciplined poet whom she and Morgan perceived. This she could do, piecemeal and at length, by involved argumentation employing recondite gatherings from historical backgrounds; but even then, those who had no taste for Vaughan as a canny, engaged royalist could dismiss even her most substantiated readings as merely-plausible suggestions. A biography that delivered only a sequence of such arguments would never reach departure if it attempted the confident inclusion of opposition with which she had galvanised her other accounts; and above all, it would be maddening to send a cavalier poet whom she believed in real life to have been tacit and dismissive, scarcely allowing his opponents a recognising glance, figuratively begging hat-in-hand for modern readers to recognise his existence. Indeed, the very scholarly laboriousness needed to expose Vaughan's timely innuendoes would tend toward disproportion, and thus a compromising—even a profaning—of the remarkable poise that the scholarship was meant to clarify.

There was more than a breakdown of health, then, in Guiney's failure to accomplish her biographical study, both in winter of 1911 and thereafter. The image of Vaughan that she and Morgan wished to communicate was at cross

purposes with the scholarly apparatus they would need to use to project it; and, in any case, despite their important new discoveries, the totality of material available was still painfully limited. Palmer had inspired them with a false confidence about the possibilities implicit in deducing biography from poetry, and this trap was more insidious for the fact that Vaughan's poetry was indeed more open to this angle than Herbert's. While Palmer's romantic preconceptions about poetry as "personal expression" led him to confidently detect thoughts and anxieties about priesthood in Herbert's 'Paradise', 'Assurance', and 'Dialogue',[70] Guiney's more "certificated" mind[71] found enough substantiable topicality in Vaughan's poems at large to draw her into pursuing, for example, possible references to the mistreatment of wives of the Welsh clergy in 'Fida forsaken'.[72] Guiney and Morgan were indeed in a position greatly to increase the very limited knowledge about Vaughan that had been current since his revival in the nineteenth century, and they truly did have enough evidence to warrant their perceptions about his character; but this did not imply readiness for a biography. Herbert E. Clarke, Guiney's fellow poet and long-time confidant, wrote in reply to her agonised news—ear pain, inability to work, Vaughan studies cut short—the following words, whose incendiary candour does much, I think, to show why he was one of her most valued literary friends:

> My dear Louise, Very sorry to hear of your indisposition, & hope you will soon be better. Very sorry, too, that you are so obsessed with Vaughan, & horrified at the idea of a book about him. Why give up to Vaughan what was meant for mankind?[73] Reflect that if you prove your theories beyond doubt (which is impossible) it will do Vaughan harm rather than good to expose the fact that he was apt to fill his verses with feeble, obscure, and ill-mannered jibes against his betters. Reflect also that not more than a couple of dozen persons in the world will be interested in the fact, one way or the other. I wish Vaughan and his verses "were in Jonadge's belly, I do."[74]

Competition and war

After the crisis in 1911, the second phase of Guiney's and Morgan's collaboration moved quickly to a close.[75] A new crop of Oxonian scholars had emerged; and a newly elaborated Bodleian catalogue made Vaughan's manuscript letters more highly visible. Guiney and Morgan had rights to first publication of Vaughan's correspondences with Aubrey and Wood; but when Leonard Cyril Martin, an Oxford graduate working at Lund University in Sweden, asked, as editor for the Oxford English Texts (OET) Vaughan, to publish transcripts of the Bodleian letters that he had earlier obtained for study, Guiney acceded.[76] Meanwhile, Hutchinson, author of an account of Vaughan in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*,[77] for which he had consulted Guiney and Morgan, was corresponding with both women over continuing Vaughan work. Morgan found this contact encouraging when she was obliged to communicate to Guiney on 24 June 1913 the next blow to their prospects:

> I incline more and more to the idea that the Oxford Press should print H.V. Mr. Edwin Davies has been made Secretary to our County Insurance Committee, and he would have no time for it, besides, he would not, could not do it nearly as well. He can give me the names and addresses of probable subscribers, and when advanced enough to send a prospectus out, I feel sure we could raise the number. Besides, lovers of Vaughan like Mr. Hutchinson would help us by canvassing their friends who would care.[78]

With no completion in sight and with no publisher committed to print the work when it was completed, and, with a text of the Bodleian letters soon to be widely disseminated, Guiney's hand was forced. She had a long biographical article published in the New York *Nation* just before Martin's text appeared,[79] plaintively but appreciatively announcing the OET Vaughan, printing all the Aubrey and Wood correspondences, telling of further letters to come, and disclosing a wealth of contextual and antiquarian information formerly intended for the "Record and Study" itself.[80]

> Within the last few years, the original Vaughan letters have been made accessible to everybody by means of the detailed Bodley catalogue, and can no longer count as part of one's private hidden treasure. An Oxford graduate, Mr. L. C. Martin, of Lund University, has lately transcribed them, and has had them set up in type as an appendix to a "Vaughan" which he has edited, and which is to be published almost immediately by the Clarendon Press. This edition will give us the first really authentic collation of the poems; a gift for which readers of Vaughan must be grateful to Mr. Martin. The work is purely critical; the appendix just mentioned is its only touch of biography, and is without annotation.[81] It cannot seem unfair to entrust to the *Nation*, by anticipation, a text of Henry Vaughan's letters copied long ago, and a gloss which represents the special study and affectionate preoccupation of a lifetime.[82]

Guiney also described the Martin edition to Morgan in terms of glowing approval, calling it "worthy of dear Henry Vaughan" and considering it of no harmful consequence to their own project.[83] But Morgan rightly sensed the disappointment that Guiney was successfully facing down with magnanimity; and when Guiney sent her a copy of the OET edition, Morgan proceeded to dismiss it as "a beautiful skeleton without flesh, blood or sinews"; also, she disparaged its notes and claimed that Martin had failed to establish contact with Vaughan's personality. "Yours will still be the book for Vaughan lovers", Morgan concluded, "and a lure to those who do not know him".[84]

"*Yours* will be the book": Morgan meant it as a balm to her friend's frustration; but it also probably marked a reality that had developed during the six years intervening between this letter and the letter ringing with confidence in 1909, when she had agreed that "*we* must call it a Biography". Since her election as Mayor, Morgan's time had been almost completely monopolised by municipal public service; and now that hostilities had broken out with Germany, she was

precipitously committing herself to organising the citizenry for the war effort.[85] Already, even as she wrote to her friend in a tone of forceful encouragement, she made it clear that she could not on her own part realistically expect to accomplish anything on the Vaughan project so long as the War lasted; also, she evidently believed (as Guiney herself had to some extent since 1909) that Palmer's editing-as-biography provided a good precedent for Guiney doing all the final synthesising and writing of copy herself.[86]

The emergence of Martin's OET Vaughan and the outbreak of war thus marked the beginning of the third and final phase of Guiney's and Morgan's joint project. Work continued in some senses as it had before: Guiney's manuscripts show comments on and responses to Martin's collations and notes, and even amidst her and her niece's own wartime efforts "at the disposal of the Emergency Committee",[87] she assembled contextual materials and followed up Morgan's research suggestions. But her chosen career as a freelance writer and researcher in England did not allow great leisure, and the stresses she endured from working under constraints of time and money took their toll. Even more taxing were the wartime prices for housing and goods: Guiney was forced to leave Oxford for the less-expensive Cotswolds; and health trips to the coast and temporary residences for

Figure 7: Guiney's grave memorial stone at Wolvercote Cemetery, Oxford.

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Figure 8: Guiney's grave memorial stone inscription at Wolvercote Cemetery, Oxford. (Guiney's aunt, Elizabeth Doyle, d. 1902, was also buried at this site. The Latin inscription below Guiney's dates is "Diligens et Fidelis", i.e., "She was diligent and faithful".)

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library and bookkeeping jobs prevented even Chipping Campden from being a steady base. She suffered a stroke near the end of the War; and, in November 1920, she died, not yet having reached her sixtieth birthday, and only weeks after a residence and walking tour in South Wales (Fig. 7 and 8). Her Vaughan materials passed to Morgan, who was then almost seventy years old.

Conclusion: Louise Guiney's literary and critical afterlife

As mentioned during the introduction to this paper, Louise Guiney's death brought forth a remarkable outpouring of reminiscence and appreciation, particularly by Alice Brown and Eva Mabel Tenison.[88] Of several studies that have followed since, the more recent seem to consider her, on grounds of her poverty, or her cessation of poetry-writing, or her religious beliefs, a foiled talent and a pitiable case. Estelle Jussim's late-twentieth-century study of Fred Day shows this tendency perhaps at its most disdainful: she characterises Guiney as having repressed "an active maternal need", dismisses Guiney's poetry, along with Alice Brown's, as a product of talent for "pleasant, sunny, uncomplicated verse", and sneers that Louise was a naïve, "generous soul, even if her interests were so literary as to preclude her comprehending the new photography".[89] In another article from the same era, Sheila Tully shows no awareness of Guiney's support for Morgan's chosen career[90] and considers Guiney a wilful literary failure who passed up an opportunity for successful support of the American suffragette movement.[91] On the other hand, studies more sympathetic with Guiney's career have found it necessary to elucidate her failure to marry or to become a nun.[92]

Personally, from the point of view of Vaughan studies, I find Louise Imogen Guiney's life and work rather more inspiring than pitiable;[93] and I wonder at such dismissive characterisations applied to a woman who can be called a literary failure only if we accept a rather overweening and elitist definition of literary success.

The strengths and weaknesses of Guiney's and Morgan's Vaughan work, augmented and preserved by F. E. Hutchinson after their passing, reflect the strengths and weaknesses of later romanticism, a movement in which all three scholars were participants and Guiney most of all. Writing Vaughan's biography was for Louise Guiney an action parallel to Monsieur Henri's challenging of the republican regime, a spontaneous campaign worth the fighting even if it ended in defeat; and there can be no doubt that her sympathies for Vaughan's partisan spirit have improved our understanding of the poet. Yet her deep aesthetic appreciation of Vaughan's poetry was an even stronger motive, and perhaps one that can be shared even more widely in our present century. I will conclude with her poem 'In A Brecon Valley', a double sonnet that memorably communicates her intense appreciation, both of Vaughan's sacred verse and of the Breconshire landscape.

I

I followed thee, wild stream of Paradise,
White Usk, for ever showering the sunned bee
In the pink chestnut and the hawthorn tree;
And all along had magical surmise
Of mountains fluctuant in those vesper skies,
As unto mermen, caverned in mid-sea,
Far up the vast green reaches, soundlessly
The giant breakers form, and fall, and rise.

Above thy poet's dust, by yonder yew,
Ere distance perished, ere a star began,
His clear monastic measure, heard of few,
Through lonelier glens of mine own being ran;
And thou to me wert dear, because I knew
The God who made thee gracious, and the man.

II

If, by that second lover's power controlled,
In sweet symbolic rite thy breath o'erfills
Fields of no war with vagrant daffodils,
From distance unto distance trailing gold;
If dazzling sands or thickets thee enfold,
Transfigured Usk, where from their mossy sills
Grey hamlets kiss thee, and by herded hills
Diviner run thy shallows than of old; —

If intellectual these, Oh! Name my Vaughan
Creator too: and close his memory keep
Who from thy fountain, kind to him, hath drawn
Birth, energy, and joy; devotion deep;
A play of thought more mystic than the dawn,
And death at home; and centuried sylvan sleep.[94]

Notes

BPL	Boston Public Library.
GEFM	The NLW Gwenllian E. F. Morgan Manuscripts.
HCD	Louise Imogen Guiney Collection, Dinand Library, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts.
Huntington	Department of Manuscripts, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
LC	Louise Imogen Guiney Collection, Manuscripts Department, Library of Congress.
Letters	Grace Guiney. 1926. *The Letters of Louise Imogen Guiney*, 2 vols. New York: Harper.
NLW	National Library of Wales collections.
Wellesley	Special Collections, Margaret Clapp Library, Wellesley College, Massachusetts.

[1] Letter from Guiney to George Herbert Palmer, 19 January 1911 (Wellesley).

[2] Brown 1921. Tenison 1923.

[3] Letters.

[4] Text taken from the front of the dust jacket to Letters.

[5] Rhys 1924.

[6] Hutchinson 1947.

[7] *Ibid*: v.

[8] Other segments of this work, pursuing Guiney's biographical angle on Vaughan and comparing it with that of her redactor Canon F. E. Hutchinson, can be seen in Nauman 2001 and Nauman and Thomas 2006.

[9] Tenison 1923: 11. The Convent of the Sacred Heart, Elmhurst, Providence, Rhode Island, where Guiney was schooled, is now closed.

[10] Guiney printed historical essays celebrating both the royalist Catholic rebellion in the French Vendée (1892) and the Emmet uprising in Ireland (1904).

[11] BPL, MS Am 1980 C.1.13.

[12] The Guineys stayed as long as they could afford, from 1889 to 1891; Leggott 1987: 139-140.

[13] Fairbanks 1972: 55-82, claims that Guiney's letters to Day (LC), show signs of jealousy and passionate interest on Guiney's part, which Day did not have the character to follow up. See also Fairbanks 1973: 51-54. My own readings from this collection seem rather to indicate close friendship of the comrade-in-arms sort: nicknames, high spirits, confidentiality, but no erotic tension. See also Fanning 1997, which notes presumptions of mid-twentieth-century erotic expectations in Fairbanks's work.

[14] Guiney 1894a.

[15] Guiney 1894b.

[16] Vaughan writes of being very ill in 1653 and 1654; Martin 1957: 215, 392.

[17] "He suffered most of the time between 1643 and 1651 from a sorely protracted and nearly fatal illness", Guiney 1894b. Other Vaughan studies had already initiated this backward extension of Vaughan's illness to account for Vaughan's increased religious rigor evident in the poetry written from the late 1640s through the early 1650s.

[18] A presentation copy of Guiney 1894b is on file at NLW, Ms 15971A. This volume, sent to Morgan by Guiney at the start of their collaboration, contains considerable annotation and revision reflecting the progress of the two scholars' studies; Tenison 1923: 304.

[19] Chambers 1896 indicates editorial familiarity with Guiney's work and some correspondence with Morgan in his Biographical Note and Bibliography (II: xxx-xxxi); also, Endnote 30. Guiney and Morgan (and Hutchinson after them) were eventually to deduce Vaughan's military service more forcefully.

[20] Guiney and Brown had already co-edited a travel guide for American women visiting England (1891); and Brown wrote a lyrical biographical memoir on Guiney shortly after Guiney's death.

[21] 'The Grave of Henry Vaughan, Silurist', Guiney's initial appeal, was posted by Edmund Gosse in the *Athenæum*, 12 October 1895.

[22] Morgan's first letter to Guiney came to Boston in November of 1895 in answer to the *Athenæum* appeal. In her second letter (late December 1895), Morgan took charge of coordinating the project, (Letters I: 76-8). Morgan's public and private correspondences over the Memorial Fund are gathered in GEFM, box 1, file 5, envelope 16. Fairbanks 1972: 118 notes the two women did not actually meet until 1900 (Letters II: 20).

[23] Morgan 1888. This study was republished in the 1896 Brecon Parish Magazine, nos. 2-12 (February through December) with additions and appreciative references to Guiney's work.

[24] M. Powell Williams. Guiney and Morgan were also aided by antiquarian litterateur Alexander B. Grosart, and by Guiney's London poet friend Herbert E. Clarke.

