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Denbighshire Historical Society

Transactions

Professor A.H. Dodd (Ed.).

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CYMDEITHAS
HANES SIR DDINBYCH

DENBIGHSHIRE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRAFODION

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TRANSACTIONS

Volume 1



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CYMDEITHAS HANES SIR DDINBYCH

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CONSTITUTION

I. Name of Society.

The Society shall be called "Cymdeithas Hanes Sir Ddinbych—Denbighshire Historical Society."

II. Aims. The objects of the Society shall be :—

- (1) To study the history of the County, including family history, literature, folk-lore, archaeology, and all the various subjects which come under the designation of "antiquities."
- (2) To publish local records.
- (3) To hold meetings at which papers can be read.
- (4) To arrange Field Meetings at historic sites in the County.
- (5) To issue periodical bulletins incorporating reports of meetings, articles and contributions on current work.
- (6) To encourage the formation of local historical societies.
- (7) To encourage the preservation of contemporary records.

III. Officers.

- (1) The Officers of the Society shall consist of the following :—
 - (a) President.
 - (b) Vice-Presidents who shall be 12 in number.
 - (c) Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
 - (d) Honorary Treasurer.
 - (e) Honorary Secretary.
 - (f) Honorary Editor.

Together with Honorary Assistant Secretary, Honorary Assistant Editor and two Honorary Excursion Secretaries.
- (2) The Officers shall be elected annually from amongst the members of the Society at the annual ordinary meeting of the Society.
- (3) The Council may fill any vacancy that may occur before the next Annual Ordinary Meeting.

IV. Membership.

- (1) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons who are in sympathy with the aims of the Society upon application and payment of the minimum annual subscription or life membership subscription.
- (2) The membership of an annual subscriber shall cease if the member omits to pay the minimum subscription for the current year.
- (3) A member of the Society shall be entitled to attend and vote at all the meetings of the Society and receive free of charge, unless the Council of the Society shall otherwise determine, all publications which the Society may issue from time to time.

V. Subscriptions.

The minimum annual subscription or life membership subscription shall be determined by the Society from time to time at its annual meeting.

VI. Council of the Society.

- (1) The Society shall, at its annual ordinary meeting in each year, elect a Council consisting of :
 - (a) The Officers.
 - (b) Four members from each of the following districts :—
 - (i) Colwyn Bay and Abergele ; (ii) Llanrwst ; (iii) Denbigh ; (iv) Ruthin ; (v) Wrexham ; (vi) Rhos, Ruabon and Cefn ; (vii) Llangollen, Glynceiriog and Llanrhaeadr Y.M. ; (viii) Uwchaled.
- (2) The Council shall have power to co-opt twelve additional members.
- (3) The Council shall meet at least twice in each year.
- (4) The Council may, at its discretion, appoint sub-committees to deal with particular aspects of the work of the Society, and may delegate to the sub-committees such powers as it considers desirable.

VII. Meetings.

- (1) The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held not later than the end of March in each year.
- (2) The Chair shall be taken at the meetings of the Society by the President and in his absence by one of the Vice-Presidents.
- (3) The Council shall arrange at least two General Meetings of the Society in each year at which papers, in English or Welsh, shall be read and discussed. The Council shall also be empowered to arrange other meetings and excursions of the Society at their discretion.

VIII. Accounts.

The Treasurer's accounts shall be audited by two members of the Society to be elected at the Annual Meeting.

IX. Amendment of Constitution.

Any proposal to amend the Constitution shall be notified to the Secretary at least 21 clear days before the Annual General Meeting, and shall only be adopted if sanctioned by a simple majority of the members present and voting.

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- Roberts, Miss G. M., Caledfryn, Park Street, Denbigh.
- Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Haddon, Garthowen, Penymaes Avenue, Wrexham.
- Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Iorwerth, Highfield, Victoria Park, Colwyn Bay.
- Roberts, Mr. Iorwerth, Isgaer, Llan-gollen.
- Roberts, Mr. John, 8, Council Houses, Cerrigydruidion, Corwen.
- Roberts, Mr. John, Dolan, Glynccir-iog, Wrexham.
- Roberts, Mr. J. Aubrey, 1, Jubilee Villas, Coedpoeth, Wrexham.
- Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ernest, Modern School, Colwyn Bay.
- Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. J. Meiric, Bod-heulog, Wrexham Road, Ruthin.
- Roberts, Mrs. J. T., Bronygraig, Cerrigydruidion, Corwen.
- Roberts, Dr. Kate, Y Cilgwyn, Denbigh.
- Roberts, Miss M., Wigley, Cilestyn, Ruthin.
- Roberts, Dr. Peggy, M.B., D.P.H., Greenfield Road, Ruthin.
- Roberts, Mrs. R. J., O.B.E., Bryn, Greenfield Road, Ruthin.
- Roberts, Miss W. M., Y Wernol, Cerrigydruidion, Corwen.
- Robertson, Mr. Eric, Minffordd, High Street, Rhos, Wrexham.
- Rogers, Mr. Emlyn, M.A., Ruel, Wrexham Road, Johnstown, Wrexham.
- Samuel, Mrs. A. T., B.Sc., Coedpoeth, near Wrexham.
- Samuel, Mr. A. T., B.A., Coedpoeth, near Wrexham.
- Schreiber, Miss G. M., 16, Gerald Street, Wrexham.
- Shaw, Miss E., 112, Park Avenue, Wrexham.
- Shone, Miss N., 52, Bradley Road, Wrexham.
- Simister, Mr. T. S., 39, Edward St., Wrexham.
- Taylor, Miss Irene, B.A., 55, Norman Road, Wrexham.
- Taylor, Mrs. Nancy, Plas Gwyn, Llan-nerch Road, Rhos-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay.
- Thomas, Mrs. A. M., 28, Ruabon Rd., Wrexham.
- Thomas, Miss C. Eluned, 7, Well St., Ruthin.
- Thomas, Mr. C. L., 35, Deva Way, Wrexham.
- Thomas, Mr. Dan, Coedfryn, Llan-gollen.
- Thomas, Mrs. Elsie, Cae'r Person, Llanrwst.
- Thomas, Mr. Graham, H.M.I., 18, Foster Road, Wrexham.
- Thomas, Dr. J. G., M.B., Ch.B., Bridge Street, Denbigh.
- Thomas, Mr. Oswald, Gelli, Ruthin.
- Tucker, Mr. Norman, A.R.Hist.S., Penshurst, Lansdowne Rd., Colwyn Bay.
- Unwin, Mrs. M., 5, Garth Terrace, Portmadoc, Caernarvonshire.
- Vaughan, Mr. Edward, Brynllan, Efenechtyd, Ruthin.
- Walford, Mr. W. A., Tigh-na-Mara, Peulwys, Old Colwyn.

- Watkins, Alderman R. F., Plas Bod-
yngharad, Llanfwrog, Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. Aneuryn, 66, Park View,
Wrexham.
- Williams, Mr. A. H., M.A., Garth,
Wenallt Road, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.
- Williams, Rev. R. Bryn, M.A., Rhos-
ydd, Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. C. P., Sandeth House,
Gwersyllt, Wrexham.
- Williams, Rev. Daniel, Y Gorlan,
Llangollen.
- Williams, Mr. David, Llys Aled, Coed-
poeth, Wrexham.
- Williams, Miss M. E., Hafoty, Abbey
Road, Llangollen.
- Williams, Alderman Edward, J.P.,
Newlands, Ffordd Estyn, Garden
Villas, Wrexham.
- Williams, Miss Ella, 44, Victoria Rd.,
Wrexham.
- Williams, Miss Elizabeth, Cernioge,
Erskine Road, Colwyn Bay.
- Williams, Miss Eluned, Islwyn, 96,
Ruabon Road, Wrexham.
- Williams, Mr. E. H., Bryngwyn,
Holyrood Avenue, Old Colwyn.
- Williams, Mr. E. Wynne, B.A., The
Modern School, Abergele.
- Williams, Mr. Gwyn, 1, Castle Street,
Ruthin.
- Williams, Miss G. M., 25, Alexandra
Road, Wrexham.
- Williams, Miss G. E., Mount Pleasant,
Ruabon, Wrexham.
- Williams, Mr. Howel, 6, Belgrave Rd.,
Wrexham.
- Williams, Rev. H. Ll., Araul, Heol
Caradog, Coedpoeth, Wrexham.
- Williams, Mr. and Mrs. H. M., Water-
loo, Glascoed, Abergele.
- Williams, Mr. J. G., 86, Glan Llyn,
Gwersyllt, Wrexham.
- Williams, Sir John Cecil, M.A., LL.D.,
20 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.
- Williams, Rev. J. Rhosydd, Tawelfan,
Poplar Avenue, Rhos, Wrexham.
- Williams, Mrs. Llewelyn, Osborne
House, Market St., Llangollen.
- Williams, Mrs. Llewelyn, Y Dreffan,
Llwyd Grove, Old Colwyn.
- Williams, Miss Menai, 37, Court Rd.,
Wrexham.
- Williams, Miss M. W., B.A., Lowther
College, Abergele.
- Williams, Mr. O., Maldwyn, Pennant,
Ruthin.
- Williams, Misses Parry, Crown House,
Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. R. Bithel, Aboyne,
Denbigh Road, Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. R. R. Coetmor, Ruthin.
- Williams, Miss Una, B.Sc., Gwynedd,
Greenfield Road, Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. William, Grapes Hotel,
Llangollen.
- Williams, Mrs. W. E., Pennant,
Ruthin.
- Williams, Mr. W. U., M.A., Bod Eryl,
Rhewl, Ruthin.
- Wynne, Mr. Ifor Lloyd, 2, Bayley
Mansions, Bayley Street, Bedford
Square, London, W.C.1.
- Wynne, Miss J. G., 6, High Street,
Broughton, Wrexham.
- Wyrne, Mr. R. O. F., Garthewin,
Llanfair T.H., Abergele.
- Wynne, Edwards, Lt.-Col. J. C.,
Plas Nantglyn, Denbigh.

THE SECRETARY'S REPORT

The inaugural meeting of the Denbighshire Historical Society was held at Ruthin on the 23rd September, 1950, under the presidency of Mr. Robert Richards, M.P. This meeting was convened jointly by Mr. D. R. Hughes and the present secretary of the Society, and the response was exceedingly gratifying. It was obvious that there was enthusiastic support for the formation of a County Historical Society, and a proposition that a Society be formed forthwith was carried unanimously.

The first steps towards the institution of the Society may, however, be traced back to the Colwyn Bay National Eisteddfod of 1947, for the Committee of that Eisteddfod, when distributing the surplus funds, allocated the sum of £50 to encourage the establishment of a County Historical Society. Further, it can be said that Mr. D. R. Hughes, of Old Colwyn, the Secretary of the Eisteddfod Council for so many years, was the prime mover in ensuring that steps be taken to bring the Society into existence.

At the inaugural meeting at Ruthin, Mr. Robert Richards, M.P., was elected the first President. In a short address he drew attention to the historical importance of the County and to the wealth of opportunity which was offered to the newly formed Society. Denbighshire had claims which made it in many ways historically unique: within its boundaries had been found the earliest evidence of human existence in Wales, and, both before and after the formation of the county by Henry VIII., this area had played a most important part in the story of our nation.

The meeting was also addressed by Mr. B. Maelor Jones, the Director of Education for Merionethshire, and the Secretary of the Merionethshire Historical Society, on "The functions of a County Historical Society." Mr. Jones spoke in particular of the work which the Merionethshire Society intended to undertake in the publication of county records and of an annual volume of Transactions.

After several other members had spoken, the meeting proceeded to appoint officers and a Council, and further arrangements for the year were left in the hands of the Council.

The main activities of the Society during 1951 included a lecture at Ruthin by Mr. Robert Richards, M.P., on "The Cistercian Abbeys of Wales, with particular reference to Denbighshire," and a lecture by Professor G. J. Williams, M.A., during the Eisteddfod week at Llanrwst on the subject "Traddodiad Llenyddol Sir Ddinbych." Both these valuable lectures, which were greatly appreciated by the audiences, are included in this volume of Transactions. An excursion was also arranged to Valle Crucis Abbey under the leadership of Mr. Robert Richards.