[25] Siberry 2016 provides an illustrated account of this episode.

[26] According to Alice Brown's account, given to Eva Mabel Tenison, "Louise was deep in Henry Vaughan editing" before any correspondence with Morgan began, Tenison 1923: 160.

[27] In her copy of Tutin 1893, Guiney transcribed from original editions several poems that Tutin omitted onto blank pages and flyleaves, continuing this project on her copy of the Aldine reprint of Lyte's Sacred Poems. At the beginning of printed selections in the former volume, Guiney notes that she is reading them for variations "in conjunction with the text of Olor Iscanus 1651, in the British Museum, Aug. 1895"; NLW Mss. 15970A and 15969A.

[28] Guiney's own practice as a poet made her at first an overenthusiastic emender, but as her scholarship advanced, she found herself increasingly inclined to let the seventeenth-century text stand.

[29] Tenison 1923: 165. This "Descriptive List of Publications" for 1896 through 1897 added that

> the book was to be the first American edition of one of the very finest and least-known of the English poets of the seventeenth century. The editors, who are both Vaughan specialists, have had the book in preparation for several years, and have brought to their task unique knowledge and enthusiasm. Only a limited number of copies will be printed.

[30] Chambers 1896: I: 295-316; II: xv-lvi, 329, refers to Morgan's antiquarian Old Welsh Chips series and acknowledges Morgan's answers to special inquiries about local geography and genealogy.

[31] Letters I: 250, 3 March, 1899 to Rev. William H. van Allen.

[32] As will be seen, the positive influence of Palmer was even more important than market pressures in changing the nature of Guiney's and Morgan's project. Guiney was at first rather pleased with Chambers' helps, but critical of his uncollated Vaughan texts; Letters I: 162, 168, 175.

[33] Found at the Probate Court of Hereford; Morgan 1896.

[34] GEFM, Mss., box 2, notebook "Aberhonddu" loose leaf inserted at p. 19. Also, Guiney 1914: 353, "Mystic as [Vaughan] is, he won his mysticism more through Plato and St. Paul, and through moods engendered by deliberate sacrifice for principle's sake, than from any happiness of nature, or endowment of grace".

[35] A brief overture by Israel Gollancz asking Guiney and Morgan to edit Vaughan for the Temple Classics series had come to nothing two years before; Letters II: 14, 16. Guiney 1902 included selections both from Vaughan's Mount of Olives (1652) and from his Flores Solitudinis (1654).

[36] This figure probably comprised Vaughan's correspondences with John Aubrey and Anthony Wood, on file at the Bodleian, where Guiney had done a considerable amount of reading the previous year.

[37] Guiney 1902: v.

[38] Guiney 1902: 402-403. Guiney's claim that her ascription of the new poem to Vaughan "could be established with extreme ease" was very incautious. Two months before her note was printed, Bodleian librarians, Falconer Madan and William Macray, communicated a much less clear-cut orthographic opinion to her. Madan thought the poem (Bodl. Mss. Ashmole 36-37, f. 206) was not in Vaughan's hand, while Macray thought that it might be in letter dated 21 January 1902; GEFM Mss., box 1, file 5, bundle 2. Later, Guiney herself found printed in a royalist tract by Arise Evans (1654), another poem from the same manuscript collection, which she had thought also to be in Vaughan's hand: it was actually a translation from Mantuan by the astrologer William Lilly; Tenison 1923: 223. New manuscript evidence has been discovered for Henry Vaughan's earlier career, but when (at request of the present author) the late R. E. Alton checked the initialled manuscript poem noted by Guiney against Vaughan's earlier and later holographs, he did not think it to be in Vaughan's hand.

[39] Morgan transcribes from Hobbes's Behemoth (GEFM Mss., box 1, notebook "Orinda P." p. 132): [1648] "'About the same time in Wales also was another Insurrection, headed by Sir Nicholas Keynish, and another under Sir John Owen, so that now all Wales was in Rebellion against the Parliament. And yet these were overcome in a moneths time by Cromwel and his Officers, but not without store of Blood shed on both sides.' Mr. E. K. Chambers did not see (in *Athenæum*) why H.V. should have a spite against Oliver!".

[40] Guiney did emend in retrospect her sentence announcing "hitherto unproclaimed references to Oliver Cromwell": "I repent of 'unproclaimed'!!" she wrote; GEFM Mss., box 1, notebook "Siluriana I" pp. 74v-75v. Chambers had girded at this participle.

[41] GEFM Mss., box 1, file 4, envelope 7 ("L.I.G. & G.E.F.M. plans for their projected book on H.V."). George Saintsbury's (1905) work did not include Henry Vaughan, who had by this time escaped the minor poet category. Fairbanks certainly errs in claiming that Saintsbury's edition "practically ended all hopes of fulfilling [Guiney's and Morgan's] dream of a major work on Vaughan" (1972: 190).

[42] Palmer 1905 emerged under competitive circumstances like those that Guiney and Morgan were currently facing, yet it achieved recognition for its scholarship even from later critics who questioned its underlying assumptions.

[43] Palmer 1905: xi-xii.

[44] Times Literary Supplement, Friday, 22 December 1905; GEFM Mss., box 1, file 10 ("Articles by other authors on Henry Vaughan"), envelope 15 ("Reviews").

[45] Guiney 1908.

[46] Thirty-two pages of annotations were sent by Guiney to Morgan in a sheaf marked "H.V. Notes. L.I.G.'s haul: 1908-9 A.D. (I hope all, or at least most, here, will be quite new to you) For G.E.F.M. No need to return"; GEFM Mss., file 5.

[47] Janet Guiney generally did not find life in England as congenial as Louise did; and occasionally would demand to be sent or taken back to America even when this inconvenienced her daughter. See, for example, Guiney's letter to Day, dated from Oxford on 15 July 1904: "My mother says she is going home in August. This seems to me, under all our present conditions, so mad a move, that the less I say about it, the better" (LC) and, on 13 December 1907, "It looks, despite my willingness to run home next September, as if I were to stay on. I can pay my own way here, and am always well enough to do it: the practical reasons for joining Mam are not yet apparent. But I miss her increasingly" (LC).

[48] See letter from Margaret Evans to Louise Guiney, dated from Llanmaes House on 10 September 1909, transcribed by Gwenllian Morgan, and inserted in Southall 1901, held at NLW general shelving CS439.P94.S72.

[49] This data on Vaughan's younger brother (William, d. 14 July 1648), found in a mid-1650s lawsuit over the purchase of a shroud for William's body, was perhaps the greatest twentieth-century advance in biographical studies of Vaughan. See Morgan's letter dated 20 June 1909, (HCD); also, Tenison 1923: 95-96.

[50] Guiney writes to Day on 30 December 1909, "Herbert reminds me of his all-suffering scholarly editor, Prof. Palmer. I dined not so long ago at the latter's, and went over with him his magnificent seventeenth-century collection, and a general collection, mostly first editions, of English poets, which he is going to leave to Wellesley College, some day. ...A nicer man you never saw, gentle and genuine to the core" (LC).

[51] Morgan, who also seems to have begun correspondence with Palmer at this time, transcribes what may have been Guiney's letter that preceded hers of 20 June 1909: "A full interpretive biography, quoting from his verse and prose at every step, weaving in every strand of all we know and feel about him. 'Henry Vaughan, Silurist: a biographic study,' would attract everybody. Our texts are the best texts, and our notes would not, I think, be worthless to use and work in"; GEFM Mss., box 1, notebook "The Red Book," p. 39v.

[52] Letter to Florence Crocker of Oxford, dated 4 February 1910 (HCD).

[53] Letter to Annie Adams Fields, 4 February 1910 (FI 1638, Huntington).

[54] Letter to Annie Adams Fields, 21 February 1910 (FI 1555, Huntington).

[55] Widow of James T. Fields, author and Atlantic editor. In Mrs. Fields's circle, which included at one time or another Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorne, Lowell, and Holmes, Guiney also formed friendships with Sarah Orne Jewett and Willa Cather.

[56] Guiney showed her appreciation to her friends by courteously breaking her resolve to abjure her poet's role (implicitly announced in her Happy Ending, published the prior December): she had Day print up a leaflet entitled De Amore Amicorum, which contained two poems in tribute to the

Fields' circle's support. Illness did not stunt Guiney's sense of humour; see for instance her remarks to Florence Crocker (4 February 1910): "My title, Happy Ending, (a good one, I think, for a selection and collection), gave me friends a sort of tummy-ache; for just as the thing was published, I set up for a sickey: artful, wasn't it? If I had only died, think of the royalties to my numerous posterity!". (HCD).

[57] These were initiated by the shock and publicity surrounding the nativist boycott against her appointment in 1894 as postmistress in Auburndale, Massachusetts.

[58] Probably an early and combined version of two future articles: Guiney 1914a and Guiney 1914b. See letters to Annie Adams Fields, dated 16 May and 26 September 1910 (FI 1539 and 1642, Huntington).

[59] 21 February 1910 (FI 1555, Huntington). Abrahams's letter was that dated 25 April [16]89 (Martin 1957: 695). The "clue" Guiney mentioned probably had to do with the letter's reference to Archdeacon John Williams of Cardigan, probable publisher of Thalia Rediviva; Tenison 1923: 215.

[60] Guiney had consciously chosen to pursue seventeenth-century studies rather than to nurse a poetic gift that she believed was fading. Special needs and occasions could still call forth poetic performances (see Endnote 56), but no verse collections were released by Guiney after 1909; Fairbanks 1972: 192-193. In 1907 she had written to Clement Shorter that she had despaired of her appeal to general audiences and of her publishability: "Everything comes back with a printed slip. So I have put in the cork, and hammered it down for good"; Letters II: 135.

[61] For much of the remaining ten years of her life, Guiney lived and worked in Oxford with her cousin Grace Cecily Guiney, who later edited Louise's letters. Louise also played an active role in the affairs of her extended family, recommending European girls' schools and hosting those able to visit England. But these were duties of a different nature from those she had acknowledged to Janet Guiney.

[62] Sale of the Maine cottage in Five Islands was probably part of Guiney's abjuring of her role as poet: it had been an important site socially and professionally for her early career, and had maintained contacts while she was in England, as she rented it out to friends.

[63] This phraseology occurs in Guiney 1908-9: 14 (also Endnote 52).

[64] For example: Letters II: 199-200.

[65] Johnson 1911.

[66] 'The King Disguis'd', published in Vaughan's Thalia Rediviva, contained a slur against Cromwell to the effect that his presence in the "Court" of Charles transformed that location into an "Ale-house". Guiney was later to argue that this reference could after all have been applicable around 1646; Guiney 1914b: 267-268.

[67] 19 January 1911 (Wellesley).

[68] 20 February 1911 (Wellesley).

[69] Accounts of this incident are numerous in Guiney's correspondence; see, for example, her letter to Annie Adams Fields dated 26 March 1911 (FI 1640, Huntington); her letter to George Herbert Palmer dated 3 April 1911 (Wellesley); her letter to Rachel Norton dated 27 March 1911 (HCD). The last of these three includes a statement briefly typical of other summaries Guiney was to give of the situation in months to come: "This winter and spring I planned out with vast forethought, to finish my Vaughan in, and lo! I have failed. The best-laid plans o' mice an' men &c. &c. I don't suppose I shall ever get such a clear field again for it".

[70] Palmer's psychobiographical micro-arrangement of Herbert's poetry was driven largely by a belief that he could detect traces of Herbert's inner debate over the priesthood throughout. In the three poems mentioned, he seems to me to find references to this issue that are particularly unwarranted; Palmer 1915, II: 382, 224; III: 368.

[71] In later correspondence with Guiney, Palmer wrote:

> What a pity that H.V., who could command such precision and splendour, ever turned aside to that rubbishy imitation of Herbert, a man so alien to his own genius that he never comprehended his work as personal expression but only as literary performance! ...What always surprises me in you is your factual acquaintance with this tangled time.

> My poor head holds no facts. As I come upon them, I see their significance and then, having modified my attitude, they pass into a blur. You keep them all distinct, can review, compare, and freshly coordinate. How well such a certificated mind is fitted for the masterpiece you have on hand! I wish you might abandon every responsibility that conflicts with this largest of duties. I am always afraid you will break down before the riches you have accumulated are given to the public! But you are brave. I wish you were also strong!

From a letter dated 14 August 1912; GEFM Mss., box 1, file 4, envelope 13 ("Notes collected by L.I.G.").

[72] During the months immediately preceding her Vaughan editing in Falmouth, Guiney sent Morgan a political-pastoral reading of 'Fida forsaken' a poem from Vaughan's Thalia Rediviva (Martin 1957: 640-641), in which she identified Fida as the poet's sister-in-law Rebecca and Fida's evil offender as Oliver Cromwell. Although the enigmatic poem could indeed be construed along these lines, the reading was very much dependent on a congeries of other biographical and interpretive glosses that Guiney and Morgan had developed; GEFM Mss., box 1, file 4, bundle 4.

[73] In a following letter, Clarke posed this quip (fittingly borrowed from the humorous epitaph for Edmund Burke in Goldsmith's "Retaliation") in a fuller version: "Who, born for the Universe, narrowed her mind, and to Silex gave up what was meant for mankind" (24 May 1911; HCD). Guiney would not, of course, have been offended by this cavalier treatment of her avid Vaughan interest. Compare her own quip in an earlier letter to Clarke (22 April 1896):

> There once was a poet named Vaughan:
> Don't you wish 'e had never been baughan? (Letters I: 104)

[74] Letter dated 23 February 1911 (HCD). Clarke's "Jonadge's belly" quotes a malaprop denunciation by Sarah Gamp in Martin Chuzzlewit.

[75] Guiney did publish some fragments of her incomplete Falmouth work that remain valuable as background studies; Guiney 1911a; 1911b; 1912.

[76] Guiney had already given Richard Ellis of Jesus College permission to print Vaughan's famous last letter to Aubrey, with its Welsh bardic legend; letter dated 8 November 1905; GEFM Mss., box 1, file 9, bundle labelled "SOME LETTERS about HV's Letters"; also, Marilla 1948: no. 100.

[77] Ward and Waller 1911: 37-42. Hutchinson 1947: 404-405 mentions "a complete edition, and a biography, with eight letters of Vaughan, and other fresh documents of biographical interest. Edd. Guiney, L. I. and Morgan, G. E. F. In preparation."

[78] HCD. The very next day, Morgan sent Guiney another note, suggesting that she could edit Vaughan for Ernest Rhys's Everyman's Library series, without giving away any of the facts for their biographical edition. (The idea seems to have been palliative in intent, and to have come to nothing.)

[79] Although the OET Vaughan's imprint read 1914, it was not actually released until 1915.

[80] Guiney 1915.

[81] Martin's appendix did in fact emerge annotated, but not in Guiney's full manner.

[82] Guiney 1915: 276.

[83] On 7 December 1914, Morgan wrote to Guiney, "I am much excited over your account of the Martin book—and agree with all that you say. I am so glad that it is worthy of dear H.V. but I do not yet see why he should have printed the letters ..." (HCD).

[84] Letter from Morgan to Guiney dated 1 June 1915 (HCD).

[85] Guiney did war-related work, too, urging her friends in America to partisanship against Germany and printing an elegiac article honouring a Catholic student from Oxford who fell on the front in France (1917).

[86] On 11 February 1915, Morgan wrote to Guiney, "I return Prof. Palmer's most beautiful letter—I always appreciate whatever he writes. I feel so with him about you and Vaughan!...Would it be possible to really tackle H.V. if you settle at Chipping Campden? as you will have more quiet there

than at Oxford, and really everything has been collected that we are likely to get. Publication would be impossible until things are normal once more, but it would be a great thing to have the book ready" (HCD).

[87] Letters II: 202. Well before the United States entered the war, Guiney's home at Longwall Cottage became a headquarters for coordinating Americans in Oxford who wished to help the Allied cause.

[88] Guiney had introduced Tenison to Morgan, and Guiney's letters to Morgan were a major source for her biography. The letters were loaned by Morgan for Tenison's work, and then given to Tenison after Morgan's death; GEFM Mss., box 2, envelope marked "Donation—Miss Wight" sheaf of letters to Marianne Dibdin, Tenison's letter dated 21 February 1940. Hutchinson had access to these letters while composing his Life. Unfortunately, they seem to have been destroyed in a catastrophic fire that gutted most of Tenison's home on 8 October 1952.

[89] Jussim 1981: 35, 70-71, 113.

[90] Letters I: 240; II: 169.

[91] Tully 1980.

[92] This group would include Tenison, Hart, and Fairbanks.

[93] Except in the sense that all of us should readily admit—pitiable by humanity, imperfection, limitation.

[94] This poem, printed with a Latin epigraph from Vaughan's Olor Iscanus (1651), appeared in Guiney's *England and Yesterday* (Guiney 1898: 56-57) and again slightly revised in her *Happy Ending* (Guiney 1909: 128-129). The latter version (which was read by Helen Gichard for the Vaughan Memorial Service in 2010) is quoted here.

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A ROYAL PHYSICIAN IN LLANGATTOCK: DR. JAMES FORD

ELIZABETH SIBERRY

On 19 December 1795, James Ford M.D. died at his home, Llangattock Place (Plas Llangattock), near Crickhowell, aged 78. He is said to have been commemorated "upon a plain stone, under the gallery, near the large door" in St Catwg's church, Llangattock, but this memorial has sadly not survived.[1]

In his *History of Brecknockshire*, Theophilus Jones simply notes that Ford was accoucheur to "her present Majesty" (Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III) but provides no further information.[2] Ford's life however deserves more study.

A medical career

James Ford was born in 1717, the son of Canon Thomas Ford of Wells. In later reminiscences, Ford recalled that:

> He was bred up to surgery under an eminent practitioner. Having completed his first rudiments, he spent some years upon the continent, with a view to the improvement of his professional knowledge and upon his return to England, intended settling at Oxford. To this end, he obtained a recommendation to the celebrated Dr. Frewin [Dr. Richard Frewin, 1681–1761] under whose patronage he was desirous of commencing his career. The doctor however received him superciliously—observing coarsely "that they had already two men there who could bleed and draw teeth, but that if he chose in, he might try his luck".[3]

The chronology is not quite clear, but Ford certainly trained as a physician at St Thomas's Hospital in Bristol[4] and then Paris (the Hotel Dieu and Charite hospitals) and was appointed one of the surgeons at the Bristol Infirmary in June 1743. *The Biographical Sketches of the Founders, Officers and Students of the Bristol Infirmary* (BBM), which were compiled from recollections and manuscripts by Richard Smith in the nineteenth century, from papers that he found at the hospital, provide a wealth of information about Ford's medical career. And Mary Fissell's book: *Patients, Power and the Poor in Eighteenth-Century Bristol*[5] gives a wider context of the medical world in which Ford operated.

By the time Ford was appointed as a surgeon at the Infirmary, he was sufficiently experienced and well regarded to have taken on an apprentice and he seems to have had a mixed practice. His own records and detailed notes of income received show that in 1754 he bled nearly 200 patients (a standard treatment at the time) for fees of between half a crown and two guineas and probably amounting to an annual income of £100. He also earned over £200 over 17 years operating on kidney stones and had a successful midwifery

practice. In addition, he had several other private pupils and gave lectures, adding considerably to his income. His patients included members of the nobility such as the Marquis of Granby, the Duchess of Beaufort, and Lady Berkeley, whom he visited at Berkeley Castle.

Ford was also interested in new research and in 1755 his letter about the use of agaric (a type of fungus) to stop bleeding was read to the Royal Philosophical Society in London and subsequently published in their Transactions. He noted that he had brought some agaric from Paris and, indeed, a piece of this, which now looks rather like leather, was kept by him in his pocket case and is still preserved in the Bristol Record Office.

At this time, Bristol was a thriving port and Ford encountered prominent visitors to the spas at Clifton and Hotwells.[6] One such encounter changed the course of his career.

In 1756, Lord Bute, Prime Minister from 1762–3, and a close friend of the future George III, stayed in Hotwells and was treated by Ford. He was apparently so pleased with his doctor that he told him that he would make his fortune if he came to London. Ford decided to take up this offer and wrote to the Infirmary in May 1759, "My private engagements have of late rendered my attendance at the infirmary extremely inconvenient, and oblige me now to resign the office of surgeon to that charity—an employment that gave me infinite satisfaction whilst it was in my power to execute it regularly".

He subsequently built a lucrative London practice and lived with his family in Albemarle Street off Piccadilly in London. In 1763, he is recorded as becoming a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians in London and he was one of the Founders of the Westminster Lying-In Hospital, south of Waterloo Bridge (one of the first general (non-denominational) maternity hospitals). He was also listed as Consulting Physician and Man Midwife to the Westminster General Dispensary in Gerard Street, Soho. In 1762, he also received a diploma from Aberdeen—perhaps a form of honorary degree—and was described by contemporaries as "a man of great talent-considerable acquirements and fascinating manners".[7]

Royal patronage

Through the patronage of Lord Bute, Ford also became accoucheur to Queen Charlotte, succeeding Dr. William Hunter, who had died in March 1783. The Queen was then pregnant but still mourning the loss of her young sons, Princes Alfred and Octavius. On 6 August, King George wrote to his Prime Minister Lord North, "The Queen, finding herself not quite well, has desired me to stay with her and Dr. Ford, having told me that probably it will prove a labour, you will give notice to the other ministers that I shall not come to town till Friday. As soon as the Queen is delivered, you shall certainly receive an account from me, who till then cannot be but in a state of great anxiety".[8]

On the following day, 7 August 1783, Ford attended the Queen when she gave birth to her fifteenth and last child, Princess Amelia.[9] All was well and the Princess Royal wrote, "she is one of the prettiest children I have ever seen".[10]

Frances Lee, who had settled in England after living in Jamaica (where Ford's brother Gilbert had been Attorney General) wrote to her brother, Richard, on 13 August 1783 with news from Windsor. She told him that, "Dr. Ford informed us that the Queen and Princess were as well as could be expected"[11] and, later, commenting on Ford's involvement with the theatre, that George III was said to have remarked, "it was all very proper, for Charlotte assures me that you are quite at home behind the curtain".[12]

Unfortunately, the Royal Archives have no record of Ford's royal career but, again, glimpses can be found in other sources. A family history website[13] states that Ford was offered a baronetcy by the king, which he refused, and that George III also gave Ford a small wooden snuff box, made in the shape of an old-fashioned shoe, supposedly from the wood of William Shakespeare's famous mulberry tree at Stratford-on-Avon. It is still in the family's possession. In addition, Ford was appointed physician extraordinary to the Queen; an appointment that was renewed on an annual basis at least until 1788 and the warrant for this year survives in the Bristol archives (Fig. 1).[14]

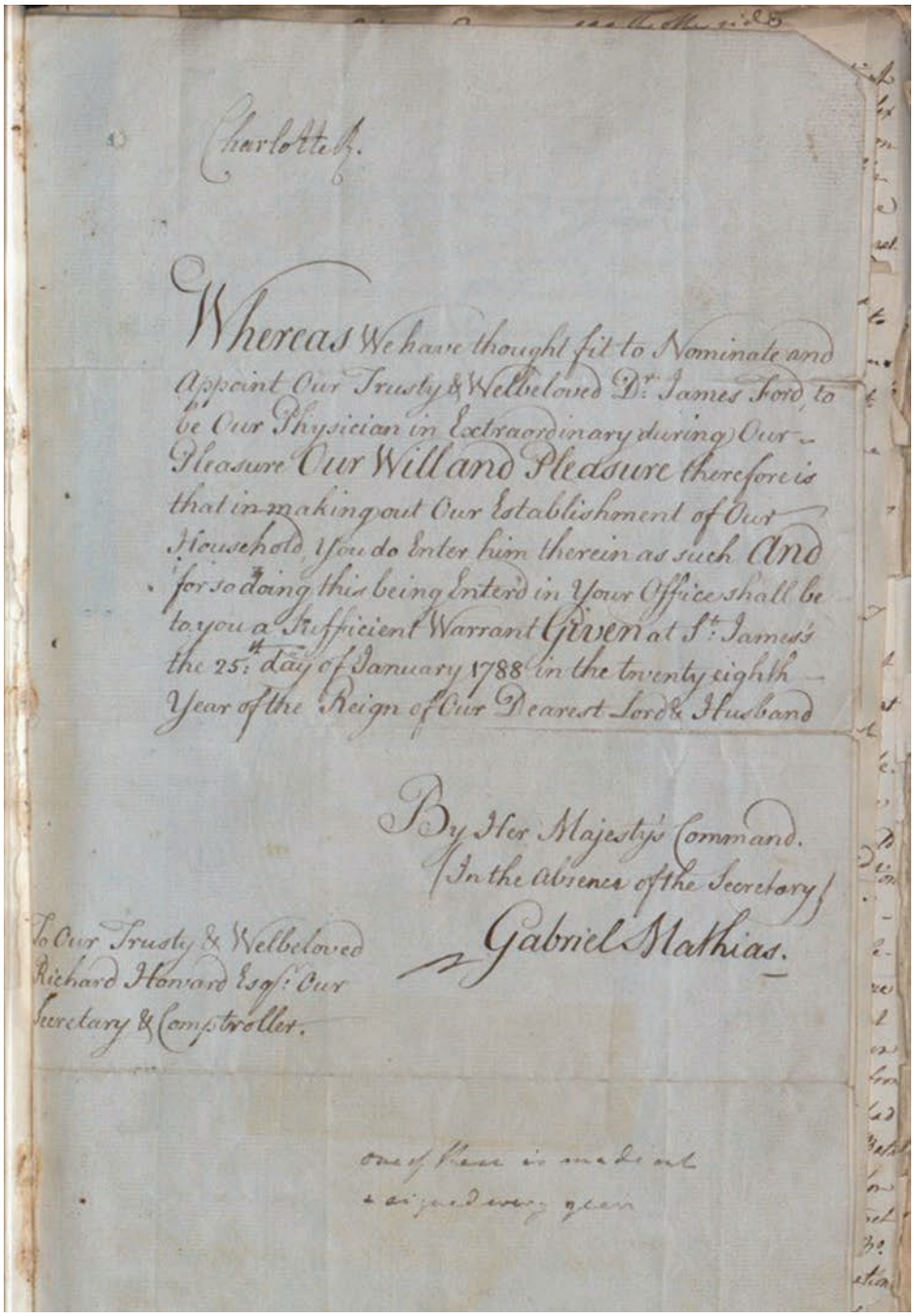
Ford's practice included other celebrities and in 1785, he attended the Brecon-born actress Sarah Siddons, whose pregnancies attracted much public interest.[15]

The theatre

As a fashionable man about town, Ford often attended the theatre and had his own box in which he entertained famous actresses of the day. This unusual combination of roles apparently caused the actress Kitty Clive to comment, "I thought that I should have died laughing when I saw a man midwife among them…I suppose they have taken him in to prevent miscarriages".[16]

In 1776, the actor manager David Garrick offered his share of the Drury Lane theatre in London for sale and Ford, Thomas Linley, and Linley's son-in-law, the playwright Richard Sheridan, purchased it for £35,000, with Ford contributing £15,000. The *Bristol Biographical Memoirs* recall, "This proved a very unfortunate speculation: the first gentleman (Linley) being unable, or unwilling, to make good his payments and the latter (Sheridan) bringing nothing into the partnership but his talents as a dramatic writer".

A series of letters to and from Sheridan in the late 1770s and 1780s record the terms of their agreement, with Sheridan describing Ford as "a very useful ally" in January 1776. Their financial problems and disputes, however, increased and began to feature in the newspapers of the day. Indeed, a cartoon, entitled 'The Theatrical War', was published in June 1787 by James Gillray, depicting Ford, Sheridan and Linley.[17]



Charlotte R.

Whereas We have thought fit to Nominate and Appoint Our Trusty & Welbeloved Dr. James Ford, to be Our Physician in Extraordinary during Our Pleasure Our Will and Pleasure therefore is that in making out Our Establishment of Our Household, You do Enter him therein as such And for so doing this being Entered in Your Office shall be to you a Sufficient Warrant Given at St. James's the 25th day of January 1788 in the twenty eighth Year of the Reign of Our Dearest Lord & Husband

By Her Majesty's Command.
In the Absence of the Secretary
Gabriel Mathias.

To Our Trusty & Welbeloved Richard Howard Esqr. Our Secretary & Comptroller.

one of them is made out
& signed every year

Figure 1. Royal warrant of appointment as Physician Extraordinary to Queen Charlotte. Reproduced by permission of Bristol Record Office: BRO 353893/36/a_i

One factor was Sheridan's difficulty with deadlines. Ford and others had to resort to various stratagems to get him to complete the latest play. In her biography of Sheridan, Linda Kelly describes what happened with *The Critic,* which was first staged at Drury Lane in 1779*:*

> Two days previous to the performance, the last scene was not written; Dr. Ford and Mr. Linley, the joint proprietors began to get nervous and fidgety, and the actors were absolutely *au desespoir*:
>
> At last Mr. Linley, who being his father-in-law, was pretty well aware of his habits, hit upon a stratagem. A night rehearsal of 'The Critic' was ordered, and Sheridan, having dined with Linley, was prevailed upon to go; while they were on the stage, King (an actor) whispered to Sheridan that he had something particular to communicate, and begged he would step into the second green-room. Accordingly, Sheridan went, and there found a table, with pens, ink, and paper, a good fire, an armed chair at the table, and two bottles of claret, with a dish of anchovy sandwiches. The moment he got into the room, King stepped out and locked the door; immediately after which, Linley and Ford came up and told the author that, until he had written the scene, he would be kept where he was.
>
> Sheridan took this decided measure in good part; he ate the anchovies, finished the claret, wrote the scene, and laughed heartily at the ingenuity of the contrivance.[18]

Ford lost a considerable amount of money and, in 1788, Sheridan purchased his quarter share of the theatre for £18,000. Sheridan, however, then passed it on in payment of other debts, so Ford's problems continued.

In March 1789, Sheridan wrote to the ground landlord of Drury Lane, the Duke of Bedford, "I have no scruple, however, of informing your Grace that the sense I have of the hardship of Dr. Ford's being compelled to pay the debt, and the embarrassment the claim has placed him in would at any time decide me to agree any terms that tended to release him".