The Council has met on several occasions, and it is felt that the Society is now firmly established. Several meetings and excursions have been held during the first part of 1952, but these will be more appropriately referred to in the second Annual Volume of the Transactions. The membership of the Society at the end of 1951 was 324: this is very satisfactory for the first year, and it is hoped that the membership will continue to increase rapidly. The publication of the Transactions will, no doubt, stimulate enrolment, and all members are invited to bring the Society to the notice of persons who will be interested. The Society has a valuable part to play in the life of the County, and it is anxious to welcome as members all those who find delight in the fascinating study of local history.

EDWARD REES,

Hon. Secretary.

DENBIGHSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY—SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 23/9/50—31/12/51

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
INCOME						
Subscriptions (324 members):						
7 Life Members	35	0	0			
1 at £2 2s.	2	2	0			
2 at £1 1s.	2	2	0			
1 at 10/6	0	10	6			
4 at 10/-	2	0	0			
1 at 7/6	0	7	6			
308 at 5/-	77	0	0	119	2	0
Donation Executive Committee Colwyn Bay National Eisteddfod				50	0	0
Refunded Town Council, Ruthin				1	1	0
				<u>£170</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
EXPENDITURE						
Hire of Ruthin Town Hall:						
23/9/50	1	1	0			
10/3/51	1	1	0			
Advertising (six newspapers)				2	2	0
Printing:				5	11	3
Circulars				4	0	0
Receipt Books				1	5	0
Stationery, Stencils, etc:				5	5	0
County Treasurer's Office				5	4	4
Roneo Ltd.....				4	11	6
Postages: Circulars, Receipts, etc.....				9	15	10
Cheque Book and Bank Charges				10	19	4
Credit Balance 31/12/51				0	7	2
				136	2	5
				<u>£170</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>

31st January, 1952.

Audited and found correct,—

WILLIAM BURD,
Hon. Auditor.

THE CISTERCIAN ABBEYS OF WALES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO DENBIGHSHIRE

To appreciate the full import of the Cistercian movement we must cast our minds back to the origin of monasticism itself. But to trace the origin of Christian monasticism in any great detail would obviously take us too far out of our course.

Moreover, it is necessary for us to remember that monasticism is not an exclusively Christian phenomenon. There was among the Jews, for example, a sect known as the Essenes, who lived apart by themselves somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea and devoted themselves to a life of asceticism and contemplation; and Tibet, as is well known, is a land overflowing with monks who apparently devote themselves to the dual cultivation of religion and dirt. Nor were some of the early Christian hermits averse to the encouragement of filth in their own persons. St. Symeon Stylites is the best known of these. He had taken up his abode on the top of a column forty feet high, and pilgrims, even from the British Isles, used to flock to gaze upon the holy man, treasuring in particular the very worms that fell from his platform! It was well that at its very inception Christian monasticism was rid of such extravagances as these.

It is generally agreed that the origin of Christian monasticism must be sought in the caves among the hills that border the Nile Valley. It began among the hermits who had taken up their abodes in these places where, it is said, some Christians had fled during the Decian persecution (A.D. 249-51.) The most famous of these hermits was St. Anthony, who was born in Middle Egypt when the third century was half-way through its course. About the year A.D. 270, having been converted, it is said, as a result of hearing a sermon on the importance of getting rid of all wealth—for he had great possessions—he decided, after spending no less than 15 years amongst some ascetics who lived near his own place, to retire to an old fort at a place called Pispir on the east bank of the Nile. Here he lived in complete seclusion for a matter of some 20 years.

Naturally enough, his extreme asceticism soon drew attention to him, and people flocked to visit him, attempting meanwhile to persuade him to abandon his seclusion in order to teach

them the new way of life. After much persuasion he decided to abandon his retreat and follow their advice. This was in A.D. 305, the date that is usually taken as marking the beginnings of Christian monasticism.

Curiously enough a similar movement was growing up in Southern Egypt under the leadership of one of the name of Pachomius. St. Anthony did little to develop monasticism as such. His ideal was that of the hermit, although he did attempt to group the hermits together in a loosely knit community known as the "Laura." But the life within the "Laura" was one of complete isolation. Each hut was to be out of sight and ear-shot of every other, and the hermits only met together for service on the Sabbath day and on Sunday.

Pachomius' effort marks a distinct advance in the growth of monasticism. The hermits were now gathered into communities and they were given a rule by which they were expected to live. This was probably the first rule ever given to a community of Christian hermits. By that one act Pachomius converted a loosely knit body of hermits into a community of monks, or regulars,—from *Regula* a rule—as they are sometimes called.

Two other names must be mentioned in connection with the foundation of early monasticism. The first of these is St. Basil, the founder of Greek monachism. He retired *c.* A.D. 360 to a lonely spot near Neo Caesarea in Pontus, where he established full monastic life, all the monks living together under a common roof, sharing in a common table and common prayer. He also stressed the importance of work as contrasted with a life of austerity and mere contemplation. They rose for the common psalmody while it was still dark, and chanted the service until dawn. Six such services were held in the course of the day, and a part of each day was devoted to labour of various kinds, particularly agriculture.

Another ecclesiastic who gave a novel turn to the development of monasticism was Eusebius, Bishop of Vercelli, who died in 371. He attempted to combine the clerical office with that of the monk and made the canons of his cathedral live together and subject to a rule much as the monks did. This was the

origin of the canonical movement, and the Augustinian canons particularly were to rival in numbers the various orders of monks. Beddgelert and Penmon were Augustinian houses in the later stages of their careers, and Llanthony in South Wales was one of the finest Augustinian houses in the whole kingdom.

But we are naturally interested in knowing how this monastic movement eventually reached our island—the *Ultima Thule* of the Roman world. Needless to say it spread both East and West, and is soon found in Palestine and Syria, where the hermit ideal of Anthony was usually followed in preference to the Pachomian, and it may be well for us to remind ourselves that this hermit ideal continued to exercise great influence upon the development of monasticism, particularly in Celtic countries.

Among the most influential of those who visited the Egyptian monks was John Cassian, whose *Collations* or *Conferences* purport to give the results of the interviews he had with some of the monks. The *Collations* became a kind of text book of monasticism, of which a chapter was read every day in every monastery throughout Europe. Moreover, Cassian himself, upon his return to Europe, set up two monasteries at Marseilles, St. Victor and St. Saveur, in which there were no less than 5,000 monks and nuns.

The movement soon spread all over Gaul and was greatly assisted by the work of the saintly Saint Martin, subsequently Bishop of Tours, who had set up his monastery at Marmoutier in the valley of the Loire. St. Ninian, the founder of Scottish monasticism, is said to have visited St. Martin on his return from Rome and to have dedicated the new monastery which he was to set up at Candida Casa in Galloway to St. Martin. This is probably the earliest Celtic monastery to be set up in these islands.

The development of monasticism in South Britain, including Wales, is usually ascribed to the visits to the island of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre. Germanus was sent over with the express object of countering the well known heresy of Pelagius (W. Morgan or Morien). Some claim that he was of Irish origin; others that he was a Briton, i.e., Welsh. Judging by the large number of Welsh churches that have been dedicated to Garmon, it is obvious that he must have had great influence

here. But there is no evidence that he established a single monastery here, although in the Life of St. Samson of Dol in Brittany there is a reference to an abbey which he is said to have built.⁽¹⁾

Under the influence of Germanus, however, the monastic movement seems to have expanded rapidly, and as far as Wales is concerned it exhibits all the characteristic features of Celtic monachism. On the one hand you have the large monastery containing some hundreds, even thousands, of monks. At St. Asaph, under Kentigern (Cyndeyrn) there were no less than 965 monks. At Bangor Is y Coed, according to the testimony of Bede, there were no less than 2,100. Cadoc, at Llancarfan, had a convent of 3,000 monks, and Dubricius (Dyfrig) had a smaller number (2,000) at Henllan in Herefordshire, and Illtud at Llanilltyd ruled over 2,000 in his most famous monastery.

On the other hand we have thousands of hermitages scattered all over Wales, whence, as the late Dr. Hugh Williams pointed out, emanated many of our oldest parish churches. Such a hermitage or cell may be seen still standing on the strand near Colwyn Bay. The cell is now known as St. Trillo's Chapel. The growth and development of Celtic monasticism is one of the romances of history. All the Celtic countries of the west, and not least Wales, shared in it. "The great stimulus to monastic development of Latin literary culture came from South Wales, especially from St. Cadoc and St. David, and from their monasteries of Llancarvan and Menevia."⁽²⁾ Some of the greatest names in our history like St. David, Gildas, Cadfan, Cadoc, Dyfrig, Illtyd, etc., belong to this period, as do the hundreds of Celtic saints to whom so many of our oldest churches are dedicated.

The year A.D. 529 was an important year in the annals of monasticism, because that was the year in which Benedict of Nursia in Italy issued his famous Rule for the new monastery that he was setting up on Monte Cassino.⁽³⁾ It would not be correct to say, as we have already seen, that this marks the

(1) *In monasterio quod, ut aiunt a sancto Germano fuerat constructum* (Vita Samson Anal. Boll. VI, p. 104).

(2) E. MacNeill, *Beginnings of Latin Culture in Ireland*, Studies XX., 1931, pp. 39-48.

(3) The old monastery was standing until lately, but was blown up by the Allies during the late war.

beginning of western monasticism, but it would be true to say that Benedict's Rule became the code whereby medieval monasticism in the west came to be regulated during the 1,000 years of its existence. The Rule is simplicity itself and owes its triumph probably to the fact that it avoids all the fanatical extravagances of the Eastern hermits, and does not attempt the unattainable. It was primarily intended for a small community of not more than a dozen monks living together under the strict yet beneficent discipline of the Rule, and under the wise guidance of the father abbot. The Rule was widely adopted throughout Western Europe, and before very long every country in the west was liberally studded with Benedictine Houses.

But as is the case with every human institution, Benedictinism soon showed signs of decline and deterioration, and the history of European monasticism is the story of its rise and of the many attempts that were made by successive reformers to preserve or to restore the primitive purity of the Benedictine Rule.

The earliest of these reformers is Benedict of Aniane, to distinguish him from the founder, Benedict of Nursia. The second Benedict made an exhaustive study of all the various monastic rules that he could find and drew up a kind of epitome or summary of them known as the *Concordia Regularum* which contains extracts from no less than 26 different Rules. The *Concordia* had the great good fortune to be adopted as the first Customs of the famous Abbey of Cluny, soon to become the best known Abbey in Europe.

We have already referred to the periodic resurgence of the hermit ideal, a tendency that persisted throughout the whole history of monasticism. Such revival occurred in the early years of the 12th century, after the fateful year 1,000 had been safely passed.⁽¹⁾ The movement was fairly general in Italy and showed itself to a lesser degree in France.

The earliest of these eremitical orders was that of Camalduli, founded in the Apennines in the year 1012. "Pious penitents" says one writer, "made their lonely dwellings on mountains and in woods and caves." Another order was the Vallombrosian, also founded in a leafy valley of the same Apennines in the year 1038.

(1) There was a widely diffused idea that the year A.D. 1000 would witness the end of the world.

A third order was that of Grandmont, founded by Stephen, Lord of Thiers in the Auvergne in the desert of Muret near Limoges in the year 1076. This order had a couple of houses on the Welsh border—one at Alberbury, the very extensive border parish that formerly belonged to the ancient 'clas' of Meifod; the other at Craswall in Herefordshire, at the foot of the Black Mountain, and there is little doubt that the new order of Cistercium owed its origin in large measure to the revived interest in a return to a simpler and more austere conception of monasticism. Reform was in the air, and when Robert of Molesme, as he came to be known, was invited by seven hermits who had already taken up their abode at Colan, to place himself at their head, it was with the rump of his disgruntled monks at La Tonnerre and the seven hermits that he took up his abode at Molesme, moving subsequently to Citeaux in 1098. This marks the beginning of the Cistercian movement.