In that November, Sheridan wrote to Ford promising, "an exact statement of our accounts and the demands against the theatre" and how he proposed to meet them. He reassured Ford, "it was certainly not understood, nor was it my intention when I completed the purchase of your quarter that any debts of any sort owing from the theatre should remain as a demand against you". Events however turned out otherwise, not least because the theatre itself required considerable investment and in fact was closed in June 1791. In November 1791, it was calculated that Ford was still owed some £7,700.[19]

By this stage, Ford had handed over his London practice to his brother John and sought exile in Rouen, through fear of being imprisoned for debt. Efforts to regain some of the money lost continued for some years. Thus, in November 1801, the Court of Chancery was asked to consider an order authorising Ford to take a share of the receipts at Drury Lane and 10 years after Ford's death, in

1805, his son Richard was involved in exchanges with Sheridan with a case at the Court of Chancery, seeking arrears of some £16,000 due from mismanagement of the theatre.[20]

Family Life

Whilst working in Bristol, James Ford had married Ann Horne, and they had two daughters and four sons. One of his daughters, Anna Maria, provides the link to Llangattock and will be discussed below. Several other family members however had interesting careers and deserve a brief mention here. One son, Richard, later Sir Richard Ford, an MP and chief police magistrate in London, also had links with the theatrical community, through a longstanding liaison with the comic actress Dorothy Jordan, who later became the mistress of the future King William IV.[21] Another son, James, became a doctor and studied in Bristol like his father[22] and his daughter, Elizabeth, married Dr. Samuel Goodenough, Dean of Rochester and, later, Bishop of Carlisle.[23]

Portraits

An oil portrait of James Ford was done from a miniature in family ownership by a fashionable early-nineteenth-century painter, John Prescott Knight[24] and a pencil drawing, again, a copy of another work, executed in London in 1772, is amongst the Bristol papers (Fig. 2).[25]

Figure 2. Dr James Ford-pencil drawing after Hamilton, London 1772.

Reproduced by permission of Bristol Record Office: BRO 35893/36/a_i

Life in Llangattock

In May 1790, Henry Williams, a Crickhowell Lawyer, married Anna Maria Ford at Old Bond Street, Westminster and, after his exile in Rouen, James Ford returned to Britain to join his daughter at Llangattock Place. In December 1793, he is recorded as purchasing the house and leased or bought further adjacent properties and land in 1795, amounting in all to some 89 acres. There is a print of Llangattock Place, dated c. 1790, in the collection of the National Library of Wales (Fig. 3). A further indication of what the house must have been like at this time is provided by the advertisement for its sale after Henry Williams had been declared bankrupt in 1802. It consisted of two parlours, a gentleman's study, a drawing room, and five bedrooms. The grounds included a "pleasure garden" and a "well of excellent water", and the owner was entitled

to two pews in Llangattock church.[26] As a further reflection of Ford's local interests, in his will (now in the National Archive), he left his son in law £200 for improving the parklands in Llangattock and also his four-wheeled chaise and several other four and two-wheeled carriages of pleasure, so he seems to have lived in some style.

Figure 3. Llangattock Place, dated c. 1790.
Reproduced by permission of National Library Wales

This was an interesting time in the history of the area, with other residents and visitors including the orientalist and traveller Sir William Ouseley and antiquarian Sir Richard Colt Hoare. Ford, however, has left little trace in local histories and is not, for example, listed among 'eminent inhabitants' of the county in Edwin Poole's *Illustrated History and Biography of Brecknockshire*, which was published in 1886. Nonetheless, he was certainly acquainted with the Rev Henry Payne (1759-1832) rector of Llanbedr and a local antiquarian,[27] who knew both Ouseley and Hoare, and provided a brief account of his life and last illness in his *Visitation* of local parishes:

> His last illness was rather tedious, but he bore his infirmities with the resignation of a Christian…A few days before his death, at his desire, I attended him when he received the holy sacrament and though very weak and conscious of his approaching dissolution, preserved his calm composure which is clearly indicative of a mind at ease…The death of Dr. Ford was generally lamented in the neighbourhood—by the gentry he was much esteemed, his manners being polite and cheerful, his conversation pleasing and instructive, his address open and engaging. By the poor he was regarded as a benefactor, always ready to relive their wants and assist them with his medical advice, but he always expected such applications to be made through the medium of their medical assistant.[28]

This seems a fitting tribute to an eventful life, which concluded peacefully amidst his family in the Usk Valley.

Notes

BBM *The Biographical Sketches of the Founders, Officers and Students of the Bristol Infirmary, Bristol Record Office.*

[1] Payne 1785.
[2] Jones 1805.
[3] Payne 1785: 126.
[4] BBM I: 56-8.

[5] Fissell 1991.

[6] Smaller than Bath, Hotwells had a pump room, theatre, and various other amusements for its wealthy visitors. Its waters were described as "brisk and soft to the palate, grateful to the stomach, wholly free from odour, and cooling to the system"; Waite 2002: 9.

[7] BBM I: 56.

[8] Fortescue 1927-28: VI no. 4436.

[9] Hedley 1975: 127.

[10] Fraser 2004 for Princess Amelia's life.

[11] Powers 2012. James Ford inherited substantial interests in Jamaica from his brother, Gilbert, who died in 1767.

[12] BBM I: 57.

[13] David and Kristin Cook Family History website: https://dkcook2.wordpress.com/ (Accessed 2 February 2017).

[14] BBM I: 57.

[15] Meehan 2014. Ford even features in a historical novel about Siddons: Plaidy 1971.

[16] Dobbs 1972: 109-10.L.; Kelly 1997: 90.

[17] Copies of the print can be seen on the website of the National Portrait Gallery: http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitLarge/mw61258/The-theatrical-war (Accessed 1 February 2017).

[18] Kelly 1997: 90.

[19] Price 1966 I: 96-8, 167, 169 and III: 205, 213, 321.

[20] Robertson 2004: 327-31 provides details of the Ford family tree in his study of Richard's son, another Richard and author of *The Handbook for Travellers in Spain* (1845).

[21] Tomalin 1994: 53-6, 72-6, 91, 125-6.

[22] BBM: letter of 23 February 1771 to the Bristol Infirmary: "It being my intention to give my son an introduction to my own business, it will be necessary for him to finish his education in London and abroad".

[23] Robertson 2004: 329.

[24] Ford 1998 Ix: fig. 197.

[25] BBM describe the pencil drawing as taken from a work in crayon by Hamilton. This may be the Irish artist Hugh Douglas Hamilton (c 1740–1808) who moved to London in 1764 and was known for his pastel oval portraits of fashionable figures of the day. The pencil copy is attributed to William Henry Goldwyer, who was a surgeon in Bristol, and dated 1821.

[26] Sarah Sankey-Barker, *A History of Plas Llangattock*. (Copy available in Crickhowell District Archive Centre).

[27] Parry-Jones 1959: 35-50. Other members of the Ford family had Welsh links: Ford's son Gilbert, a lawyer, married a Miss Attwood from Wales and two of their daughters lived with Mrs. Williams.

[28] Payne 1785: 126. The Bristol papers also indicate another intriguing link between Ford and Payne. A manuscript note on the back of the royal warrant appointing Ford states "The comb and shirt came into the family of the late James Ford by a gift from Mr Proger of the Vendre near Abergavenny, the gentleman from whose house King Charles I made his escape to the New Passage leaving the comb and his shirt behind him in the hurry of making his escape". The Proger family, who lived at Gwernvale outside Crickhowell (now the Manor hotel) were certainly prominent royalists and Edward Proger accompanied the future Charles II into exile and was suitably rewarded after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Payne comes into the story because he purchased a number of letters from Proger to the King and also a portrait of Proger by Sir Peter Lely at the Gwernvale sale in 1789. Perhaps he gave the royal memorabilia to his Llangattock friend?

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COTTAGES AND CASTLES: GLIMPSES OF VICTORIAN BRECON AND SOME OF ITS PROMINENT CITIZENS THROUGH A STUDY OF ONE PROPERTY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

GLYN MATHIAS

As the eighteenth century turned into the nineteenth, the castle at Brecon was already in a ruinous state. Depicted by several artists of the Romantic period, Welsh castles called to mind the ruins of the classical world. One contemporary letter describes the portfolios of artists travelling around Wales as being full of "rocks & cataracts & ruin'd castles".[1] One travelling author, William Fordyce Mavor, visiting Wales in 1805, noted that Brecon boasted the ruins of a castle from which the whole town may be advantageously viewed, "but only some detached fragments remain".[2] But this view of the castle was about to change. Mavor noted that, "various ugly cottages" had made their appearance around the castle ruins, giving the impression, he thought, that it was not quite so romantic any more.

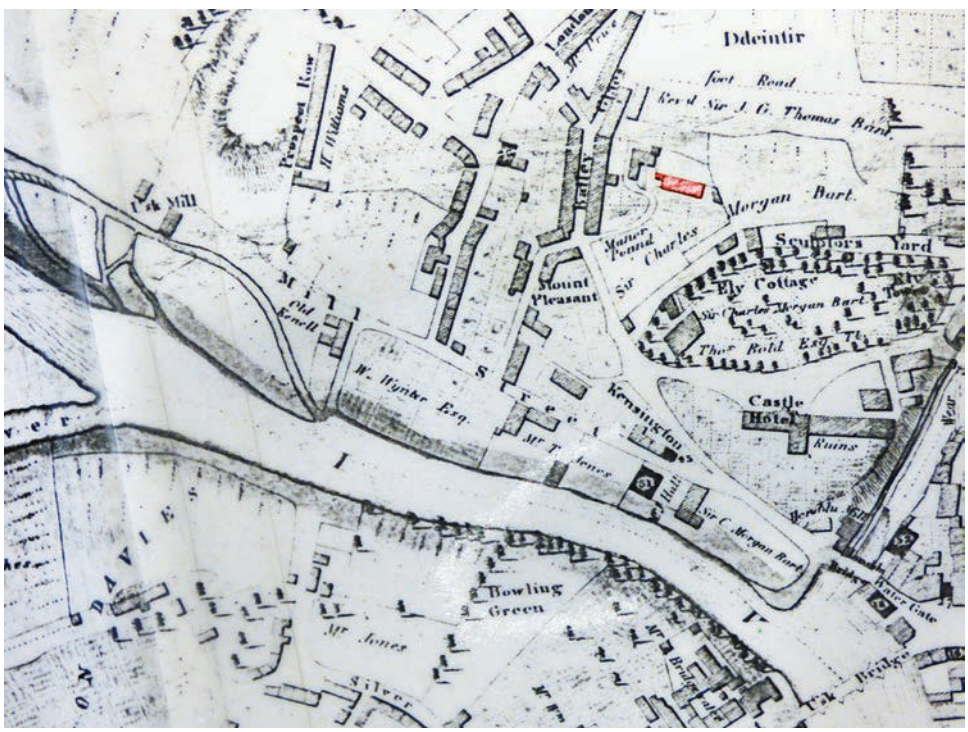


Figure 1. Map of Brecon 1834. The cottages are highlighted in red. (Brecon Library)

Three cottages

A row of three cottages appears on the 1834 map of Brecon (Fig 1); less than a hundred yards from the old castle walls, and they also appear in the census for the parish of St John the Evangelist in 1841 and 1851. They consisted of The Garden Cottage and two other unnamed cottages, as well as an amount of land variously described as 'the garden' or a yard. The cottages were owned by a widow, Ann White Money, described as a person of 'independent means', and she lived in The Garden Cottage accompanied by a maidservant. Those tasked with carrying out the census must have been a little chary of asking a lady her age, because in 1841 it was given as 55 and in 1851 it was given as 70.[3] It is probable that it is this cottage where Ann Money lived that still exists as part of the current property (Fig 2). If that is the case, it would have been a two-storey building and relatively spacious for that period with at least two bedrooms. In the late 1850s, the tenants of one of the other two cottages were a blacksmith, Watkin Lewis, and his wife, Esther, and in the other a man called John Davies.

Figure 2. The Garden Cottage today.

There is no doubt that Ann Money was the owner of all the cottages. The 1851 census describes her as a "proprietor of houses", and when the property was sold after her death in 1860 the conveyance made clear she had owned the freehold.[4] Her will, drawn up in 1858, gives further indication that she had considerable means at her disposal (Fig. 3). She bequeathed shares in the National Provincial Bank as well as cash to several local people, including her servant Esther Arthur—provided she was living with her at the time of her death. To one recipient, she bequeathed, "my bath chair, three silver tablespoons and my tent bedstead, bed mattress, bed clothes

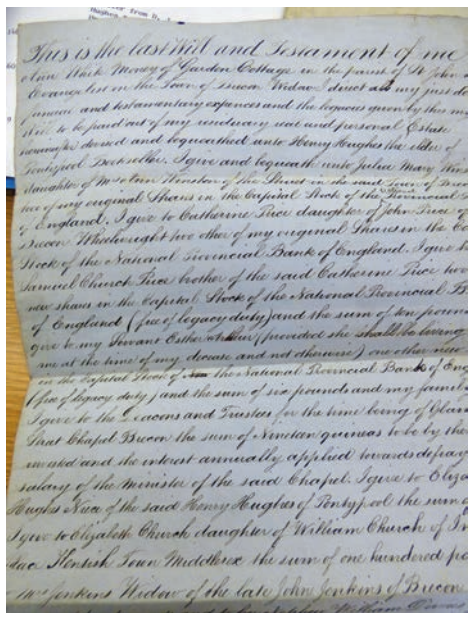


Figure 3. Ann Money's Will, 1858.

and bed furniture". To another, she left, "my second-best bed, my bedstead and bed clothes and all my plate and china".[5]

The evidence shows that she was a considerate landlord. In her will, Ann Money stipulated that Watkin and Esther Lewis should be allowed to continue to live there after her death. She stipulated that the couple should be allowed "the use of her cottage now occupied by them as long as the survivor should live". That has significance later in the story. Mrs Money herself appears to have been popular in the neighbourhood. The address of the property was subsequently given as 'Money Square' and later 'Money Court'.

The area was still evolving in 1860, and, to identify the location of the cottages, contemporary documents describe them as "situate lying and being near to Mount Pleasant". This was a large house 50 yards distant (now on the southern side of the Avenue) which was older and clearly better known than the cottages. The 1841 census shows it was then occupied by the Rev. David Blow, who had established the English-speaking Congregational Chapel in Glamorgan Street, Brecon during the previous decade.[6] Coincidentally, the 1851 census shows that Ann Money had what was politely called "a visitor" staying with her, but was more likely to have been a lodger. He was Henry Griffiths, then 25 years old, who succeeded David Blow as the minister at the Glamorgan Street Congregational Chapel, and was to remain there until 1873.[7] Ann Money was presumably a member of that congregation, because, in her will, she donated 19 guineas to the Deacons and Trustees of the Glamorgan Street Chapel, "to be invested and the interest applied to defraying the salary of the Minister". When she died in 1860, she was 82 years old, proving that both previous censuses had got it wrong. She was buried in the municipal cemetery in Brecon which had only opened for burials the previous year.[8]

Joseph Richard Cobb

The man who bought the Garden Cottages in 1860 was Joseph Richard Cobb (Fig. 4). He was a solicitor, who had been admitted to the roll of solicitors in 1842 at the age of 21.[9] He was now a partner in Williams, Maybery and Cobb, a firm which had been the chief legal advisers to some of the great ironmasters and had been responsible for drawing up many of the early mineral leases.[10]

But Cobb was not intending to live in his newly-bought property. In fact, he had already moved his family into a brand-new mansion standing in its own grounds. Nythfa was built in 1857 to a specification laid down by Cobb (Fig. 5), at a cost of more than £2,000, the equivalent of several hundred thousand pounds today. The house had a strong room guarded by an iron door, presumably to hold his legal documents, and the tiles on the floor of the entrance were decorated with the family coat of arms. There were to be two water closets, one for the family and one for the servants.[11] The 1871 census

shows the family at Nythfa, including three sons and two daughters, together with a nurse and cook, and five other servants. The house was named Nythfa, which means 'nesting-place', after a spotted flycatcher built a nest and reared its young while the building work was under way.