Two other names in addition to Robert of Molesme are associated with the origin of the Cistercian order. One of these was an Englishman of the name of Stephen Harding, who drew up the famous Charter of the order—the *Carta Caritatis*.

But the greatest of all was St. Bernard, one of the great figures of the Middle Ages, prophet, preacher and administrator. He was a youth of 22 when, in 1112, accompanied by 30 of his companions, he knocked at the door of Citeaux praying to be admitted to the order. This was the making of the order, and before he died in 1154 there were Cistercian abbeys in every country in Europe. There were 75 monasteries and 26 nunneries in this country, of which there were 17 monasteries and two nunneries in Wales.

Thus Cistercianism at its inception was essentially a reform movement, and as it happened, it proved to be the last of such mediaeval movements. It is no exaggeration to say that monasticism culminated in Cistercianism. No further attempt at reforming the institution was undertaken. The virtues of a cloistered life had ceased to attract. New interests and new institutions, particularly the universities, were to draw men away from the cloister. The new religious enthusiasm found its opportunity not in a monastery, but in the streets and slums of the rapidly rising towns.

Cistercianism gave a new orientation to monastic life. There is a fresh note of simplicity which recalls something of the austerity of the early hermits. The church was a simple structure with an altar of wood and no carvings or representation of saints, and an attempt was made to simplify the services and avoid the embellishments of Cluny. Of set purpose they chose the most remote and least cultivated areas for their homes, in striking contrast to the early Benedictines who usually chose a site near a town and often in close proximity to the castle. Their fare was of the simplest, and at first, at any rate, they worked with their hands to provide the necessaries of life. Instead of the flowing black gown of the Benedictine, the Cistercian wore a white gown of undyed wool.

Moreover, the Cistercians are essentially a country order, a fact that endeared them to a pastoral people like the Welsh, and, gradually, as the result of their diligence in cutting down the forests and in draining the land, and particularly their success as pastoral farmers in the rearing of sheep, they too succumbed to the temptation of wealth. Their granges, as their farms are generally known, were widely scattered over the countryside, and in order to cultivate these they introduced a subsidiary order of labourers who were known as "conversi."

It was in the year 1128 that the first convent of Cistercians landed in England, having been invited hither by William Giffard, Bishop of Winchester, and given a site at Waverley in Surrey. Waverley was then a wild and desolate area, and evidence of its former character can readily be seen by anyone who visits Churt, the Surrey estate of the late Earl Lloyd George. It provided an ideal site for a Cistercian community, but it remained isolated and remote throughout its existence, and Cistercianism does not seem to have taken root in England until the foundation of the famous abbey of Rievaulx amidst the Yorkshire dales, under its great Abbot Ailred.

The first house to be founded in Wales was Neath, which was founded on the 25 October, 1130, the convent being sent out from Savigny in France. Savigny was really a separate order, to whom Henry I. of England had granted territory in the woods of Savigny. Its customs were almost identical with those of the Cistercians, and in 1147 it ceased to function as a separate

order, its houses being absorbed by the Cistercians. Basingwerk was another Savigniac house that was so absorbed.

Tintern followed hard upon Neath, being founded on the 9 May, 1131, by a convent of monks that was sent out from L'Aumone, one of the early Cistercian abbeys on the Continent.

But much as in the case of the foundation of Rievaulx in England, it was the foundation of Whitland, "Y Tŷ Gwyn ar Dâf," that led to the expansion of the movement in Wales. "Y Tŷ Gwyn" was founded on the 16 September, 1140, the convent in this case coming from Clairvaux in the valley of the Wormwood, which had been founded by the great St. Bernard himself. The community was first settled at a place called Little Trefgarn in Pembrokeshire, on land given them by Bernard, the first Norman bishop of St. David's. It was not until 1151 that the monks occupied the site at "Y Tŷ Gwyn." After the founding of Whitland progress was fairly rapid and a considerable area of the country was soon covered by Cistercian abbeys. Of the total of 17 Cistercian abbeys in Wales, no less than 7 owed their origin directly or indirectly to Whitland. It is little wonder that Whitland came to be regarded as the Cistercian mother abbey in Wales.

The first abbey to be founded by Whitland was Cwm Hir, set in a lovely valley of Maelienydd in Radnorshire. This was in 1143, but Lloyd has shown good reasons for questioning this early date, and he prefers to take the year 1176, the year of its re-foundation, as the date of its actual establishment.

Strata Florida, which Lloyd speaks of as the premier abbey of Wales, was the second to be founded from Whitland, and this was on the 1 June, 1164. If we reject the early date for the founding of Cwm Hir, Strata Florida appears to be really the first house founded by Whitland.

On the 22 July, 1170, Strata Florida itself sent out a colony to the neighbouring Principality of Powys, where a site was provided by that cultured Prince of Powys, Owen Cyfeiliog—in the rich valley of the Severn, near Welshpool. Llantarnam, or Caerleon, was the next site chosen to which a company of monks was sent from Strata Florida. This was on the 22 July, 1179, and on the 24 July, 1186, still another community was sent out of Strata Florida to a place known as Rhedynog Felen near

Carnarvon, whence they were shortly removed to Aberconwy. This was the beginning of the well known abbey of that name.

One of the Welsh Principalities was still without its Cistercian abbey. This was northern Powys which, after its separation from Powys Wenwynwyn, *c.* 1195, came to be known as Powys Fadog. But at the very beginning of the 13th century, on the 28 January, 1201, a convent was dispatched from Strata Marcella to Valle Crucis to occupy a site at the foot of the hill on which stood Castell Dinas Brân, the "caput" of Powys Fadog. The site was provided by Gruffydd ap Madog, the Lord of Powys Fadog, as the result of representations made by no less than four Welsh abbots—Peter, Abbot of Whitland, Deiniol of Strata Florida, Philip of Ystrad Marchell and Rhirid of Cwm Hir.

Little is known of the history of the house, although the names of some of the abbots have survived, like Adam, who was responsible for building the west end with its beautiful circular window, and Robert Salesbury, the last abbot but one of whom we catch a fleeting glimpse among the prisoners incarcerated in the White Tower in London. The Charters naturally enough give particulars of the territories in their possession, and an occasional name among the witnesses may be of some interest. Madog's first charter is unfortunately undated, but the charter of 1222 is a short recapitulation of the earlier one. The properties enumerated are naturally to be found within the Lordship of Powys Fadog for the most part, such as Llynegwestl—the township in which the abbey was situate, Banhadla, half of Buddugre, Creigiog, Cwm Brwynog, Cefn Lluestyn, as well as land in Wrexham, Bersham, Acton and Halton.

There were also rights of common of pasture throughout the Cymwd of Maelor, including Maelor Saesnec, Yale, Nanheudwy and Cynllaith. A fishery, both below and above the town of Llangollen, was given them by the freemen.⁽¹⁾ Later on there was a dispute between these same freemen and the monks as to the fishing rights, but in the Charter of 1236 the abbey's 'fishery on the Dee on both sides of the town' is confirmed.

(1) They were the freemen, not of Llangollen in the narrow sense—for Llangollen was never a Chartered Borough—but the "uchelwyr", the freemen of the old Welsh Laws.

Two fiscal surveys fortunately enable us to glean some information about the financial condition of the abbey. In an older "Taxation" of 1254, which is known sometimes as the Old Valuation (*Vetus Valor*), or the Norwich Taxation, there is only the bare reference to the fact that at *Llanccallen* there was a monastery of the Cistercian order. Forty years later, in 1291, the Taxation, known as Pope Nicholas' Taxation, gives us a complete picture of the abbey's income. The abbey grange at Llynegwestl, consisting of 3 carucates, yielded an income of £3. Two other granges brought in £5 10s. The Vaccary of Nant (a Hafod on which cattle were kept), together with the grange of Mwstwr, accounted for £3 19s. 8d., and the grange of Wrexham brought in 15/-. There were 20 cattle valued at 30/-, giving a total income of £14 14s. 8d. The figures of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* 1535, the elaborate survey drawn up by Henry VIII's commissioners of the monastic and ecclesiastical properties of the kingdom are much more detailed. There is little doubt that as far as the monasteries were concerned the survey was drawn up with a view to their eventual liquidation.

The grange of Llynegwestl, including some tenements that were let, brought in an income of £20 4s. 8d. The demesne land in the immediate neighbourhood of the abbey was let at £8 9s. 8d., and the mill for £4 13s. 4d., showing how the old monastic economy was gradually breaking up. The monks like other feudal barons had their manorial courts, and those at Llynegwestl yielded £1 6s. 8d. p.a., giving a total income for the Bailiwick of Llynegwestl of £32 6s. 8d.

In the Lordship of Bromfield (*Maelor Gymraeg*), Wrexham, had a rental of £14 2s. 8d. The mill was let for £5, and the courts brought in 53/4, making a total of £21 16s. 0d.

In the Lordship of Chirk, at Halghton, rents amounted to 79/-. The demesne was let for 26/8. There was no court income, and the total income from Halghton only amounted to £5 5s. 8d.

The total temporal income—income from land and properties, etc., thus amounted to £61 7s. 0d.

But it is not so much the extent of property which it held, as the number of churches which it had managed to appropriate, that is the outstanding feature of its endowment. In 1224 Reyner, Bishop of St. Asaph, gave Valle Crucis half the tithes of Wrexham, and in 1227 his successor, Bishop Abraham, added the

other half. In 1240 Bishop Hywel ap Ednyfed gave them the Church of Llangollen, and a little later on they became possessed of its chapelries, viz., Ruabon, Chirk, Llansantffraid Glyn Ceiriog, and Llandegla. Wrexham had already been appropriated. But it was hardly to be expected that their right to so much ecclesiastical property should go unchallenged, and when Anian II (y Brawd Du o Nannau) became Bishop in 1268 he lost no time in disputing the claim. Whenever a church was appropriated by a monastery it was incumbent upon the monastery to put in a vicar to be responsible for seeing that the usual parish services were regularly held. This, as may be imagined, was a fruitful source of friction between the monks and the clergy, and in this case, seeing that the churches that were appropriated were all of them chapels dependent upon Llangollen, the monks claimed that a single vicar appointed to Llangollen was sufficient. The Bishop, on the other hand, claimed that a vicar should be placed in each of the appropriated churches. The matter was referred to Canterbury, and the Abbot of Tal Llychau (Talley) was appointed arbitrator and he found in favour of the monks. The Abbot went so far as to excommunicate the Bishop for his conduct in the matter—a threat that was on the point of being put into execution when the Pope intervened,

Valle Crucis' spiritual income amounted to £152 16s. 5d. giving, along with the temporal, a total income of £214 3s. 5d.

The last 200 years of the existence of Valle Crucis present us with two highly contrasted pictures of the life in the monastery. It is well known that after the conquest of Wales and the fall of the Welsh princes, the Welsh bards found a warm welcome not only among what remained of the old aristocracy, but also in the monastic houses, particularly those of the Cistercian order, and contemporary Welsh poets are loud in their praises of the hospitality meted out to them by the monks.

It is a commonplace with Welsh scholars that the era 14th—16th centuries is the golden age of the Welsh *cywydd*, and not a few of these were, in the first instance, addressed to Welsh Cistercian abbots, among whom is more than one abbot of Valle Crucis.

Even a superficial reading of the *cywyddau* is sufficient to show us that the bards were chiefly attracted by the sumptuous repasts which the monks freely provided, rather than by any

intellectual and still less any spiritual sustenance which the monastery may have offered.

Still, the spiritual aspect was not completely forgotten. Guto'r Glyn, for example, in one of the most beautiful of his *cwyddau*, refers to the reverent care with which "Dafydd, Abad Glynegwestl," performed the services in the Abbey Church.

Santaidd a llariaidd ar allorau—Duw

Y dywaid weddïau ;

Saint yn ei gwfaint nid gau,

Saint Antwn, sant yw yntau

Eurodd adeilodd y delwau—ar côr

Ar cerygl a'r llyfrau ;

But the note suddenly changes in order to refer to Dafydd's many festivities :

Arglwydd walch i roi gwleddau

O fewn cwrt ni fyn nacau.

Yno cawn fawr ddawn fyrddau—mawr yfed

Ac ymrafael fwydau ;

Ym mhlas Egwestl, aml seigiau,

Mae llyn hen i'm llawenhau.

Cawn feddyglyn gwyn a gwineu—fragod

Cawn freugwrw o'r pibau ;

Cawn win a chnewyllion cnau,

Cawn fil ancwyn afalau.

The reference is to the apples of Anjou, which was for centuries among the territories in the possession of the kings of England.

A gras ac urddas, a garddau—gwenyn

Gwinwydd a pherllannau ;

A chaer Iâl a'r chwarelau,

A thân a wnaeth hen yn iau.

"A chaer Iâl a'r chwarelau" : The reference, as I think, is not to any quarries which the abbey may have possessed, but to the quarrels, the small squares of glass, that were used in glazing the abbey. The art of glazing was lost during the middle ages, and it was only the greater buildings, like cathedrals and the

greater abbeys, and often only a portion of these, that were glazed. Mediaeval people had to be content with very narrow apertures in the walls, which were subsequently filled in with a piece of plaited wicker work. This plaiting was very often insufficiently done, which possibly explains the old Welsh saying about being able to see "trwy'r dellt," through the plaited work.

But "Caer Iâl," unlike the usual mediaeval fortresses which had only narrow slits, but through which it is true the occupants could shoot, was glazed with quarrels in the approved modern fashion. In addition, there was a fire in the guest room, which was a considerable luxury. Fire was usually reserved for monks who had recently been bled or were otherwise indisposed, and was usually confined to the Infirmary and, possibly, one other room.

There is a further reference to glazing in *Cywydd xiv*. (*Gwaith Guto'r Glyn*, edited by Sir Ifor Williams).

Gwe gerrig yw ei garas,⁽¹⁾

Gwydr a'r plwm yw godre'r plas.

Does this mean that only the lower storey was glazed and that the Dorter, which was overhead and where light was less required, would be left unglazed.

And this is how Guto sums up his impressions of Valle Crucis, *Cywydd xvi* :

Tŷ'r brâg iach, tŷ'r bara gwyn,

Tŷ'r bragod a'r tŵr brigwyn,

Tŷ'r gweiniaid tew ar ginio,

Tŷ'r beirdd, a phoed hit y bo.

Guto'r Glyn was a native of Glyn Ceiriog, in the neighbouring valley of the Ceiriog, and in *Cywydd xiv* he refers to the fact that he had traversed most of Wales as a wandering minstrel—*clerwr* :

Clera Môn cael aur a medd (*mead*)

Gynt a gawn, Gwent a Gwynedd.

but finds, after all, that in his native Iâl he does as well as anywhere :

"Clera'n nes, cael aur a wnaŷ,

Yma'n Iâl am na welaf."

(1) 'Cuirass': the defensive armour of the individual soldier, consisting of a breastplate and a backplate fastened together.

Much the same is the praise meted out to "Abad Dafydd o Glyn y Groes" by Gutyn Owain, the herald bard as he is known on account of the fact that he was appointed by Henry VII to trace his descent from the earlier kings of Britain. Gutyn Owain was a burgess of Oswestry and wrote a delightful ode in praise of Oswestry and his fellow burgesses for having extended to him the privilege of citizenship although he was now advanced in years.⁽¹⁾

Gutyn salutes him—Abbot David, as
 Pab Iâl bendith pob aelwyd
 Pasio Nudd⁽²⁾ mew'n pais wen wyd.
 Pab y Glyn a farn pob gwlad,
 Nid tebyg neb it Abad,
 Dy wleddau rif dail oeddynt,

 Echdoe a doe, y deuwn
 I'r byd da, a'r bywyd hwn ;
 Heddiw ni'th oedaf Dafydd,
 Yn fore dof ar y dydd.

And Gutyn regales us with fuller particulars :

Afon o las fedd i'w yfed—a gawn
 Gwin, osai,⁽³⁾ a chlared,
 Meddyglyn rhwydd im rhed,
 Pob da esmwyth, pob dismed,⁽⁴⁾
 Dismed ac yfed a gaf
 Wtres⁽⁵⁾ gwin ni ad tros gof,
 A chael aur rhodd uwchlaw rhif
 A byd yn ail bod yn nef,
 O bedwar cwrs yw bwydau'r cog⁽⁶⁾
 A'u gwirodydd o win gwridog.

Even when every allowance has been made for the fulsomeness of the praise, and the poetical license indulged in on such occasions the picture is essentially one of much feasting and merrymaking which cannot be excelled in any of the several *cynyddau* we have in praise of the hospitality that was enjoyed

(1) See "Cymru'r Oesau Canol," p. 190-1 ; (2) Nudd or Ludd was said to have been one of the most generous of the early kings of Britain ; (3) Osai—A favourite wine of the poets : claret was another ; (4) Dismed—dishmeat ; (5) Wtres—more than enough ; (6) The cook's four course dinner.

at the festive board of one of the native lords. Compare for example "Cywydd Moliant i Rys o'r Tywyn" by Dafydd Nanmor which is exactly in the same strain.

Such is the delightful picture of Valle Crucis given us by some of the leading bards of the 15th and 16th century.

Let us now turn to the Public Records, however, and compare what we have just learned of Valle Crucis with what they say. There seems little doubt, for example, that the growing prosperity of the Cistercian houses caused some of the neighbouring barons to cast a covetous eye upon their properties, and even to proceed to lay their hands upon it. An excellent example of such high-handed action has fortunately been preserved in the *Record of Carnarvon* 1335. The Record, amongst other things, contains a number of petitions in which are preserved the grievances both of individuals and of communities, such as abbeys, boroughs, etc.

On p. 219 is a complaint of the monks of Valle Crucis against Roger Mortimer, one of the most powerful of the Border Barons who had one of his castles at Chirk, that he had disturbed the monks in their enjoyment of their woods at Halton, Chirk, and had carried away timber from their woods at Brynmawr, thus preventing the Convent from carrying away the wood which they required for the repair of their houses. He had also forced the Abbot's men to perform various services for him at his castle (of Chirk) despite the fact that they were not liable to him for any kind of service whatsoever.

Furthermore, he had "disseised" them of a plot of land known as Wromneywick in Mochnant, whereof the monks had been seised from time immemorial. Moreover, he had erected houses on that plot of land from which he drew rents. This place, as Lloyd points out in his very interesting article in the *Celtic Bulletin*, Vol. 2, p. 320, is undoubtedly Wernfeifod, which lies on the borders of Maengwynedd, a little above Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant.

Fortunately for us, there are still extant two documents of the greatest value which enable us to follow the closing stages in the history of Valle Crucis as of most other religious houses. The one is the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, from which quotations have already been given and which is a detailed survey of the properties possessed by the various religious houses in 1535 and

their values. The other is the State Papers (Domestic) for the reign of Henry VIII., which is a record of government transactions in connection with the Dissolution of the Monasteries. They consist chiefly of letters and communications addressed to Thomas Cromwell, "the Hammer of the Monks," and answers to these, as well as directives addressed to various commissioners.

According to the *Valor* the total income enjoyed by Valle Crucis on the eve of the Dissolution was £214 3s. 5d., net £188 8s. 0d., which, when equalled to modern values amounted to nearly £8,000, and when it is recalled that there were only six monks in the house at the time one realises in what pleasant lines the monks' lot was cast. The figures of the *Valor* have been subjected to the most scholarly scrutiny by the late Prof. A. Savine, of the University of Moscow, and nowhere has the accuracy of their testimony been impugned. The only exception to this statement is the suspicion that in a few instances—a very few—the monks may have suppressed a few figures which showed their position in too favourable a light.

On 10 September, 1535, Adam Becansaw, Priest, and Dr. John Vaughan, one of the commissioners, write to Cromwell as follows: "From the 22nd to the 26th August we visited V. Crucis where many things require reformation. The Abbot came in, was sworn and examined, and was carried by Mr. Bannerton's servants to the castle of Holt, and one of his monks whom we took was 'apostata.' (The Abbot referred to probably was Salisbury, of whom more anon. The commissioners would hardly have imprisoned Herne, the last abbot, to whom they granted a pension of £23). There they await the King's pleasure. The Monastery and the church are in great decay and indebted to the King and others for 300 marks. We intend to deprive the Abbot on the 4th or 5th September, and we wish to know your pleasure for a new election. There are six monks in the house, but none fit for abbot, as the house is so much in debt and in decay. The Abbot of Kymmer, who is a good husband (man) would fain have it, and would give you £20 towards your duty, but no more."

But the Abbot of Valle Crucis had been in trouble before this, because in May, 1535, Sir Walter Stonore writes to Cromwell: "I have to advertise you of certain ill disposed persons

lately in Oxford of whom I am informed by Rob. Hall who was taken at Tame for making money and sent to Oxford gaol by Sir John Daunce. He is one of them, as he declared to 2 of my servants that watched the gaol there since the prisoners broke out of Banbury prison. He stated that if I would be his good master he would betray a great nest of thieves. As I could not go myself I wrote to the said Hall to tell me his secrets, and if I found it to be true, I would befriend him. I send his letter here enclosed. On receipt of it, I sent to Oxford to take 'the seyde Abbot' and others specified in it who had fled to London, where Hall was taken. Since then it is said that £140 have been found with him. The Abbot is Abbot of Vale Crucis in Wales, and is a white monk named Salysbere. If it be your pleasure I will speak with Hall because my neighbour, Hamylden, was robbed on Shrove Sunday last when the said Abbot and Wm. Pygott and Jonys, mentioned in the letter, were present. They have committed many robberies as Hall says.—Stonore."

This is the text of Hall's letter :

"Robert Hale (Hall) Goldsmith to (Sir Walter Stonore). This is the truth of the robbery of Hamlynton (*sic*). The thieves were my Lord Abbot named Salbere, Wm. Pegot his servant, Master Jonys, James Whelar, Pereys Felde and Robt. Hale, goldsmith. The Abbot is at the White Friars of Herforte (Oxford) or else at the Bellys Kedlenton, 'for he is great with him.' You shall know more when I speak with you. Jonys and the other met at the White Friars gate in Horforte at the next house to the gate toward the town. Whatever they took the Abbot and Master Jonys had all and none of us had one penny."

On July 6th, 1536, Salesbury is committed to the Tower. The entry is as follows: List of Prisoners in the Tower on July 6th. "In the White Tower Rob. Sallesbere of the Abbey of V. Crucis, Robt. Hall of Occhefortsecre, Goldsmith."

"Rob. Sallèsbere" was undoubtedly a member of the famous family of Llewenni, Denbs., some of whom remained faithful to the old religion to the end, as witness the ornate little chapel built by one of them at the very close of the Middle Ages at Rhûg, near Corwen.

The Commissioners apparently must have carried out their threat to deprive the Abbot on 4 or 5 September, 1535, for on

the 15 May 1536, Sir Wm. Kyngston directs a letter to Cromwell informing him that "with your help" a monk of the Tower Hill had been promoted to the Abbey of Valle Crucis.

18 May 1536. Sir Wm. Kyngston to Cromwell :

"I have been with my lord of Rochford and shewed him the clause of your letter. He answered that he had sent word to Dr. Alsye. Notwithstanding he says that he made suit to you for promotion of a white monk of the Tower Hill, and with your help he was promoted to the Abbey of Vale Sante Crewsys in Cheshire, and he had for his promotion £100 and at Whitsuntide next should receive £100 more, but for this the King has his obligations. He supposes the said Abbey is suppressed and the Abbot undone and his sureties also. . . . You must help my lord of Rochford's conscience for the monk if need be."