At that time, the Nythfa grounds stretched down the hill to the edge of Mount Street. In the building schedule, there were instructions to build piggeries, stables, a fowl-house, offices, a coach house, a harness room and a dairy. Cobb especially prized the view from his new mansion. In a letter dated September 20, 1857 to an aunt, he described the new house, and the view of the Beacons from it, with two sketches in his own hand to demonstrate his point. From the dining room window, he wrote, "the only buildings visible are the three churches—St John's, St Mary's, St David's—Christ College and the Castle. I wish you could come to see it".[12]

So, who was Joseph Cobb, where did he get his money and what were his motives for purchasing a row of cottages on the other side of the Honddu river?

The memorial plaque to Cobb in the Cathedral in Brecon states that he was born in 1821 in Broughton Castle, Oxfordshire, the third son of George Cobb. The castle, near Banbury, is of medieval origins and belonged for centuries to the Fiennes family. But in this period, the family lived elsewhere and the Cobb family was leasing the castle, which was in a somewhat dilapidated state.[13] His son's early upbringing in a castle appeared to leave a lasting impression.

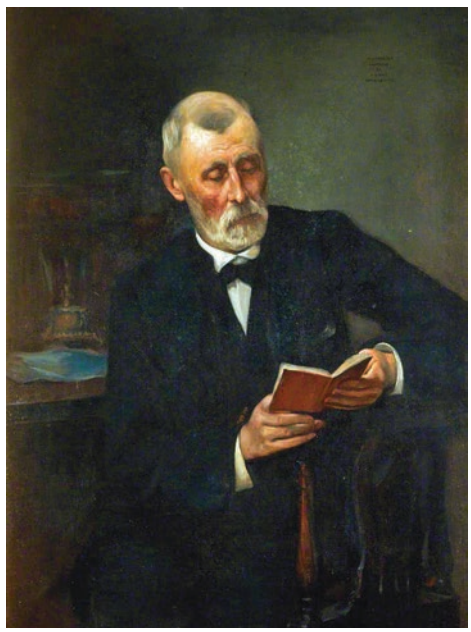


Figure 4. Joseph Cobb portrait by Peter Alexander Hay (1866–1952).

Caldicot Castle

Figure 5. Letter from Joseph Cobb with drawing of Nythfa.

Courtesy of Jo Copping

The Cobb family traced their ancestry back to the time of Edward III, and, since the eighteenth century, had made their money from land, banking, and the manufacture of paper. Cobb's great-uncle, Thomas Cobb, invented a machine for manufacturing paper in separate sheets and the letters patent were passed on in his will.[14] Cobb's father, George, was himself a wealthy banker and landowner. He had worked in Lombard Street, London before joining the family-owned Banbury Old Bank, and he owned land in Birmingham, Oxfordshire, and Breconshire.[15] His landholding in the town of Brecon included significant amounts of land to the north of the old town walls, encompassing much of the area subsequently known as Belle Vue. Cobb was managing this property on his father's behalf and there was extensive correspondence between them on sales, purchases, rents, and such matters.[16] The property included the Nythfa estate, and when George Cobb died in 1865 he left "the house, gardens and lands called Nythfa" to his son Joseph.[17]

Joseph Cobb was a man conscious of his looks. "I have a nervousness of being photographed", he wrote in 1857. "It is vanity, I suppose, and I will not be done—I know they would produce some lantern-jawed caricature".[18] But that did not prevent him from improving his prospects by marrying into the De Winton family. In 1856, at Llanfrynach Church, he married Emily Catherine Powys de Winton, the youngest daughter of John Parry de Winton of Maesderwen (Fig. 6). The de Winton family, who had changed their name from Wilkins in 1839, had been prominent in the running of the Brecon Bank, the dominant Welsh bank at the time. John Parry de Winton was a leading partner for several decades and one of the most influential bankers in the country.[19] The marriage appeared to be a happy one. Cobb addressed his letters to "his own little wife" and Emily responded by calling him "my own darling hubby".[20]

Figure 6. Joseph and Emily Cobb.
Courtesy of Pauline Hayward

Given the resources at his disposal and his position in Brecon society, it is hardly surprising that Cobb played a prominent part in the life of the town. He was at various times a member of the town council, in due course becoming an alderman. He was a member of the local health board, a shareholder in the local gas company, secretary to the Markets Company, clerk to the County Roads Board, secretary to the Brecon Angling Association, as well as appearing as a solicitor at the Magistrates' Court and the Assizes.[21] He was also, for a

period, the Liberal agent for the Brecknock constituency.[22] But most importantly in the context of this story, Cobb was secretary to the Brecon and Merthyr Railway Company, a post he was to hold for more than 25 years.

The Brecon and Merthyr Railway Company

In the 1850s, Brecon seemed to have been left behind in the race to build new railways, but by the end of that decade there were several railway companies vying to get into the town. These were all private companies requiring commercial funding and public support to build their lines. Cobb was a leading player in the campaign to build a connection from Merthyr into Brecon (Fig. 7). While he was secretary to the company, his father-in-law, J.P. De Winton, was the chairman (at least for an initial period). This family combination played large part in getting the project off the ground.[23] At that time, an Act of Parliament was required to build such an undertaking, and the first proposal was put forward in 1858. What is astonishing in retrospect, is the degree of rivalry between the different companies. One of these was the Neath and Brecon Railway (although it came in various guises and combinations), which was attempting to get into Brecon from the west. The competition between the Brecon and Merthyr and the Neath and Brecon was fraught, with various attempts at blocking each other's plans.[24]

Figure 7. Brecon and Merthyr train at Brecon, around 1905.

So, the fact that Cobb bought The Garden Cottage and its adjoining properties in 1860 becomes significant. He didn't just want the rental income from the tenants—he wanted something else as well. As secretary to the Brecon and Merthyr, he would have been fully aware of the various plans to bring a line into Brecon from the west and would have known the likely route. The route was to come in via Defynnog, Aberbran, and Cradoc, with a viaduct over the river Honddu (Fig. 8). The land on which the cottages stood was therefore on the likely route the railway would need to enter Brecon. At the very least, the Neath and Brecon would have to pay him compensation for part of his land.

Soon after Cobb's purchase of the property there was a flurry of different proposals for the western route. One of them was a plan put forward in 1862, by a company called the Brecon Junction Railway, which was actually a proposal being used by the Brecon and Merthyr "as a means of keeping control of the western approaches in the face of the N&B [Neath and Brecon] offensive".[25] But the move failed and the route was successfully established the same year by a

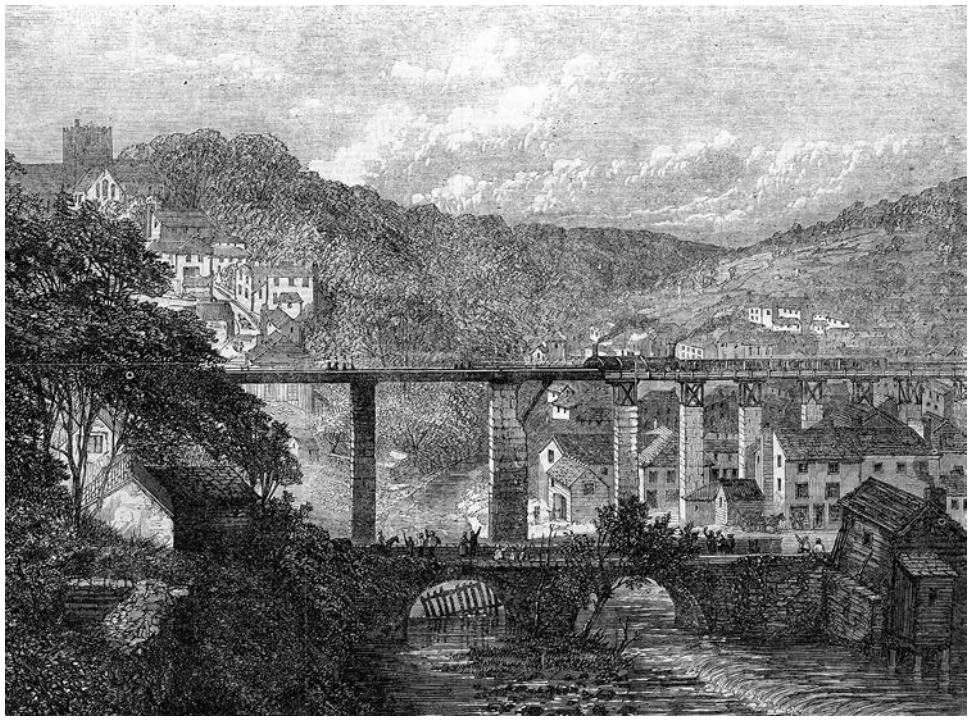
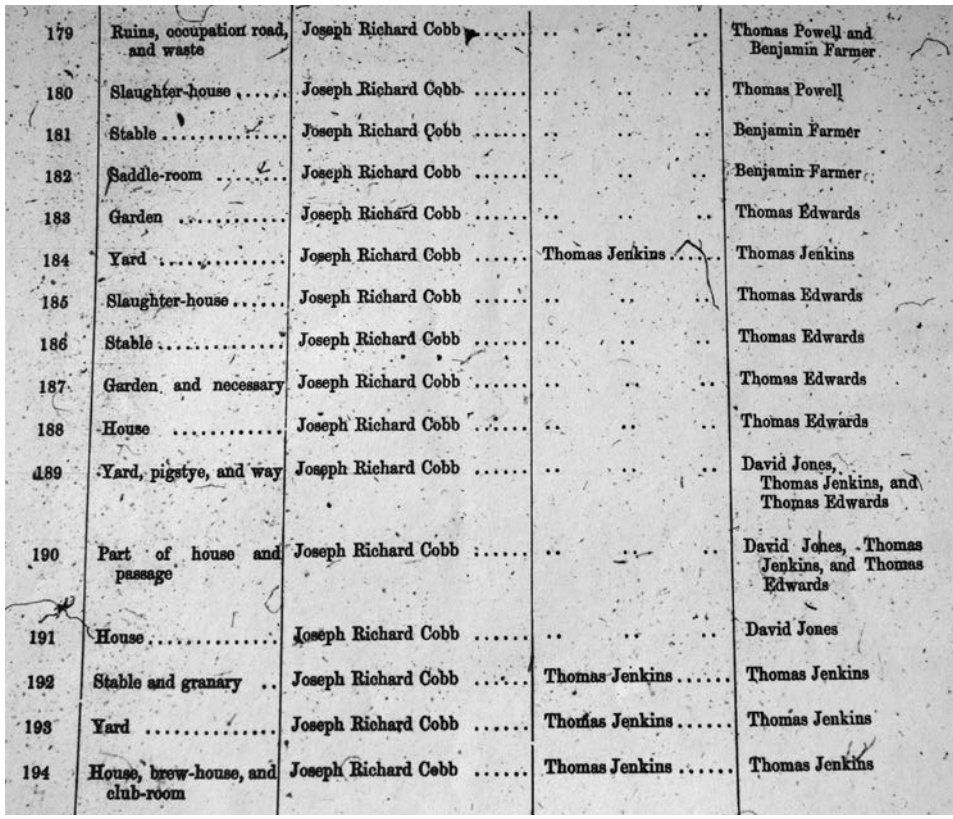


Figure 8. The viaduct over the Honddu. (Illustrated London News, 1867).

company called the Dulas Valley Mineral Railway, which the following year changed its name to the Neath and Brecon Railway. As part of the process, all such public undertakings were obliged to make a public declaration of their plans, including their intention "to purchase by compulsion or otherwise, all such lands as may be required for the construction of the said railway".[26]

In the list of 'owners or reputed owners' of land and buildings needed for the railway it is not difficult to find the name of Joseph Cobb. The properties are not named, but The Garden Cottage and its adjoining cottages can be identified by the fact that the name of Esther Lewis is placed alongside that of Cobb as the 'owner or reputed owner'. Her husband, Watkin Lewis, had died, and Cobb was still honouring the terms of Mrs Money's will. Esther Lewis' name was presumably so placed because of her right of residence in one of the cottages.[27]

The fact that the property owned by Cobb was on the route of the line might be deemed a coincidence, if it were not for the fact that he also owned nineteen other properties along the route (Fig. 9). The list includes a Brewhouse, a stable and granary, a slaughterhouse, a house, several yards, and a saddle room. This extensive property portfolio would have brought him considerable compensation from the Neath and Brecon (which was at times in a precarious financial



179	Ruins, occupation road, and waste	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Powell and Benjamin Farmer
180	Slaughter-house	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Powell
181	Stable	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Benjamin Farmer
182	Saddle-room	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Benjamin Farmer
183	Garden	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Edwards
184	Yard	Joseph Richard Cobb	Thomas Jenkins	Thomas Jenkins
185	Slaughter-house	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Edwards
186	Stable	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Edwards
187	Garden and necessary	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Edwards
188	House	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	Thomas Edwards
189	Yard, pigstye, and way	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	David Jones, Thomas Jenkins, and Thomas Edwards
190	Part of house and passage	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	David Jones, Thomas Jenkins, and Thomas Edwards
191	House	Joseph Richard Cobb	.. .. ..	David Jones
192	Stable and granary ..	Joseph Richard Cobb	Thomas Jenkins	Thomas Jenkins
193	Yard	Joseph Richard Cobb	Thomas Jenkins	Thomas Jenkins
194	House, brew-house, and club-room	Joseph Richard Cobb	Thomas Jenkins	Thomas Jenkins

Figure 9. List of some of the properties owned by Joseph Cobb on the route of the Neath and Brecon line.

position) by the time the line was completed in 1866. In the case of The Garden Cottage, the railway line took a slice of the land at the rear of the property.

Modern notions about conflicts of interest do not necessarily apply in this period. But it is worth noting that not only was Cobb an official of a company, the Brecon and Merthyr Railway Company, which saw itself as a rival to the Neath and Brecon, but he and his family also had substantial investments in the Brecon and Merthyr. There is a fascinating exchange of letters in the Brecon County Times, where Cobb is defending the financial performance of the company. He claimed close acquaintance with the facts, saying, "I hold...a considerable number of debentures and of preference and ordinary stock and my family and friends hold more".[28] In other words, he had both a professional and a financial interest in making life difficult for the Neath and Brecon Railway Company.

Cobb admitted that he was combative in his business dealings, writing in 1870 that he "has to fight and likes to fight professionally, and in this may he

be pardoned, hoping that in so fighting, he could meet any of his opponents after death amicably…".[29] Some of those opponents certainly found him irritable and even at times cantankerous, and negotiations with him were sometimes 'strained'.[30] Using his position as a solicitor, he was always ready to take legal action.