This letter shows quite clearly to what mercenary depths the sacred task of selecting a new abbot had descended. The new Abbot was a monk of the name of John Herne, to whom a pension of no less than £23 p.a. was awarded at the Dissolution. The rest of the monks had to be content with £10 13s. 4d. between them.

Such is the pitiful story of the end of one of the most beautiful abbeys in these islands, and the gradual tarnishing of one of the noblest ideals that ever swayed the minds of men.

The property remained in the hands of the Crown until 1612, when it was granted to Edward Wotton—subsequently Lord Wotton. Ultimately it was purchased by John Trevor, Esq. of Trevor, whose heiress married Thomas Lloyd of Glanhafon. In 1742 Mrs. Lloyd of Glanhafon repaired the buildings and converted the Chapter House into a dwelling house. A Miss Lloyd of Glanhafon acted as custodian of the Abbey for many years, living alone in the former Chapter House and carrying on a certain amount of farming. Glanhafon is a delightful old farmhouse standing in the middle of the Tanat valley, about a mile and a half below the village of Llangynog in the parish of Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant.

ROBERT RICHARDS

CISTERCIAN HOUSES IN WALES AND THE BORDER

I. Of Savigniac origin :

Neath, 25 Oct., 1130.
 Basingwerk, 11 July, 1131.
 Combermere, 3 Nov., 1133.
 Buildwas, 8 Aug., 1135.

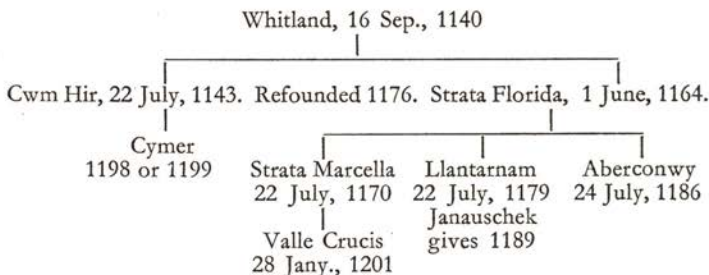
II. Founded by Cistercian Houses on the Continent :

Tintern, L'Aumone, 9 May, 1131.
 Whitland, Clairvaux, 16 Sept., 1140.
 (The first settlement was at Little Trefgarn, Pemb. Re-
 moved to Whitland 1151.)
 Dore, Morimond, 26 Ap., 1147.
 Margam, Clairvaux, 21 Nov., 1147.

III. Founded by Cistercian Houses in England :

Flaxley, Bordesley, 30 Sept., 1151.
 Grace Dieu, Waverley, 24 Ap., 1226.

IV. Whitland's daughters and descendants :



V. The Cistercian Nunneries :

Llanllugan.
 Llanllyr.

TRADDODIAD LLENYDDOL DYFFRYN CLWYD A'R CYFFINIAU

Dylwn ddywedyd ar y dechrau fod y testun a roddais i ysgrifennydd y Gymdeithas hon, sef "Traddodiad Llenyddol Sir Ddinbych," ychydig yn gamarweiniol. Ni ellir dywedyd fod traddodiad llenyddol arbennig yn perthyn i sir fel Sir Ddinbych, a grewyd gan Ddeddf Seneddol Seisnig. Ond pan soniwn am ranbarth neu dalaith, fel Mōrgannwg, y mae pethau'n wahanol. Petawn yn dywedyd "Gwynedd Is Conwy," sef hen gantrefi Rhos, Rhufoniog, Dyffryn Clwyd a Thegeingl, byddwn yn nes ati, ond nid yw hynny, chwaith, yn gwbl foddhaol, gan fy mod am gynnwys Iâl a Maelor ac Edeirnion yn ogystal â thueddau gorllewinol dyffryn Conwy. Efallai mai'r term gorau fyddai "Dyffryn Clwyd a'r Cyffiniau," hynny yw, dyffryn yr afon, ac nid y cantref a ddygai'r enw hwnnw. Gellir sôn am draddodiad llenyddol y rhanbarth hwn, ac nid amhriodol traethu ar y pwnc o flaen y Gymdeithas hon. Ac wedi dywedyd hynyna, dylwn ychwanegu mai hwn yw'r rhanbarth pwysicaf yng Nghymru o ddechrau'r bymthegfed ganrif hyd y ddeunawfed, ac mai'r bywyd llenyddol a fu'n nodweddu'r wlad yma sydd, i raddau helaeth, yn egluro parhad traddodiadau diwylliannol cenedl y Cymry hyd ein dyddiau ni. Dyma ganolfan bywyd llenyddol y cyfnodau hyn. Cofier mai am y bymthegfed ganrif a'r unfed ar bymtheg a'r ail ar bymtheg a'r ddeunawfed y soniaf, oherwydd ni wyddom ddigon am fywyd llenyddol y cyfnodau blaenorol i roi barn ar gyfraniad y gwahanol daleithiau.

Rhaid imi egluro ar y dechrau nad oes fodd imi wneuthur dim yn awr namyn cyfeirio eich sylw at y prif bwyntiau. Ni wyddom eto mo'r manylion am amryw agweddau ar hanes bywyd llenyddol y rhanbarth ac am fywyd a gwaith rhai o'r prif gymeriadau yn yr hanes hwnnw. Rhaid wrth lawer iawn mwy o ymchwil cyn bod modd i neb gynnig trafodaeth foddhaol, a geill y Gymdeithas newydd hon gyflawni cryn wasanaeth wrth fapio'r maes ac wrth annog ymchwilwyr i astudio'r hanes, nid yn unig hanes y ffigurau mawr a phwysig, ond hefyd y mân lenorion a'r gwŷr di-sôn-amdanynt y ceir cyfeiriadau atynt yn yr hen law-ysgrifau. Dylid hefyd yn Nhrafodion y Gymdeithas gyhoeddi erthyglau ar yr hen gartrefi enwog a oedd yn gefn i'r bywyd llenyddol yn yr hen amser, oherwydd ceir mwy ohonynt yn

Nyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau nag mewn un rhanbarth arall. Nid rhaid namyn edrych ar fap a ddengys blasau uchelwyr Cymru yn y bymthegfed ganrif a'r unfed ar bymtheg i sylweddoli hynny, oherwydd gwelir yno nid yn unig blasau enwog fel Llyweni a Chloddiaith a'r Rug, ond hefyd dai fel Bachymbyd, Bachygraig, Bryneuryn, Gwenynog, Y Foelas, Plas-y-Ward, Berain, Bodidris, Euarth, Plas Iolyn, Y Giler, &c., &c. Dyma faes cyfoethog i'r Gymdeithas hon, ac edrychwn ymlaen at drafodaethau manwl ar y pynciau hyn yn y Trafodion.

Fel y dywedais eisoes, ni wyddom ddigon am fywyd llenyddol y rhanbarth hwn cyn y bymthegfed ganrif i gynnig trafodaeth foddhaol. Ond pan ddown at y bymthegfed—"Y Ganrif Fawr," fel y gelwir hi gan Mr. Saunders Lewis—y mae un peth yn weddol glir. Ys gwir fod penceirddiaid mawr a phwysig yn y taleithiau eraill, megis Dafydd Nanmor o ymyl Beddgelert, Ieuan Deulwyn a Lewis Glyn Cothi o Ddeheubarth, Hywel ap Dafydd a Bedo Brwynllys o Frycheiniog, Gwilym Tew o Forgannwg, Llawdden o Fachynlleth, &c., eto, credaf ei bod yn iawn inni ddywedyd mai canolfan bywyd llenyddol Cymru—canolfan dysg Gymraeg—yn yr oes honno ydoedd y rhanbarth hwn a Gogledd Powys. Gadewch inni enwi'r beirdd hyn—Dafydd ab Edmwnd o Hanmer, Gutun Owain o Faelor, Guto'r Glyn (o Lyn Ceiriog, yn ôl pob tebyg), a Thudur Aled o Lansannan. Hwn oedd cartref dysg Gymraeg yn yr oes honno—mae popeth yn awgrymu hynny. Er mwyn egluro hyn, rhaid cofio bod y gramadeg barddol cynharaf sydd gennym wedi ei ysgrifennu yn nechrau'r bedwaredd ganrif ar ddeg gan Einion Offeiriad o Wynedd—o ba ran o Wynedd nis gwyddom. O hynny ymlaen, y mae'r hanes yn weddol glir. Parhawyd gwaith Einion gan Ddafydd Ddu Athro o Hiraddug, gŵr eglwysig o gyffiniau Tremeirchion a'r Cwm, y mae'n fwy na thebyg. Yna, yn y bymthegfed ganrif, cawn Ddafydd ab Edmwnd yn ad-drefnu mesurau cerdd dafod ac yn ennill y gadair arian yn Eisteddfod Caerfyrddin, yr ad-drefniad a ddilynwyd gan y beirdd Cymraeg o'r dyddiau hynny hyd heddiw. Gwelwn ei ddisgybl, Gutun Owain, yn ail ysgrifennu'r gramadeg ac yn rhoi inni'r disgrifiad cyntaf o'r cynganeddion. Felly nid rhaid rhyfeddu mai Tudur Aled o Lansannan, nai Dafydd ab Edmwnd, ydyw un o'r pen meistri, onid y pen meist'r, ar gelfyddyd y cywydd. A pharhabdd y traddodiad hwn trwy'r unfed ganrif ar

bymtheg. Y mae'n gwbl bosibl—gellir mentro awgrymu hynny erbyn hyn—mai Gruffudd Hiraethog, athro barddol enwocaf y ganrif honno, bardd arall o Lansannan, a roes drefn derfynol ar y gramadeg, wedi ei rannu'n bum llyfr, gramadeg y rhoes gopiâu ohono i'w ddisgyblion, Simwnt Fychan o Lanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Wiliam Cynwal o Ysbyty Ifan, a Wiliam Llŷn (oherwydd, er geni'r gŵr hwnnw yn Llŷn, eto fel disgybl Gruffudd Hiraethog y mae'n bwysig, ac yng Nghroesoswallt y trigai). Y pwynt y dylwn ei bwysleisio yw hwn, ein bod yn canfod yma yr enghraifft orau sydd gennym o draddodiad ysgol, y naill genhedlaeth yn trosglwyddo ei dysg a'i llyfrau a'i thradodiadau i'r llall nes i Urdd y Beirdd ymddatod yn yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg. Hon oedd gwlad y penceirddiaid dysgedig, ceidwaid y ddysg farddol, y gwŷr a roes inni'r llyfrau sy'n trafod celfyddyd cerdd dafod. Ac o gofio hyn, nid rhyfedd mai yn y wlad hon y cynhaliwyd yr unig eisteddfodau y gwyddom amdanynt yn yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg, sef eisteddfod gyntaf Caerwys yn 1523, a'r ail yn 1568 (neu 1567). Dyna a ddisgwyliid. Yr oedd rhesymau eraill tros ddewis Caerwys yn hytrach na rhyw dref arall yn y rhanbarth, ond y ffaith y dylem ei chofio yw hon, mai dyma ganolfan y bywyd barddol o ddyddiau Dafydd ab Edmwnd ymlaen.

Y mae hyn yn arwain yn naturiol at yr agwedd bwysicaf ar fywyd diwylliannol Sir Ddinbych a'r cyffiniau, sef bywyd ysgolheigaidd cyfnod y Dadeni, yr hyn sy'n egluro parhad dysg Gymraeg hyd ein dyddiau ni. Dyma, yn ddiamau, gyfraniad mawr y rhanbarth hwn i'n treftadaeth fel Cymry. Nid testun darlith mohono, eithr testun llyfr, ond ni ddaeth yr amser eto i ysgrifennu'r llyfr hwnnw. Gallaf nodi rhai pethau. Gŵyr pawb am yr hyn y cyfeiriai ato—bechgyn ifainc o Gymry, meibion uchelwyr, yn myned i brifysgolion Lloegr, ac weithiau i'r Cyfandir, yn yfed yn helaeth o ysbryd oes y Dadeni, a dychwelyd i Gymru i geisio creu yma yr un math o fywyd ag a geid mewn gwledydd eraill yng Ngorllewin Ewrob. Fel yr oedd ysgolheigion Lloegr a'r Cyfandir yn astudio hanes eu gwledydd hwy, yn chwilio am hen lawysgrifau Lladin a Groeg ac yn eu hastudio, ac yn ceisio gwneuthur eu hieithoedd hwy yn gyfryngau addas i ymdrin â phob rhyw bwnc, felly'r Cymry hyn hwythau. Y maent yn cychwyn cyfnod newydd yn hanes dysg Gymraeg. Hyd yn hyn, y beirdd proffesyddol fu ceidwaid y ddysg honno,

ond yn awr y mae gwŷr bonheddig ac offeiriaid a chyfreithwyr a meddygon yn dechrau cymryd eu lle. Pwy oedd y Cymry hyn?

Yn gyntaf oll cawn y rheini a astudiaï hanes Cymru, a'r enwau pwysig yn y cysylltiad hwn yw Syr John Prys o Sir Frycheiniog, Humphrey Lhuyd o Ddinbych, a'r Dr. David Powel, ficer Rhiwabon.

Ac yn ail, y rheini a astudiaï'r iaith Gymraeg a chelfyddyd cerdd dafod. Rhaid cofio am eiriadur William Salesbury a'i lyfrau ar seineg, a'i ymdriniaeth â rhetoreg; am ramadeg Gruffydd Robert; am lyfr Wiliam Middleton ar gerdd dafod; am lyfr anghyhoeddedig Thomas Prys o Blas Iolyn, yntau, ar gelfyddyd cerdd dafod; am ramadeg Siôn Dafydd Rhys; am ramadeg Henry Salesbury o Ddolbeleidr yn ymyl Dinbych; am eiriadur Thomas Wiliems o Drefriw; am lyfr Henri Perri ar retoreg; ac am ramadeg a geiriadur y Dr. John Davies o Lanferres (ac o Fallwyd).

Ac yn drydydd, y gwŷr a feistrolodd yr hen iaith lenyddol, ac a fu'n cyfieithu'r Beibl i'r Gymraeg, sef William Salesbury, yr Esgob Richard Davies o'r Gyffin wrth Aberconwy, yr Esgob William Morgan, a'r Dr. John Davies.

Diau mai'r ffaith fwyaf nodedig a ganfyddir wrth astudio'r rhestr uchod yw fod y rhain i gyd yn dod o Sir Ddinbych a'r cyffiniau, ac eithrio Syr John Prys a Gruffydd Robert (er i Wyneddigion Llundain wneud ymdrech lew i'w gysylltu â Threfalun ym Maelor), a Siôn Dafydd Rhys. Dyma ganolfan y Dadeni yng Nghymru, a gwŷr y rhanbarth hwn a achubodd ddysg Gymraeg yn y cyfnod pan oedd yr hen fywyd diwyllianol yn "kychwyn ar dramgwydd."

Pa fodd y gellir cyfrif am hyn? Nid gwaith hawdd yw egluro ffeithiau o'r nodwedd yma, ond tybiaf mai un elfen bwysig yn yr eglurhad yw'r ddysg farddol a fu'n nodweddu'r rhanbarth. Dyma wlad y penceirddiaid dysgedig, a'r traddodiad hwn, traddodiad dysg, sydd, i raddau helaeth, yn egluro'r ffaith mai oddi yma y daeth y rhan fwyaf o'r dyneiddwyr Cymreig. Ac yn y cysylltiad hwn y mae'n bwysig rhoi sylw i Ruffudd Hiraethog, y gŵr y cyflwynodd William Salesbury iddo ei lyfr ar retoreg fel y gellid cyfoethogi'r ddysg farddol. Edrych yn gilwgsu a wnâi'r beirdd ar yr ysgolheigion a ymddiddorai yn eu pynciau hwy—rhywbeth iddynt hwy eu hunain a'u noddwyr ydoedd yr hen ddysg Gymraeg. Ond y mae amryw bethau'n

awgrymu fod Gruffudd Hiraethog, y pwysicaf o'r penceirddiaid tua chanol y ganrif, yn wahanol, a gellir dal mai ef yw'r bont rhwng yr ysgolion barddol a'r oes newydd. Dywaid Salesbury yn ei folawd iddo ei fod, megis dyneiddwyr gwledydd eraill, yn dyfal gasglu hen lawysgrifau rhag eu myned ar ddifancoll. Ni allai Salesbury beidio â gwneuthur pob ymdrech i hyrwyddo dysg Gymraeg

“gan dy welet ti, Gruffydd, dy hun mor hiraethoc am gyweir yr Iaith ac ydd wyt (mal y dyweit y llatinveirdd am Atlas) yn kymryt gormodd baich ar dy ysgwydd vnigawl, nid amgen nath vod yn keisio ymhel o yma ac o yackw am pop hen kwrach o lyfyr brycheulyd ei ddarllen ac ei chwiliaw dros-taw, er cahel peth kymporth tu ac (at) gynnal yr iaith sydd yn kychwyn ar dramgwydd: Ie, ni atei tosturi anveidrawl ymy dy'adael dy hvn yn vnic y sefyll y dan vaich mor athrwm, anid, hyd y gwasanaythei egwander vy nerth am harial, estyn vy esgwydd y dan yr vn baich y gyd ar lluddedic ysgwydd daudy. Ny atei vyth kyfiawnder kydwbybod kalon vn dyn dynawl dy ady di yn vnic y ymofaly, y ymdrapheth ac ymdraphillian y tuhwnt ac y gwnai Prometheus, am yr hwn y chwetlit tros iddo ei astud aei veddylgar vefyrdawt vot eryr yn pigo ei bervedd allan oe geudawd. A chan vod yn ddiameu genyf veint yw dy draserch ar yr Iaith, llyma vi yn estyn hyn yma o ffiguræ megis yn golofneu, yn oseilieu, ac atteigion ei dodi wrthei.”

Fe'i gwelir yn llunio casgliad o ddiarhebion, ac yn dywedyd iddo ei lunio “i goffau ac i ddwyn ar gof ir neb o genedl gymry a vo allan oi wlad jaith i gnowdol fam i hunan ai natturiawl ddayaren.” Nid oes neb eto wedi astudio'r ochr hon ar ei weithgarwch yn ddigon manwl, a phan gawn astudiaeth weddol drwyadl, odid na welir mai ef, fel yr awgrymodd Mr. Saunders Lewis, ydoedd yr unig bencerdd a sylweddolai beth oedd arwyddocâd y bywyd newydd, ac a gydymdeimlai â delfrydau'r Dadeni. Gwrandawer arno'n annerch y darlennydd ar ddechrau ei gasgliad o'i ddiarhebion:

“Och dduw mor angharedic ac mor annaturiawl vydd llawer o genedl gymry ac yn enwedic y rhain a elont allan o dervynau i ganedic natturiawl ddayaren ai gwlad pawb val i bo yr achos yn ymgais ai arvaeth. . . . A phob un or rhai a dariont nemor oddi kartref yn kashau ag yn gillwng dros gof iaith i ganedic wlad a thafodiad i vam gnawdawl. A hynny a ellir i adnabod

pann brofo yn wladaidd draethu Kamberaec, arr lediaith i dafod ac mor vursen, er na ddysgawdd iaith arall, na chroyw ddoiwaid iaith i wlad i hun, a hyn a ddoetto mor llediaith floesc lygredig ar ol iaith estronawl. . . . Ac velly pa angharedigrwudd vwy ar ddyn no gyrru i vam gnawdol allan oi dy a lletyvu estrones ddidras yn i lle."

Cofier ysgrifennu hyn cyn cyhoeddi Gramadeg Cymraeg Gruffudd Robert. A allai'r gŵr hwnnw ei hun ddoedyd yn amgenach? Manylais ar hyn am fy mod yn credu mai'r ysgolheictod barddol sydd, i raddau helaeth, yn egluro'r ffaith mai Dyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau—a rhoi ystyr go eang i'r term "cyffiniau"—ydoedd cartref y Dadeni yng Nghymru.

Nid oes fodd i mi yn awr fanylu ar bob agwedd ar weithgarwch yr ysgolheigion hyn, ond rhaid imi drafod dau beth er mwyn rhoi rhyw syniad am y bywyd rhyfedd a nodweddai'r rhanbarth yn yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg ac ym mlynnyddoedd cynnar yr ail ar bymtheg. Soniais eisoes am Ruffudd Hiraethog yn ymroi i chwilio am yr hen lawysgrifau. Dyma un o'r agweddau mwyaf diddorol ar weithgarwch y cyfnod hwn. Pan oedd Ieuan Fardd (neu Ieuan Brydydd Hir) ar ryw sgawt yng Nghaernarfon yn 1783 cyfarfu â Robin Ddu o Fôn, ac fe brifiodd y sgwrs yn ymrafael gwyllt—yr hen bwnc, Gogledd a Deau. Mynnai Ieuan mai'r Deau oedd cartref cysefin hen lawysgrifau'r Cymry, er mai yn yr Hengwrt a Wynnstay a Chloddiaith y ceid hwy yn yr oes honno. Ac yr oedd Ieuan yn llygad ei le. Yn y Deau y ceid Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin, Llyfr Aneirin, Llyfr Taliesin, Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch, Llyfr Coch Hergert, Llyfr Coch Talgarth, Llyfr Ancr Llanddewifrefi, a'r rhan fwyaf o'r hen gopiâu o Frut y Brenhinoedd a'r Cyfreithiau, &c. Y mae popeth yn awgrymu mai'r Deau oedd gwlad y llawysgrifau yn yr Oesoedd Canol. Ond yn yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg, gwelwn y rhan fwyaf o'r hen lyfrau hyn, a gynhwysai hen ganu a hen ryddiaith y genedl Gymreig, yn cael eu cymryd i'r Gogledd. Dyma bwnc mawr, a hyd yn oed petai gennyf amser, ni byddai modd imi gynnig eglurhad boddhaol a llawn arno. Rhaid wrth lawer iawn mwy o ymchwil cyn bod hynny'n bosibl. Ond credaf fod un peth yn weddol glir, sef mai traddodiad pencerddiaidd y rhanbarth hwn, a'r diddordeb mawr a enynnwyd ymhlith ysgolheigion Dyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau mewn popeth a oedd yn ymwneuthur â dysg Gymraeg sy'n egluro paham y mae cynifer