It had been intended for the Neath and Brecon to terminate in Brecon at a station shared with the Brecon and Merthyr line, which had opened in 1863. Thanks to the endless squabbling between the rival companies, this had proved impossible to achieve. So, the Brecon and Merthyr terminated at a station in the Watton and the Neath and Brecon at a station at the top of Mount Street (Fig. 10). It was clearly absurd to have rival stations in such a small town, and eventually agreement was achieved on a site for a joint station at the top of Free Street (the site of the present fire station). There were, however, many frustrating delays and difficulties, one of which was the fact that Cobb was guarding the land that the Neath and Brecon needed to connect from Mount Street to Free Street.

Figure 10. The site of Mount Street station.

The Cobb family owned land on both sides of the prospective line, and one dispute involving a right of way was taken by Cobb all the way to Chancery, stating in one letter that, "the excessive beastliness of the men in the pathway reserved for myself and my family...is enough to ruffle the temper of a less irritable man than myself".[31] Another dispute arose because some of the Cobb land, just north of the town walls in an area called Clawdd y Gaer, was needed for a siding, but the Neath and Brecon was going to have to pay Cobb for it. In 1867, the Board of Trade was told that Cobb was ready to sell at a price to be agreed with the Neath and Brecon if the company would pay for it.[32] The Free Street station was finally opened in 1871, but the Neath and Brecon trains did not get there until the following year.

Joseph Cobb the Antiquarian

When Cobb died in 1897 he was not, however, remembered primarily for his business activities but as "one of the leading antiquaries of Wales".[33] He became a prominent member of the Cambrian Archaeological Association and played a significant part in the restoration of the Priory Church—now the Cathedral—in Brecon.[34] He was certainly supportive of the plans for the restoration of the Church when the architect, Sir Gilbert Scott, was commissioned to direct the

work in 1861. In 1874, Cobb published a book entitled *A Short Account of the Church of St John the Evangelist*, (the Priory Church). He comes out of it sounding very much a conservationist, with some un-Victorian views, describing "this age as more obliterating than Henry the Eighth's or Cromwell's". He goes on to say, "Recently I have been in several restored churches and have found an old font, in which the parishioners had been baptised probably for some 800 years, turned out into the churchyard for no fault of its own, and replaced with some modern thing of machine-dressed Bath stone...".

Indeed, Cobb is credited with helping to preserve some of the church's sculptured stones, tombs and monuments. The inscriptions were copied, rubbings of the stones made and the locality of each marked at the expense of the Restoration Committee, he wrote, "with a view as far as possible of insuring their safety and, in any event, of preserving a memorial of them. This was intrusted to the writer...".[35]

Cobb's interest in archaeology and ancient buildings can be seen in a document he wrote carefully listing "objects of archaeological interest near Brecon", beginning with "Celtic remains, stations, fortified posts etc.—at Slwch ¾ mile—a very perfect camp—on the Crug hill 1 mile—a very perfect camp...".[36] This developed in his later years into a fascination with medieval military architecture, perhaps because of his childhood experiences.

He was an assiduous reader on the subject, and although self-taught, became involved in the restoration of a number of Welsh castles. He was sufficiently confident to compare his approach to that of "the picturesque people who see so much that does not exist".[37] Between 1880 and 1883 he undertook considerable restoration work at Pembroke castle, most notably the Barbican Gate. "I have also restored the Barbican gateway. The walls were about 5ft high on one side, 9ft on the other, with the springing of the arch. For the design above the arch, I am responsible. The thin walls of the by-gate tower and of the foss bastion, I need not say, were put by me...".[38] A later authority commented that the names of the individual parts of the castle were largely the invention of Cobb, adding waspishly that "they are not particularly well-chosen".[39]

Around the same time, Cobb leased Manorbier Castle, just a few miles from Pembroke. He is described as playing an integral part in the revitalisation of Manorbier Castle, and "his legacy may be noted in the restored floors of the towers and the gatehouse, new windows and repaired stonework".[40] He levelled the ground in the inner ward to create a tennis court, and, more controversially, he converted a sixteenth-century barn inside the castle walls into a 'modern' house, which to this day looks somewhat incongruous (Fig. 11). It is now used as a holiday home.[41]

Then, in 1885, while still holding the lease at Manorbier, he went one further and bought another castle: Caldicot Castle, near Chepstow (Fig 12). His

notepaper at the time gave three addresses, Brecon, Caldicot Castle and Manorbere (sic) Castle, although by 1887, Manorbere had been crossed out.[42] He had decided to make the castle at Caldicot a family home, and the Cobb family continued to live there until 1963. In Cobb's time, the family commuted between Caldicot and Brecon.[43]

Figure 11. House in Manorbier Castle.

He began work on restoring the castle almost immediately, and indeed would not permit a visitation by the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1885 owing to the "transitional state in which it was involved for needful repairs". Expressing his regret that he could not receive them, he insisted that he had always observed two canons when carrying out restoration work, "One. Never to remove an ancient stone except to put a similar sound one in its place or to bring to light one more ancient. Two. Never to put any constructural work (socket pipes excluded) but what there is evidence that it or its equivalent existed before".[44]

Figure 12. Drawing of Caldicot Castle 1885 by Joseph's son, Wheatly Cobb.
Courtesy of Jo Copping

His intervention at Caldicot, as at Manorbier, was important in saving the castle from further ruin, as evidenced by a photographic comparison between the castle in 1885 and its much-improved condition in more recent times (Fig. 13). But, as any visitor will also notice, Cobb did not always follow his own 'canons'. He needed to provide suitable accommodation for his family and, to that end, chose to develop the gatehouse. The woodwork and brickwork used to build the extension on the inside of the gatehouse could not be described as medieval in appearance. A local outcry obliged him to reduce the height of the roof, which he covered with clay tiles rather than the original stone tiles.[45] The extension was built in line with his own preliminary design.[46]

Figure 13. Caldicot Castle today.

One of the attractions of Caldicot Castle for Cobb was the drawbridge. He had a theory that he wanted to prove. The conventional view on medieval construction was that the castle drawbridge spanned just the moat and was lifted by chains passing through the castle walls and over a windlass. He had an entirely different explanation, which he put forward in one of his many articles for *Archaeologia Cambrensis*: that "the bridge was about double the length...and that it was balanced on trunnions near the centre of its length... that there was a pit...and that the castle end of the bridge went down into this pit". In other words, it was not lifted by chains, which in his view were only there to steady the bridge. Instead it worked like a seesaw, with the centre of the bridge resting on a pivot. "What I saw at Caldicot filled me with a desire to dig and see more, as I satisfied myself that at no place I had seen was the arrangement better to be studied...I became owner, and I dug and was not disappointed".[47] He felt he had proved his theory and he recreated the drawbridge.

Cobb spent many hours researching the history of the castle and, in particular, the lineage of previous owners. He made a great deal of notes, usually on the reverse of previous letters or documents: correspondence from the National Liberal Club; a letter offering for sale fine cases of Madeira wine; and even a document relating to the Brecon and Merthyr railway. In his clear—if by now somewhat spidery—writing, he drew up a history of all the owners dating back to the Norman conquest. After a list that includes the likes of the Earl of Hereford and the Duke of Buckingham there appears the name of J. R. Cobb. He had not just bought a castle, he had bought its history as well.[48]

He also discovered links with Brecon. His chart of previous owners underlines those who had been Lords of Brecon as well as Caldicot. Cobb's son, Geoffrey Wheatly Cobb, made a speech to Caldicot School in 1895, in which he told the story of the marriage of a twelfth-century Earl of Hereford to Sibylla, the daughter of Bernard Newmarch, Lord of Brecon, "and thus for the first time the manors of Brecon and Caldicot were united, as, after a very long interval, they are at present".[49] On his memorial plaque at the cathedral in Brecon, Cobb describes himself as "Lord of the Manors at Brecon and Caldicot".

By the time of his death in 1897, at the age of 76, where did his heart really lie? In Brecon or in Caldicot? The memorial plaque cites Joseph Richard Cobb "of Nythfa in this Borough and Caldicot Castle, Co. Monmouth". A few years after his death, his family funded the building of the lych-gate to the Cathedral in his memory, which stands to this day. The stone commemorating his life can be seen on the inside right-hand wall. But he and other members of his family are buried in the graveyard at St Mary's Church, Caldicot, close by his beloved castle.

The cottages after Cobb

In 1886, Cobb had sold The Garden Cottage and its associated buildings, perhaps to help raise money for the cost of the restoration work at Caldicot Castle. He sold it to an acquaintance, Rhys Davies, who had begun his career articled to Cobb's firm of solicitors.[50] By this time, Davies had become the Borough Surveyor, a J.P. and a well-known figure in the town (Fig. 14). The conveyance refers to "the Garden Cottage with the garden and outbuildings thereto belonging" and, referring back to the 1860 conveyance, "also those two cottages and premises near thereto late in the occupation of Watkin Lewis and John Davies". The conveyance is not accompanied by any plan of the property and there is no mention of the fact that a slice of the land had been taken for the Neath and Brecon railway line.[51]

Figure 14. Rhys Davies

Brecon Museum

Unlike his predecessor, Davies certainly intended to live there. He undertook a considerable amount of rebuilding work. Two of the cottages were demolished, but The Garden Cottage was left standing.[52] In place of the demolished properties, Davies built a three storey Victorian villa and connected it to the Garden Cottage with two lateral corridors. Sections of iron rails were used as beams and the fence dividing the property from the line was constructed from railway sleepers, which were still there more than a hundred years later. As a Welsh-speaker, Davies called his house 'Harddfan', which translates as 'beautiful place', something of a change from the 'ugly cottages' spotted near the beginning of the century (Fig. 15). The 1891 census has Davies and his wife, Annie, living in 'Harddfan House' with their three children and a 17-year-old domestic servant, Phoebe.

Figure 15. Harddfan: the house built by Rhys Davies, incorporating the Garden Cottage.

In his role as Borough Surveyor, Davies was responsible for the construction of the Promenade along the banks of the Usk. He was very active in the town,

becoming secretary to the Breconshire Agricultural Society in 1882, and writing a brief history of the Society from its earliest days. But he is perhaps best-remembered for his love of Welsh language and literature and his energetic support for eisteddfodau. In this he followed his father, Thomas Davies of Llywel, and he chose the title of 'Llew Llywel' (the Lion of Llywel) as his bardic name in honour of his native parish.

He was the author of numerous poems and in 1876 brought out a volume called 'Sketches in Wales', published by H. B. Wheeler of High Street, Brecon. This volume, which ran through an edition of 8,000 copies, contained work in both Welsh and English. It was then described as "stamping him as a litterateur of genius",[53] but a more recent authority described it as containing "light-hearted skits and squibs…of the sort one might hear at a Noson Lawen".[54]

The first piece, entitled 'Yr Eisteddfod', is a colourful piece of satire, of which some early lines give the flavour:

> Mae'r babell yn eang, a llu wedi ei llenwi,
> Addurnir ei hochrau gan amryw faneri,
> Mae lluman yn hofran a a'i geiriau'n hysbysu
> Fod oes y bydysawd i hen iaith y Cymry.
>
> *The tent is wide, and the people have filled it,*
> *The sides are adorned with all sorts of banners,*
> *The flags are hovering above with their words advertising*
> *The old language of Wales to the entire universe.*

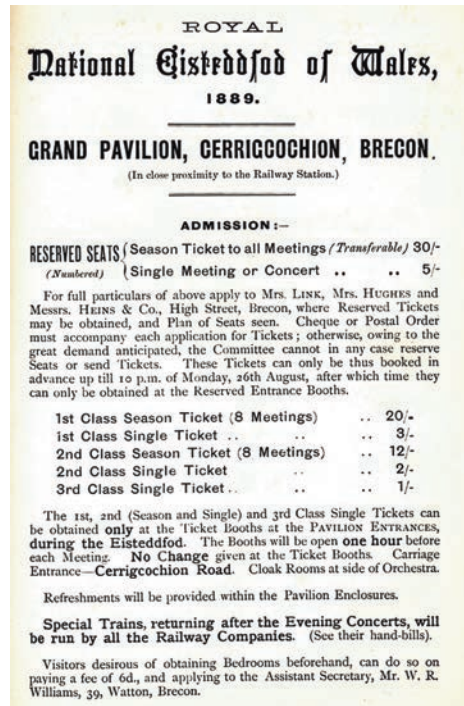
The pieces in English, described as 'songs', have a constant theme of misty-eyed Welsh patriotism, defiant against the encroachments of "John Bull" and proud of the "mountain home of the true Welshman". But this is not nationalism in the modern sense, for Davies makes clear his loyalty to Queen Victoria: "few from her rule dissent". In his celebration of "the thousand Welshmen" who fought at Agincourt, and "the squire of Brecknock", the "valiant David Gam", he concludes on a note which includes the whole of the kingdom:

> Should hostile hosts e'er rise in arms
> and round our island clam,
> the throne will find mids't Cambria's hills
> another David Gam.

Davies was a key figure in running the local eisteddfodau in Brecon in 1894 and 1897, acting as secretary to the general committee and as a conductor and adjudicator during the events. He was commended at meetings of the Gorsedd

as being one of the most efficient secretaries in the Principality.[55] In 1889, the National Eisteddfod came to Brecon, advertised as being held in the Grand Pavilion, Cerrigcochion, near the railway station, with special trains provided (Fig. 16).[56] Davies was secretary to this National Eisteddfod, "with the ultimate success of the event being attributed in no small way to his hard work and vision".[57] The chairman of the event was Dr James Wheeler who, conveniently for planning purposes, lived close by at Mount Pleasant.[58]

Davies died at his residence, Harddfan, at the early age of 54. His obituary in the Brecon County Times described him as "one of the most popular of our citizens" and "universally esteemed and respected". A bilingual poem appended to the obituary ended thus:



ROYAL

National Eisteddfod of Wales,

1889.

GRAND PAVILION, CERRIGCOCHION, BRECON.

(In close proximity to the Railway Station.)

ADMISSION:—

RESERVED SEATS (Numbered) { Season Ticket to all Meetings (Transferable) 30/- ; Single Meeting or Concert 5/-

For full particulars of above apply to Mrs. Link, Mrs. Hughes and Messrs. Heins & Co., High Street, Brecon, where Reserved Tickets may be obtained, and Plan of Seats seen. Cheque or Postal Order must accompany each application for Tickets; otherwise, owing to the great demand anticipated, the Committee cannot in any case reserve Seats or send Tickets. These Tickets can only be thus booked in advance up till 10 p.m. of Monday, 26th August, after which time they can only be obtained at the Reserved Entrance Booths.

1st Class Season Ticket (8 Meetings)	.. 20/-
1st Class Single Ticket	.. 3/-
2nd Class Season Ticket (8 Meetings)	.. 12/-
2nd Class Single Ticket ..	.. 2/-
3rd Class Single Ticket	.. 1/-

The 1st, 2nd (Season and Single) and 3rd Class Single Tickets can be obtained **only** at the Ticket Booths at the Pavilion Entrances, **during the Eisteddfod**. The Booths will be open **one hour** before each Meeting. **No Change** given at the Ticket Booths. Carriage Entrance—**Cerrigcochion Road**. Cloak Rooms at side of Orchestra.