o'r hen lyfrau yn eu llyfrgelloedd hwy yn ail hanner yn unfed ganrif ar bymtheg. Y bywyd ysgolheigaidd hwn oedd yr echedfaen a dynnai'r hen lawysgrifau o'r Deau. Wrth ddarllen y llyfrau a adawodd y gwŷr hyn ar eu hól, canfyddwn awch am wybodaeth ac awydd i gasglu ynghyd holl hen drysorau llenyddol cenedl y Cymry, a'u hastudio a'u copïo, fel y baent yn rhan o etifeddiaeth cenedlaethau'r dyfodol, awch ac awydd a welir nid yn unig mewn ysgolheigion enwog fel William Salesbury a Thomas Wiliems a'r Dr. John Davies, mewn copïwyr rhyfeddol fel John Jones o'r Gelli Lyfdy ym mhlwyf Ysgeifiog, ac mewn offeiriaid fel David Powel a Jasper Gryffyth, gwarden Ysbyty Crist yn Rhuthun, a David Johns, ficer Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, ond hefyd mewn llu o wŷr di-sôn-amdanynt, megis Rhisiart ap Siôn o Ysgorlegan yn Llangynhafal, Rhisiart Langford o Drefalun ym Maelor, Roger Morris o Goedytalwrn yn Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Edward ap Roger o Riwabon, Siôn aer y Conwy o Fotryddan, Tomas Wyn o Euarth, a Thomas Evans o Hendre Forfudd. Ac ni ddylid anghofio'r beirdd; heblaw Gruffudd Hiraethog, cawn ei ddilynwyr, Simwnt Fychan o Lanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Siôn Tudur o Lanelwy (perchennog y Llyfr Du o Gaerfyrddin am gyfnod), Wiliam Llŷn, Wiliam Cynwal a Rhys Cain (perchennog Llawysgrif Hendregadredd), i gyd yn gopïwyr ac yn gasglyddion. Nid oes glwstwr o'r math hwn yn yr un rhanbarth arall. Fel y dywedais eisoes, rhyw awydd anniwall i gasglu ynghyd drysorau'r gorffennol a welir yma. Yr enghraifft ryfeddaf o hyn ydyw John Jones o'r Gelli Lyfdy, a dreuliodd hanner can mlynedd a mwy yn chwilio am lawysgrifau ac yn eu copïo fel y cedwid yr hen destunau rhyddiaith a'r Hen Ganu, ac fel y gallai cenedlaethau'r dyfodol eu hastudio—llunio cyfrolau mawr, gyda rhagymadroddion yn annerch "yr hygar ddarlleidd," a'r darllenwyr hynny ydyw ysgolheigion Cymraeg yr ugeinfed ganrif. Nid gormodiaith yw dywedyd mai gwŷr Dyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau a wnaeth fwyaf i ddiogelu'r Hen Ganu a rhyddiaith a barddoniaeth yr Oesoedd Canol. A hynny mewn cyfnod go argyfyngus. Beth petai Llyfr Aneirin a Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin a Llyfr Taliesin a Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch wedi diflannu yn y cyfnod hwn? Felly y gallwn sylweddoli cyfraniad yr hen gasglyddion a'r hen gopïwyr hyn. Ac wedi i'r genhedlaeth hon farw, cipiwyd y rhan fwyaf o'u llyfrau, llyfrau'r ysgolheigion a llyfrau'r copïwyr yn ogystal â llyfrau'r beirdd, gan

Robert Fychan o'r Hengwrt, a thrwy ryw ryfedd wyrth, cadwyd y rhan fwyaf o lawer o'r casgliad hyd y ganrif ddiwethaf pan drosglwyddwyd y cyfan i Beniarth, ac ym mlynnydoedd cynnar y ganrif hon i'r Llyfrgell Genedlaethol. Y mae arnom ddyled drom i Robert Fychan, ond y mae arnom drymach dyled i'r gwŷr a gasglodd yr hen lyfrau ac a fu wrthi yn eu copïo yn y ganrif flaenorol. Dyma ran o ddyled Cymru i Sir Ddinbych a'r cyffiniau.

Y mae agwedd arall ar y gweithgarwch hwn. Nid gwanc y llyfrbryf yn unig a ganfyddir yma, a'r awydd i ddarganfod ac i ddiogelu trysorau'r gorffennol, ond hefyd chwilfrydedd yr ysgolhaig. Dywedais eisoes mai Dyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau ydoedd canolfan dysg Gymraeg yn yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg. Fel y mae ysgolheigion y Dadeni yn astudio'r ieithoedd clasurol, felly y maent hwythau yn ymroi i astudio eu hen iaith glasurol hwy, y Gymraeg. Mae hwn yn bwnc mawr, ac ni allaf yn awr namyn sôn am un gongl o'r maes. Efallai mai'r hyn a gafodd fwyaf o sylw ydoedd hen faes llafur y penceirddiaid, geirfa'r iaith lenyddol. Dyma ran dra phwysig o'r ddysg farddol y soniais amdani, a gwelir Gruffudd Hiraethog yn troi'r hen eirfâu yn eiriadur, sy'n cynnwys llinellau enghreifftiol o weithiau'r beirdd. Yr wyf eisoes wedi cysylltu mudiad ysgolheigaidd y Dadeni yng Nghymru â dysg yr ysgolion barddol, ac y mae'n weddol eglur mai'r traddodiad barddol sy'n egluro diddordeb y dyneiddwyr yng ngeirfa'r iaith. Fe'u gwelwn yn astudio geiriadur Gruffudd Hiraethog, yn ychwanegu ato, ac yn ei ddiwygio. Y mae William Salesbury yn cyhoeddi geiriadur, a Henry Salesbury a Henri Perri a David Powel yn casglu geirfâu, ac nid yn unig hynny, ond y mae gwŷr fel Rhisiart Langford o Drefalun, a Rhisiart ap Siôn o Ysgorlegan, a Thomas ap Llywelyn ab Ithel, a Roger Morris o Goedytalwrn, a John Jones o'r Gelli Lyfdy, ac eraill na wyddom ddim amdanynt namyn eu henwau, yn dyfal astudio'r hen lawysgrifau yr oeddynt yn eu casglu, yn codi'r hen eiriau ac yn ceisio eu hegluro. Ni welir dim tebyg i'r bywyd ysgolheigaidd hwn mewn un rhanbarth arall yn yr oes honno. Y mae pawb yn gwybod am Eiriadur mawr Lladin-Cymraeg Thomas Wiliems o Drefriw, ac am Eiriadur y Dr. John Davies o Fallwyd, dau o lyfrau mawr oes y Dadeni yng Nghymru, ond yr ydym yn anghofio mai'r gweithgarwch ysgolheigaidd y cyfeiriais ato sy'n egluro'r geiriaduron hynny. Rhaid inni eu gosod yn erbyn y cefndir hwn.

Ond y mae'r bywyd hwn yn marw yn yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg. Cododd cenhedlaeth na chymerai ryw lawer o ddi-ddordeb yn y pethau a fuasai'n ddiddannwch i'w hynafiaid, a darfu am y penceirddiaid dysgedig, ond llwyddodd Robert Fychan i ddiogelu llawer iawn o'u llyfrau. Yr olaf o'r hen ysgolheigion ydoedd William Maurice o Gefn-y-braich yn Llansilin, a oedd, yng nghyfnod Huw Morus, yn dyfal gasglu llawysgrifau Cymraeg ac yn eu hastudio. Golwg ddigalon oedd ar bethau tua diwedd yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg. Petai gŵr deallus yn y cyfnod hwnnw yn dechrau myfyrio ar hynt dysg Gymraeg, diau y byddai'n edrych ar oes ysgolheigion Dyffryn Clwyd fel math o "haf bach Mihangel" yn hanes bywyd diwylliannol Cymru, haf bach Mihangel yn rhagflaenu'r gaeaf. Fe ellid tybied fod popeth ar ben. Yr oedd y beirdd proffesyddol wedi diflannu bron i gyd, ac nid oedd mwyach gorff o ysgolheigion yn astudio'r hen lenyddiaeth. Ond yn y cyfnod hwn, aeth Cymro ifanc o Lanforda, ger Croesoswallt, o'r enw Edward Lhuyd, i Rydychen (hynny yw, gŵr o wlad William Maurice, yr olaf o'r hen ysgolheigion), a chychwyn mudiad newydd a arweiniodd i'r adfywiad a weddnewidiodd y byd Cymraeg yn y ddeunawfed ganrif. Yr ydym ni wedi clywed priodoli hyn i ysgolheictod Seisnig Rhydychen—Cymro ifanc yn ceisio cyflawni'r un gwasanaeth i ddysg Gymraeg ag a gyflawnai ei gyfeillion Rhydychenaidd i ddysg Saesneg. Ni ellir amau nad yw hynny'n iawn, ond eto, os ef yw'r gŵr y cyfeirir ato mewn llythyrau o eiddo ei dad a ddarganfu'r Athro Dodd o Fangor yn ddiweddar, yna y mae'n eglur iddo yntau etifeddu rhyw gymaint o hen chwilfrydedd ysgolheigaidd ei gynefin. Felly, y mae modd awgrymu mai'r hen fywyd hwnnw a gynhyrchodd y gŵr a achubodd ddysg Gymraeg yn y ddeunawfed ganrif. Ac fe ddylem gofio na byddai'r adfywiad hwnnw—yr adfywiad a gysylltir ag enwau Morrisiaid Môn a Goronwy Owen ac Ieuan Fardd—yn bosibl, na byddai ysgolheictod Cymraeg ein dyddiau ni yn bosibl, onibai am hen ysgolheigion Dyffryn Clwyd a'r amgylchoedd. Hwyl a achubodd hen lawysgrifau'r Cymry, ac a barodd eu diogelu; hwyl a drosglwyddodd inni yr hen ddysg farddol; hwyl a roes i wŷr y deffroad yn y ddeunawfed ganrif ciriaduron a gramadegau a llawysgrifau a'u galluogai i astudio'r hen lenyddiaeth; hwyl a ddiogelodd yr hen iaith lenyddol yn ei phurdeb, a'i rhoi yn y Beibl Cymraeg yn etifeddiaeth i holl genedlaethau'r dyfodol. Dyma faint ein dyled i'r rhanbarth hwn.

Ond nid dyna'r cyfan. Ochr yn ochr â'r bywyd hwn, arhosodd y traddodiad barddol yn fwy byw yma nag mewn odid ranbarth arall. Yr oedd y gyfundrefn farddol yn graddol farw, ond eto, ni lwyr ddiflannodd y ddysg farddol yn y wlad hon, ac y mae'n ffaith arwyddocaol mai'r ddau fardd pwysicaf a ganai yng Nghymru yn hanner olaf yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg ydoedd Edward Morris o Gerrigydrudion a Huw Morus o Ddyffryn Ceiriog. Yn wir, yr oedd beirdd y ddeunawfed ganrif wedi etifeddu'r hen ddulliau a rhyw ychydig o'r hen feistrolaeth. Y mae arnaf ofn fod Syr John Morris-Jones wedi ein camarwain wrth foli Goronwy Owen. "Ymhellach," meddai, "pan oedd hen gelfyddyd barddoniaeth Gymraeg ar drengi fe anadlodd Gronwy fywyd newydd iddi; nid gormod dywedyd mai iddo ef y dylem ddiolch ein bod wedi etifeddu'r adnabyddiaeth fyw sy gennym o'r gynghanedd." Nid oedd yr hen gelfyddyd ar drengi yn Sir Ddinbych a'r cyffiniau yn yr oes honno. Gallai gŵr fel John Powel, y gweydd a'r clochydd o Lansannan, ganu cywydd rheolaidd yn null yr henfeirdd, peth nas medrai na Goronwy Owen na Lewis Morris. Ac y mae hynny'n wir am feirdd fel Edward Jones, Bodfari, heb sôn am Edward Samuel o Langar, a Rhys Jones o'r Blaenau. Ac nid hynny'n unig. Yma y ceid gweddillion yr hen ddysg bencerddiaidd gynt. Rhaid inni edrych ar wŷr fel Dafydd Jones o Drefriw, a Huw Jones o Langwm, a Siôn Dafydd, y clocsiwr a'r offeiriad lleyg, o Bentre'r-foelas (y gŵr y bu Twm o'r Nant yn trin ei hen lyfrau), a Robert Thomas, y clochydd o Lanfair Talhaearn, a John Powel, y clochydd a'r gweydd o Lansannan,—rhaid inni edrych ar y rhain fel disgynyddion yr hen ysgolheigion a'r hen benceirddiaid. Er eu tloted a'u hannysgediced, yn ôl safonau'r oes ac yn ôl barn y Morrisiaid, eto hwy oedd etifeddion y ddysg farddol. Geilw Dafydd Jones ef ei hun yn "Fyfyriwr ar Hen Bethau,"—disgrifiad da. Gwŷr yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg wedi goroesi ac wedi colli eu sglein oedd y rhain. Yr hen lawysgrifau oedd eu difyrrwch—dyma'r "Cydymaith Diddan," a defnyddio'r teitl, a roes Dafydd Jones i'r casgliad o ryddiaith ac o farddoniaeth a dynnodd ohonynt. Dysgu a wnâi'r Morrisiaid, dysgu a wnâi Goronwy Owen (a gorbwysleisio hynny ar brydiau er mwyn ymagweddu fel dyn clyfar), ond yr oedd hen draddodiad Dyffryn Clwyd a Bro Hiraethog yng ngwaed y bobl hyn. Ac y mae hyn yn ein hatgoffa am sylw a geir yn nrama Mr. Saunders