Refreshments will be provided within the Pavilion Enclosures.

Special Trains, returning after the Evening Concerts, will be run by all the Railway Companies. (See their hand-bills).

Visitors desirous of obtaining Bedrooms beforehand, can do so on paying a fee of 6d., and applying to the Assistant Secretary, Mr. W. R. Williams, 39, Watton, Brecon.

Figure 16. Programme for the 1889 National Eisteddfod. Brecon Museum

> We lost a Genius, one of many parts,
> A Genius who found room in all our hearts
> A man of Wit and Wisdom to the brim,
> He loved all Brecon, and all Brecon him.

His grave in Brecon cemetery is fashioned in the style of a Celtic standing stone. After his death, Davies' widow Annie went to live in Maida Vale with her eldest daughter Llywela, who had forged a career as a pianist of international renown. The house was sold to a local family in 1901, and then changed hands only twice, in 1932 and 1946, before my wife, Ann, and I bought it in the year 2000.

As a footnote, it is worth adding that the inhabitants of The Garden Cottage and subsequently Harddfan, would not have been unduly disturbed by the trains passing immediately behind the property. Apart from a handful of freight trains each day, there were in 1870 just five passenger-trains a day between Brecon and Neath. By the turn of the century, there had been an increase in freight traffic, but the number of passenger trains was little changed.[59] The line was closed in 1962, just under a hundred years after it had opened.

Notes

[1] Lord 2016.

[2] Mavor 1806.

[3] In 1841, the census forms were distributed to households two days before census night and were collected the following day.

[4] Conveyance: November 14, 1860.

[5] Will of Ann White Money, September 7, 1858 (Gwent Archive)

[6] Guide to the Plough Chapel, Brecon, 2015.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] Burial records (Powys County Council).

[9] South Wales Echo: December 6, 1897.

[10] Maybery Collection (Archives Wales).

[11] Cobb family papers (courtesy Pauline Hayward).

[12] Letter: Joseph Cobb September 20,1857 (courtesy Pauline Hayward).

[13] Broughton Castle website http://www.broughtoncastle.com/ (Accessed 1 February 2017).

[14] Will of Thomas Cobb 1822 (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[15] Pauline Hayward, Cobb family historian.

[16] Correspondence between George and Joseph Cobb, e.g. over the sale of Ffynnonau, a farm near Cerrigcochion Road (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[17] Will of George Cobb (courtesy Pauline Hayward).

[18] Letter: Joseph Cobb to an aunt, September 20, 1857 (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[19] Roberts 1961.

[20] Family correspondence (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[21] Brecon County Times: 1860s various.

[22] Letter: from Col. Lloyd Watkins MP, April 10, 1852, requesting Joseph Cobb to accept a renewal "of my former retainer" at the next election (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[23] Barrie 1991.

[24] Jones, Dunstone, and Watkins 2005.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] Court of Quarter Sessions, Deposited Plans of Undertaking (Powys County Archives).

[27] The relevant Plan of Undertaking is for the Dulas Valley Mineral Railway: Extensions and Deviations to Brecon 1862. The properties were numbered and referenced to a map.

[28] Brecon County Times: various, 1868

[29] Letter: March 12, 1870 (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[30] Jones, Dunstone, and Watkins 2005.

[31] *Ibid*.

[32] *Ibid*.

[33] South Wales Echo: December 6, 1897.

[34] Dictionary of Welsh Biography.

[35] Leaflet promoting the publication of Joseph Cobb's book, then provisionally entitled: *A Concise History and Description of the Priory Church of St John the Evangelist.*

[36] Handwritten note by Joseph Cobb, undated (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[37] Cobb 1883.

[38] *Ibid*.

[39] King 1978.

[40] Manorbier Castle website http://manorbiercastle.co.uk/ (Accessed 1 February 2017).

[41] *Manorbier Castle* by Caroline Dashwood, booklet by the owners.

[42] Letter: Joseph Cobb, August 30, 1887 (National Library of Wales: uncatalogued Cobb papers).

[43] Cobb family papers (courtesy Pauline Hayward).

[44] Minutes of meeting of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, October 1885.
[45] Caldicot Castle Guidebook.
[46] Notes on the History of Caldicot Castle by Joseph Cobb (Gwent Archive).
[47] Cobb 1888.
[48] Notes on the History of Caldicot Castle by Joseph Cobb (Gwent Archive).
[49] *The Story of Caldicot Castle* by G. Wheatly Cobb: speech 1895, privately printed 1931.
[50] Powys Local History Encyclopaedia.
[51] Conveyance: March 29, 1886.
[52] Subsequent documents still refer to 'The Garden Cottage' for several years afterwards.
[53] Brecon County Times: March 24, 1899.
[54] Mathias 1980-81.
[55] Brecon County Times: March 24, 1899.
[56] National Eisteddfod programme 1889 (Brecknock Museum).
[57] Powys Local History Encyclopaedia.
[58] Census 1891.
[59] Jones, Dunstone, and Watkins 2005.

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Glyn Mathias studied history at Jesus College, Oxford, before embarking on a career in journalism. He became Political Editor at ITN in London and then Political Editor at BBC Wales in Cardiff, subsequently serving as the first Electoral Commissioner for Wales and as the Welsh member on the Ofcom Content Board in London. His autobiography, *Raising an Echo*, was published in 2014. He is a member of the Executive Council of the Brecknock Society.

NOTES AND QUERIES

THE BRECON MANSION HOUSE: THE SURVIVING NORTH-WEST WING

NIGEL CLUBB

I enjoyed reading the article by David Jones Powell in the 2016 volume of *Brycheiniog*[1] on the Mansion House of the Morgans of Tredegar, formerly in St Mary Street, Brecon. The article was based on accounts of living in the house by Dorothy Elizabeth Powell (known as Elizabeth), the author's aunt. She describes how, following the sale by the family in 1928, the main central section of the house and the service wing to the south-east were demolished in the early 1930s, after occupation by the Inland Revenue. The service wing to the north-west, described as the 'kitchen' end of the house in her account (and surviving today as an independent building), subsequently became the head Post Office for Brecon. It bears evidence of the stamp vending-machines to the right of the façade and there are post boxes to the left. The building is still referred to locally as the 'Old Post Office' and, at the time of writing, it is occupied by Young's carpet shop.

I would like to draw the attention of your readers to some aspects of this surviving wing of the Mansion House, in particular, the sensitive modifications that were made to the facade in the middle decades of the twentieth century. These modifications occurred after the occupancy of the Jones Powell family, and perpetuate aspects of the architectural style of the Mansion House, as well as introducing a new wave of classical revivalism: the neo-Georgian style.

If we look at Fig. 1, which is the family's archive photograph looking west along St Mary Street[2], the end of the main Mansion House is to the left and the slightly recessed 'kitchen' end is in the middle. Although recessed, it was an integral part of the Mansion House, but it is also possible that the wing

Figure 1. Archive photograph of the north-west wing.

Figure 2. View of the north-west wing as in 2016.

incorporates earlier buildings or structures. Elizabeth Powell thought that the wing had been an Inn previously[3], including a cellar. The Morgans had owned all the property down to the end of the street, including the former Bull Inn in Wheat Street, (now Ruperra House, named after another seat of the Morgans).

During the nineteenth century, the facade of the 'kitchen' wing had been given architectural features in harmony with the elevation of the main House; particularly the surface treatment, the string course which continued across both facades, the quoining, both at the corner of the main house at the end of the wing, as well as the window embrasures with their moulded architraves, and the consoles that support the window sills.

A comparison of Fig. 1 with the current view of the wing in Fig. 2 reveals that, while the first floor is largely unchanged, there were significant modifications to the ground floor during the twentieth century. Moving from left to right, one entrance has been blocked up, while further to the right, a window opening has been replaced by a new entrance surrounded by an elaborate door case, which is linked architecturally to a new bowed window by a cornice, frieze, and pilasters. Finally, moving further to the right, a passageway has been replaced with two new window openings.

Almost certainly, the modifications are associated with new uses for the 'kitchen' wing as an independent building after the demolition of the main house, probably in connection with the use by the Inland Revenue or as a Post Office (the latter also involved significant building to the rear of the wing).

It is worth looking at several of the 'new' features in the façade in turn.

- Some care has been taken with the 'new' entrance, (Fig. 3 provides a current view), which has been provided with a wide central door case of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century type, with a cornice and frieze supported by fluted pilasters and Corinthian capitals. The frieze is decorated with an oval patera to each side, encasing a square-headed entrance with a panelled door and an overlight. Comparing the door case with that of the main Mansion House in Fig. 4 (another family archive photograph[4]), we can see significant similarities in the style and composition, except that the Mansion House example is pedimented with a round-headed entrance and the door case of the 'kitchen' wing is squarer. Door cases of this elaborate type would have been seen as old-fashioned by the 1930s, but someone has taken the thought and trouble, either to commission one, or, intriguingly, to recycle an old door case from another building. David Jones Powell informs me that those responsible for the demolition of the main house after the occupation of the Inland Revenue were keen to sell fixtures from the house. There is a family tradition, for example, that the fine fireplaces were sold by auction and sent to the USA.[5] It is not possible from the existing archive

photographs to prove that the door case came from the Mansion House, but it does seem more likely that it was recycled from another building rather than having been commissioned anew at this date.

Figure 3. 'New' door case on the north-west wing.

Figure 4. The main Mansion House door case.

- The cornice and frieze run across from the 'new' door case to the right where they meet two pilasters supporting capitals, which articulate a feature of a twentieth-century type, a wide-bowed and narrow-pained window much favoured by neo-Georgian architects as a 'Regency' feature (Fig. 5). As a more contemporary form of classical revivalism, it would undoubtedly have seemed more in the spirit of the 1930s than the style of the door case. The bowed window may be a later replacement of an earlier unbowed shop window frame, more consistent with the original scheme.
- The two 'new' window elements further to the right have the same earlier design as those which helped to unify the 'kitchen' wing with the main Mansion House. Here again, thought has been given, and trouble taken, with the architectural expression of the façade. With their small panes and hornless sashes, they are quite likely to have been recycled, perhaps one from the window opening replaced by the 'new' doorway and another recycled

Figure 5. The north-west door case and bowed window.

from the main House. The same treatment is applied to the adjacent Morgan property further down the street towards the former Bull Inn.

The survival of the north-west wing of the Mansion House, provides us with a reminder of the demolished Mansion House, which has left such a gap in St Mary Street. The wing also provides interest in the street from the architectural treatment it was given after the main building was demolished. The treatment is not likely to be accidental. The style of the neo-Georgian bowed window is characteristic of the period and fits comfortably with Post Office use from the 1930s onwards, serving as a shop window. But the other elements, especially the door case and the cornice and frieze, echo an earlier period of classical revivalism.

This note on the surviving wing of the Mansion House should be placed in a wider context. The neo-Georgian style represented by the bowed window had often been adopted by public bodies and utilities by the 1920s and 1930s, almost as an official statement. A recent reappraisal of the neo-Georgian style[6] regards it as an assertion of national image and identity, especially in the inter-war period. Applying it to the north-west wing of the Mansion House could be seen, in retrospect, as a sensitive response to the historic townscape of Brecon, as indeed could all the changes to the wing during the twentieth century. Yet, within thirty years, by the 1960s, the neo-Georgians had lost out as modernism in architecture impacted so significantly on our historic towns and cities.

I would like to thank Martin Cherry, John Gibbs, Ken Jones, and David Jones Powell for their comments on this piece.

Notes

[1] Jones Powell 2016.
[2] Reproduced from: *Ibid*: 43: Fig. 4.
[3] *Ibid*: 44.
[4] Reproduced from: *Ibid*: 43: Fig. 3.
[5] *Ibid*: 45: Fig 7.
[6] Holder and McKellar 2016.

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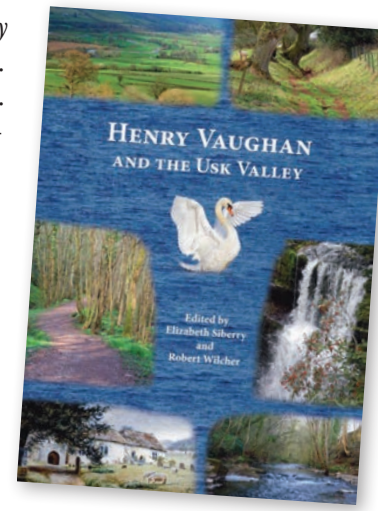
Jones Powell, D. 2016. Memories of the Now-Vanished Mansion House, Brecon, One Hundred Years Ago: Based on Two Accounts by Dorothy Elizabeth Powell (1913–1988). *Brycheiniog* 47: 41-9.

Nigel Clubb was Director of the National Monuments Record for 16 years, first with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and, after merger, with English Heritage. He is currently Chair of the Board of the Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture at King's College, London, and a member of the Heritage Lottery Fund Committee for Wales. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, and a Registered Archivist. Born and bred in Wales, he is now based in Brecon.

BOOK REVIEWS



Henry Vaughan and the Usk Valley *edited by Elizabeth Siberry and Robert Wilcher.* 2016. Logaston Press. Paperback: 110 pages. £10.00. ISBN-10: 1910839027 ISBN-13: 978-1910839027.

It is remarkable that Henry Vaughan, who died at the age of 74 in 1695, completed his most admired poetical works about halfway through his life. He continued thereafter in the practice of medicine in the neighbourhood of his birthplace in Llansantffraed in the Usk Valley. His metaphysical poetry faded from critical view until the arrival of Romanticism. Later in the nineteenth century several editions of Vaughan's works were published. The first definitive biography was written in 1947 by Francis Ernest Hutchison who drew extensively upon the material lovingly collected by American Louise Guiney and her correspondent, local enthusiast Gwenllian Morgan, over the previous quarter of a century (see Jonathan Nauman's article in this volume). A wealth of analysis and research into his works is now available, much of which is directed at the specialist scholar and does not encourage the passing reader to stop and seek a solid appreciation of Vaughan's poetry and its background: the troubles of his twenties and thirties; his religious devotion; his immersion in the local landscape; and his reverence for nature. *Henry Vaughan and the Usk Valley* is a superbly organised collection of eight thematic essays that shine a modern light on facets of his character but especially illuminates his seventeenth-century visionary and devotional thoughts by very readable analyses of selected poems.

Following a biographical introduction by the editors, Jeremy Hooker explores Vaughan's relation with the landscape in which he passed his life, especially the River Usk and adjacent mountains. The interplay of light and water fascinated Henry (and his twin-brother poet, Thomas). Examples of verse that perfectly illustrate this are presented and for the newcomer to seventeenth-century poetry, end notes explain the poets' allusions. The use of such end notes for nearly fifty poems is a most valuable feature throughout the book. Robert Wilcher uses his mastery of political and religious conflicts and of poetry of the time to select works of Henry Vaughan from which the tumult of the Civil War cries out. He follows this with an exposition on the outrage evident in the poems caused by the religious diktats of those who had usurped

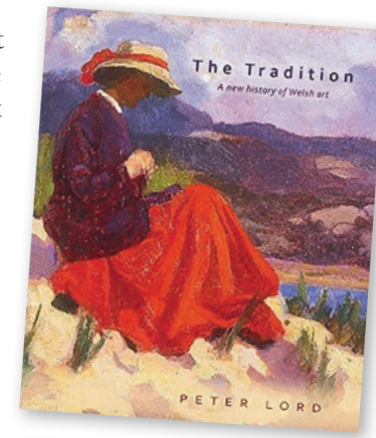
the monarchy during the interregnum. Helen Wilcox presents Vaughan's pastoral purpose as one of three strategies poetically deployed in reconstructing the Church's 'ancient way'. The presence of God 'everywhere' is the second. The re-establishment of the church in one's own spiritual strength complete her suggested trinity of reinvigoration of what, in modern terms, would be a personal virtual church. American scholar Jonathan Nauman perceives an inclination in the sacred works, including elements of hermetic thought, to let the natural world speak for itself as God's creation and help humanity forgo sin. He also presents the view that Henry Vaughan was a poet who transfigured the Usk Valley into a mystical literary prototype, a Book of Nature. There is little overlap of the poems selected by Hooker in discussing Vaughan and landscape, and Nauman in discussing Vaughan and nature, the exceptions being *Regeneration* and *The Waterfall*. Simone Thomas, herself a GP, carefully investigates his study of medicine evidenced by several of his own medical texts in Latin that he annotated. She concludes that he was a traditional country doctor whose practice was almost certainly based on herbal medicine, methods he may have known from early age. He was not however, ignorant of iatrochemistry, the use of chemicals in treatments. The rediscovery of Henry Vaughan's life and work in the nineteenth century and his subsequent influence on later poets, authors, composers, and illustrators up to the present day is comprehensively explained by Elizabeth Siberry. Altogether the essays provide an eightfold path to the understanding and enjoyment of the poetry of Breconshire's most famous son.

Henry Vaughan and the Usk Valley was jointly commissioned by the Brecknock Society and the Vaughan Association. There are many colour photographs; these and other illustrations greatly enhance the printed word. Each essay has a list for further reading. An excellent index is provided together with a guide list of the poems included. This book will be a landmark in the literature of Henry Vaughan and should bring him to a wider public.

SEAMUS HAMILL-KEAYS
The Vaughan Association

The Tradition, A New History of Welsh Art 1400-1990 *by Peter Lord.* 2016. Parthian. Hardback: 400 pages. £40.00. ISBN-10: 1910409626 ISBN-13: 978-1910409626.

Ffiniau: Four Painters in Raymond Williams' Border Country *by Peter Wakelin.* 2016. Art Works. Paperback: 64 pages. £7.50. ISBN-13 978-0995498716.



The Tradition is a synthesis of the three important works produced by Peter Lord and his team at the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies at the University of Wales under the general heading of The Visual Culture of Wales. Titled *Industrial Society*, *Imaging the Nation*, and *Medieval Vision* these are now out of print and in this new volume Lord continues his campaign to revitalise our understanding of the role that art has played in the life and culture of Wales.

His overriding theme is to dispose of the view, promoted by the academic and artistic critics of the late-twentieth century, that Wales had no artistic culture or tradition. It is in this area that his own research and pungent arguments, revealing the depth, richness, and wealth of artisan artists such as Hugh Hughes and William Rees who have contributed to a living creative tradition in the past is most powerful.

Lord does not simply argue that there is a 'welsh tradition' in art, one with its own style passed on from generation to generation. Rather through the collection of a vast array of over four hundred images, he details and reflects on the diversity of the visual culture of Wales, from the stunning recently discovered fifteenth-century wall painting of St George and the Dragon at Llancarfan, to Jack Crabtree's Going down the Ramp of the 1980s. The images alone strongly support his argument that the strength of Wales' visual culture, both high and low, be reassessed.

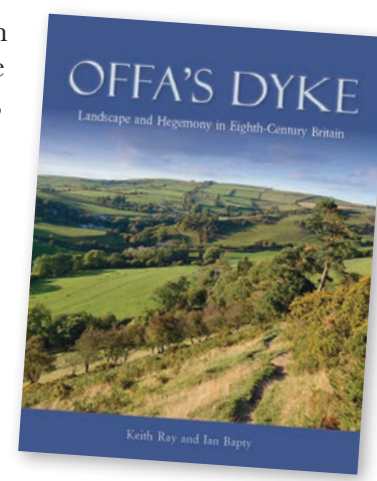
Does Lord go too far in his argument? If we look at the early Eisteddfods then the culture celebrated was poetry, music, and craft. In Abergavenny, it is not until the Eisteddfod of 1848 that Lady Llanover and the Reverend Thomas Price offer for the first time a prize for a work of art. It is won by the Brecon born, London based, sculptor John Evan Thomas and the subject is the *Death of Tewdric*. Lord splendidly illustrates this on page 188. (Breconshire readers

will be delighted that this sculpture will feature once again in the reopened Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery).

Subsequently, the arts have been celebrated as part of the National Eisteddfod. For the 2016 National Eisteddfod in Abergavenny, Peter Wakelin curated a beautiful and evocative exhibition, *Ffiniau*. Examples of the work of Joan Baker, Charles Burton, Bert Issac and John Elwyn were grouped to reflect major themes of Raymond William's autobiographical novel *Border Country*. In the catalogue, Wakelin thoughtfully interweaves the story Williams has to tell of his own life, of crossing borders of time, family, society and country, with how these four artists looked at their own time and place in Wales and recorded it with insight, skill and truthfulness.

WILLIAM GIBBS
Chair, The Brecknock Art Trust

Offa's Dyke: Landscape and Hegemony in Eighth-Century Britain *by Keith Ray and Ian Bapty.* 2016. Windgather Press. Paperback: 200 pages. £29.95. ISBN-10: 1905119356 ISBN-13: 978-1905119356.



"There was in Mercia in recent times an energetic king called Offa, terrifying to all the neighbouring kings and provinces around him, who created a great ditch to be made between Britain [Wales] and Mercia from sea to sea". So says Asser, a Welsh monk from St David's (who became integral within the Wessex Court) in his ninth-century *Life of King Alfred*.[1] But was he right? Did Offa, in fact, build the dyke that bears his name?

In 2014, a series of radiocarbon dates put sections of the dyke 200 years before Offa's reign.[2] It seemed like the dyke was no single construction (analysis shows it was built in short sections) but developed under the control of several Mercian warlords *before* Offa unified the province as one all-powerful entity. There was even a suggestion in some quarters that maybe the dyke was not Mercian at all, but Welsh.

More recently, the dates have been questioned as they were derived from buried turves and may reflect the original surface of the land prior to the dyke's existence rather than the start of construction itself. More research into dating the dyke is clearly needed.

From this background, it is brave indeed to publish a book that claims, as it does so boldly on the cover, to comprise 'Offa's Dyke' in the 'Eighth Century'. Do the authors not appreciate the controversy over both these claims? Actually, they do. There can be few more qualified than the authors of this work: Keith Ray was County Archaeologist for Herefordshire, and Ian Bapty was previously the Offa's Dyke Management Project archaeologist. They deal with the date controversy deftly, by suggesting there is an unwavering attribution of the dyke to Offa; it has never been seriously questioned in any of the later sources. Besides, Offa is almost incidental in a book that delves far deeper than the identity of its putative builder.

The authors pick up from where Cyril Fox left off with his own publication on the dyke.[3] Indeed, the new study is dedicated to the memory of Fox. Despite being, as Asser put it "from sea to sea", the dyke is not linear but consists of short sections that are deliberately placed to be visible from the west (this is very obvious at the edge of our county where the dyke—or, at least, the footpath pertaining to be the dyke—follows the contours of the hilltop, highly visible from the western valleys). The dyke functioned as containment, surveillance, and threat. It was not so much to keep the Britons [Welsh] out of Mercia, but to keep them controlled. It slowed movement across the border and, in so doing, led to the creation of a distinctive border culture, perhaps an early precursor for the later March lordships.

The book considers existing centres of power, what the authors call "political places", such as Talgarth, the old centre of Brycheiniog. This was a significant area for Offa as he began his fighting in the Wye Valley and ended it there too. There is even the possibility that he crossed the Usk Valley watershed at Brecon and entered the county, just a little before he died.

There is little record of the destruction Offa wreaked in Brycheinog. For that, we need to return to King Alfred and, specifically, his eldest daughter, Æthelflæd, who ruled Mercia with every inch of steel as had her predecessor. She drove her fighting into the heart of Brycheiniog, putting the old centre of kingship—the crannog in Llangorse Lake—to the flame. The Mercian Anglo-Saxon chronicle records that she "captured the king's wife and 33 other persons".[4] A deed worthy of Offa himself.

So, what of the dates? In the event, they hardly matter. Eighth century is good enough for now and Offa is unlikely to have his crown tilted. Moreover, this book is about so much more. Engaging, erudite, and excellent, it is a book that every putative walker of the dyke should read and, in so doing, lift their eyes from the path to take in the landscape surrounding the dyke and the figures of old who lived, fought, and died along its length.

Notes

[1] Asser, *Alfred the Great*, Ch. 14: 71.

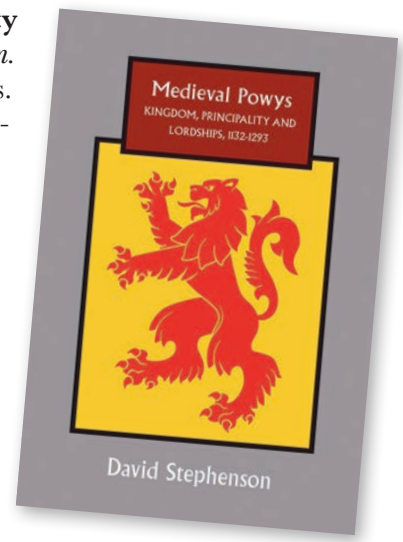
[2] Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. 2014. *Dating Offa's Dyke*. http://www.cpat.org.uk/projects/longer/offachirk/dating_offas_dyke.pdf (Accessed 8 February 2017)

[3] Fox, C. 1955. *Offa's Dyke: A Field Survey of the Western Frontier-Works of Mercia in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries AD*. London: Oxford University Press.

[4] Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Mercian Register): 916.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of Brycheiniog

Medieval Powys. Kingdom, Principality and Lordships, 1132–1293 *by David Stephenson.* 2016. Boydell Press. Hardcover: 368 pages. £60. ISBN-10: 178327140X ISBN-13: 978-1783271405.



In 2012, David Stephenson gave the Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture, which was subsequently published in *Brycheiniog* 44: Conquerors, Courtiers and Careerists: The struggle for supremacy in Brycheiniog 1093-1282, and a second edition of his important book, *Political Power in Medieval Gwynedd*, was published in 2014. His latest book, on Medieval Powys, has been eagerly awaited and it provides another major step forward in our understanding of the complex politics of Wales in the Middle Ages.

The Kingdom of Powys in this period was not of course the Powys of today but consisted of the lands between Gwynedd, Deheubarth and the Middle March. Stephenson's Introduction summarises and challenges previous historiography, which has tended to focus on Gwynedd as the major power and gives little attention to the Powysian rulers. Using a wide range of sources (Welsh and English), from chronicles and charters to bardic poetry, he presents a more complex and much more interesting picture. Maps give the geographical context and genealogical tables help us understand the interrelationships between key families.

The chapters in Part 1 follow a chronological approach. After the re-emergence of Powys, Chapter 2, entitled *The Age of Eminence*, deals with Madog ap Maredudd who ruled from 1132–1160; his work as a builder of castles and churches, and relationship with the English Henry II. Stephenson describes the subsequent period as one of "crisis and renewal" highlighting the rise and

fall of Gwenwynwyn ap Owain Cyfeiliog, as a central figure in the campaigns in 1211–15. These reversed King John's near conquest of Wales in 1211 before his expulsion from his lands by Llewellyn ap Iorwerth and death in 1216 (chapters 3 and 4). From 1216 to 1240, Gwynedd was in the ascendant, but Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, who spent much of his youth in the manor of Ashford in Derbyshire, held by his mother Margaret Corbet, proved a resilient and resourceful ruler (chapter 7) and the Powysian lordship persisted under his son Owain (chapter 8).

In Part II, Stephenson moves on to analyse aspects of governance in Powys: how government and the law actually worked and the practicalities of, for example, church patronage. These were troubled times when the kingdom of Powys was often involved in armed conflict but Stephenson's mastery of the sources provides a more varied picture, including the use of strategic dynastic alliances with marcher families and other Welsh ruling houses.

The wealth of detail and the complexities of the period make this a book one reads and then wants to reread as a quarry of information; a fascinating window into a very different world, which may have been more nuanced and pragmatic than previous histories have suggested.

ELIZABETH SIBERRY
Brycheiniog Editorial Board

The Lords of Hay *by Alan Nicholls.* 2016. Lulu. Paperback: 268 pages. £14.99. (Available from Lulu.com).

Alan Nichols of the Hay History Group is rapidly becoming the Theophilus Jones of Hay. His other works include the Historical Directory of Hay and the Historical Directory of Hay Rural Parish. Taken with this book, which records what is known of the Lords of Hay in their dealings with town and parish, all three are superlative reference works into the history of the lords, people, and buildings of Hay. A mine for future researchers.

That sounds dry, and, moreover, it is unlikely that anyone will purchase this book to read from cover-to-cover (although it could be, with profit). Rather, it is a book for serious researchers and, for the rest of us, to be dipped into and—as I am finding—dipped into regularly.

The bulk of the book features the lords that ruled Hay from the eleventh century to the sixteenth century, with a shorter section towards the end covering more recent lords, including the Bailey lineage that still holds the title. Each lord (and some ruling ladies) gets a short introduction and chronology of events relating to Hay, variously taken from Calendars of Rolls, letters, and charters, with many translated here for the first time from medieval Latin or Old English. The book provides a contemporary record of what is known about each from original sources.

Lineages such as Neufmarché, de Braose, de Bohun, Buckingham, and Stafford reveal an abiding Anglo-Norman presence. Other names are even more recognisable. Henry Bolingbroke (Henry IV), his son, Henry V, and, if only technically, Henry VIII, who took the title when he executed Edward Stafford, the third Duke of Buckingham, and restored the land, but not the title, to Buckingham's son, Henry Lord Stafford. There are many black and white photographs of manuscripts, seals, and tombs, which serve to enliven the text.

Alan Nichols has provided us and, more importantly, posterity, with a very valuable resource; some of these translations are available nowhere else. He is (with a little help, as he is keen to acknowledge) a one-man industry for the history of Hay. He does the town, and all those interested in its history, a great service.

OTHER TITLES RECEIVED

Historic Houses and Other Historic Buildings in Brecon *by Robert Eckley.* 2016. Brecon Local and Family History Society. Paperback: 62 pages. £9.00.

This is a small book with minimal text, providing photographs of the historic houses and buildings in Brecon, together with images or transcriptions of the associated plaques that provide their history. For first-time, and more seasoned visitors to Brecon, this book is a must-read.

Brecon Remembers World War One *by Brecon U3A Family History Group.* 2016. Brecon U3A. Paperback: 342 pages.

A labour of love, this book provides brief biographies (and often a photograph) of all the Brecon men who fell in World War One, taken from contemporary documents. It commemorates each man with a fitting and respectful tribute, recording the richness of a life lost for others. It brings a sobering reality to the list of names that appear in near-anonymous regularity on our war memorials. Behind each name is a story. This book presents them.

MIKE WILLIAMS
Editor of Brycheiniog