Lewis, "Eisteddfod Bodran." Dyma a ddywaid Manawydan am yr hen grŵr: "Glywaist ti o, Rhiannon? Wyddost ti, mae hyn yn ddigon o dâl imi am anturio rhoi'r ysgol i fyny a mynd i grwydro drwy Gymru. Dyma iti un o'r olaf o'r hen feirdd gwlad a'r hen glochydion. Yr oedd Talhaiarn a Siôn Powel a Thwm o'r Nant yn perthyn iddo fo, nid yn destun llyfr ac arholiad fel y maen nhw i ni." Gallwn ninnau ddywedyd fod Gruffudd Hiraethog a Wiliam Llŷn a Wiliam Cynwal yn perthyn i Ddafydd Jones a'i gymheiriaid, ac nid yn destun llyfr fel y maent i ni, ac fel yr oeddynt i raddau helaeth, i Lewis Morris ac i Oronwy Owen. Gwrandewch ar ddisgrifiad Lewis Morris o Huw Jones o Langwm: "I was favoured lately with the company of a mountain poet, who prided himself on being a wanderer like the ancients he is truly an original of the first order, and worth seeing, hath a natural aversion to Saxons and Normans, and to all languages but his own." Y mae hyn yn ein hatgoffa am ddisgrifiad Gruffydd Robert o feirdd yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg, oherwydd, yn wahanol i'r dyneiddwyr eraill, ychydig a wyddai ef am y traddodiad barddol. "Canys," meddai, wrth sôn am y beirdd Cymraeg, "mae'nt hwy yn tybied na ddylid fyth cyphlybu na groegwyr na lladinwyr i benceirddiaid yr hen gymru." Yr hen syniadau a oedd gan Huw Jones. Dirmygu'r gwŷr hyn a wnâi Lewis Morris a Goronwy Owen. Ond y mae Ieuan Fardd dipyn yn wahanol. Bu ef byw yn eu canol pan oedd yn gurad yn Nhrefriw ac yn Llanfair Talhaearn, a sylwedolodd fod gweddillion yr hen ddysg ganddynt. Gwelodd yma'r hen draddodiad yn aros yn lledfyw.

A dyma wlad y canu rhydd cynganeddol, y baledi a'r carolau, gwaith y beirdd a berthynai i ysgol Huw Morus. Yma y ceid y rhan fwyaf o'r baledwyr a'r carolwyr, a gwŷr fel Ffoulke Owens o Nantglyn, a Thomas Jones o Gorwen ac o Amwythig, a Dafydd Jones o Drefriw, a Huw Jones o Langwm, a Jonathan Hughes o Langollen, a Daniel Jones o Riwabon, yn casglu eu gweithiau ac yn eu cyhoeddi. A dyma wlad yr anterliwtiau o amser Huw Morus hyd ddyddiau Twm o'r Nant. Y mae'r rhain, ar ryw olwg, yn ffeithiau anodd eu hegluro, a chyn belled ag y gwelaf i, yr unig ffordd i wneuthur hynny ydyw priodoli'r cyfan i barhad y traddodiad llenyddol y gellir ei olrhain yn ôl i'r bymthegfed ganrif, er ei fod erbyn hyn wedi newid ei ansawdd, i

raddau helaeth, a'r gân bencerddiaidd wedi troi'n garol ac yn faled ac yn anterliw†. Ond yr oedd y diddordeb a'r ynni llenyddol yn parhau. Hon oedd y wlad fwyaf llenyddol a mwyaf barddol yng Nghymru'r ddeunawfed ganrif.

Ac y mae hyn yn arwain yn naturiol at y pwynt olaf sydd gennyf. Pan ofynnwyd imi annerch y Gymdeithas hon, awgrymwyd "Cyfraniad Sir Ddinbych i Gymdeithas Gwyneddigion Llundain" fel testun. Bernais innau'n gam neu'n gymwys na ellid egluro'r cyfraniad hwnnw heb draethu ar draddodiad arbennig y rhanbarth. Oherwydd, mewn ffordd, Cymdeithas Sir Ddinbych oedd y Gwyneddigion. Fe geid ynddi, bid sicr, aelodau o bob un o siroedd eraill y Gogledd, a llawer o'r Deau, ond credaf ei bod yn iawn dywedyd mai gwŷr y sir hon a ffurfiai'r cnewyllyn pwysig ym mhob cyfnod yn ei hanes. Hyd yn oed yn 1831, bron ugain mlynedd wedi marw Owain Myfyr, oddi yno y deuai 42 o'r aelodau. Dyma'r ffigurau am siroedd eraill y Gogledd—26 o Sir Drefaldwyn, 21 o Sir Feirionnydd, 18 o Sir y Fflint, 12 o Sir Fôn, a 7 o Sir Gaernarfon. Deuai mwy o aelodau o Sir Aberteifi ac o Sir Gaerfyrddin nag o Sir Gaernarfon. Cymdeithas a grewyd gan adfywiad y ddeunawfed ganrif oedd y Cymmrodorion; cymdeithas a grewyd gan fywyd llenyddol, gwerinol Sir Ddinbych oedd y Gwyneddigion; cymdeithas o bobl a oedd yn hoff o ganu penillion gyda'r delyn, pobl a fagwyd yng ngwlad y carolau a'r baledi a'r anterliwtiau, pobl lawen, ond pobl a fagwyd yn y wlad fwyaf "llynyddol" yng Nghymru. Gedwch inni feddwl am Owain Myfyr, y sylfaenydd, a thad y Gymdeithas am fwy na deugain mlynedd. Aeth i Lundain yn ifanc, ac er na wyddom odid ddim am ei ieuentid yn Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr, eto, a barnu wrth ei hanes mewn cyfnod diweddarach, ni allai gŵr fel ef beidio â theimlo'r un dylanwadau ag a welir wrth astudio hanes yr hen glochyddion, Dafydd Jones a John Powel a Robert Thomas, a'r hen glocsiwr, Siôn Dafydd o Bentre'r-foelas. Cofier nad oedd yn fardd nac yn llenor—er bod ganddo amgenach syniad am lenyddiaeth nag a dybir yn gyffredin—ond yr oedd yr "Hen Bethau" yn ei waed yntau. Wedi cyrraedd Llundain cyfarfu â Rhisiart Morris a Robin Ddu o Fôn a gwŷr eraill a wyddai am ddysg y cylch Morrisaidd. Daeth i wybod am ddelfryd y cylch hwn, sef dwyn yr hen lenyddiaeth y buasai gwŷr ei fro ef yn ei diogelu ac yn ei hastudio, ddwy ganrif a mwy cyn hynny, i olau dydd, a cheisio

creu yng Nghymru, gwlad heb brifddinas na phrifysgol, gylch o ysgolheigion a allai sicrhau parhad astudiaethau Cymreig. Methiant fu hanes y Cymmrodorion cyntaf, ond fe lwyddodd y Gwyneddigion,—neu'n hytrach, y sylfaenydd. Oherwydd enw arall ar y Gwyneddigion yn y cyfnod cynnar ydyw Owain Myfyr. Credaf mai'r hen draddodiad y ceisiais ei ddisgrifio sy'n egluro ymroad rhyfeddol y gŵr hwn—copio llawysgrifau, cefnogi ysgolheigion a llenorion a gohebu â hwy yn gyson, ymateb i gais gwŷr ei sir ef i droi eisteddfod y beirdd yn sefydliad i hyrwyddo llenyddiaeth ac ysgolheictod, talu i gopïwyr ac ysgolheigion, a pharodrwydd digymar i wario ei gyfoeth fel y gellid dwyn hen dreftadaeth cenedl y Cymry, a anweswyd gynt gan wŷr ei fro ef, i olau dydd. Nid oes fodd egluro a gyflawnodd heb gofio am draddodiad y rhanbarth hwn, am yr hen benceirddiaid a'r hen ysgolheigion, a heb gofio am wŷr o gyffelyb anianawd iddo ef ei hun, Rhisiart Langford o Drefalun, Roger Morris o Goedytalwrn, John Jones o'r Gelli Lyfdy, Rhisiart ap Siôn o Ysgorlegan, a Thomas Evans o Hendre Forfudd. Dyna ei hynafiaid ef. Ac un o'r amcanion a oedd gennyf wrth baratoi'r anerchiad hwn ydoedd ceisio dangos mai gŵr o'r cyffiniau hyn a ddylai fod wedi cyflawni dyheadau ysgolheigion y ddeunawfed ganrif. A pheth hollol weddus hefyd oedd fod y gŵr a wnaeth hyn yn bosibl ac a gyflawnodd y caledwaith, sef William Owen [-Pughe], wedi cael etifeddiaeth yn Sir Ddinbych, ac mai â'r sir hon y cysylltir ei enw bellach ac nid â Sir Feirionnydd. Mewn ffordd, gellir dywedyd fod gyrfa Owain Myfyr yn goron ar weithgarwch gwŷr y wlad hon o'r bymthegfed ganrif ymlaen.

Wel, gellid sôn am lawer agwedd arall ar draddodiad llenyddol Dyffryn Clwyd a'r cyffiniau, ond fy amcan pennaf wrth draethu ar y testun hwn ydoedd cyfeirio eich sylw at y gwaith y dylai ymchwilwyr y Gymdeithas hon ei gyflawni. Hyderaf y gellwch ymhen rhai blynyddoedd gyhoeddi gwaith safonol ar hanes llenyddol eich bro. Mae gennych faes cyfoethog. Fel y dywedais ar y dechrau, dyma'r rhanbarth pwysicaf yng Nghymru, o bell ffordd, cyn belled ag y mae a fynnom â hanes bywyd llenyddol ein cenedl o'r bymthegfed ganrif ymlaen. Fel gŵr o'r Deau, y mae'n hyfrydwch gennyf ddymuno i chwi bob rhwyddineb.

G. J. WILLIAMS.

HENRY DENNIS :

A CORNISH CAPTAIN OF WELSH INDUSTRY

The story of the later development of the mineral resources of Denbighshire in the second half of the nineteenth century is closely associated with the manifold activities of Henry Dennis, of New Hall, Ruabon, the Cornish engineer who came from Bodmin to construct a tramway at Llangollen and remained to become one of the chief captains of industry in North Wales.

At the time when the Industrial Revolution began in this part of the Principality, the principal figures in the coal and iron industries were the famous John Wilkinson, "Father of the Iron Trade," and his younger brother William, who took over from their father Isaac Wilkinson, the Bersham Iron Works—a foundry well known, not only in this country through its production of cylinders for Boulton and Watts' engines, but on the Continent of Europe, especially in France. Later, John Wilkinson bought the Brymbo estate where he carried out extensive iron founding and coal mining operations at the spot where the Brymbo Steel Works was subsequently built. When John Wilkinson was at the height of his career as ironmaster and maker of machines at Bersham and Brymbo, high hopes were entertained that North Wales, having begun so well, would continue to progress; but these expectations were not realised. The richer natural resources of the Midlands and South Wales coupled with the advantages gained through new inventions and better means of transport, produced conditions in which North Wales lost its place in the race. An impetus was given to coal mining in East Denbighshire in the eighteenth century, following Abraham Darby's discovery of a process to use coke in place of charcoal for making iron, but it lost its force through the competition of more favoured areas in the Black Country and the Rhondda Valley. And so during the first half of the nineteenth century, successive waves of trade depression, lawsuits in the Court of Chancery, and developments elsewhere, caused a setback to the heavy industries of East Denbighshire from which it had been only partially rescued by the efforts of pioneers like Henry Robertson and the Darby brothers, whose

railways, collieries and iron works, together with the nearby enterprises of men like James Sparrow at the Ffrwd, and Thomas Clayton of Brynmally, laid the foundations upon which the later coal, steel and clay industries of the neighbourhood were destined to be established. When Henry Dennis first came into Denbighshire, about the year 1850, twenty-six collieries were operating. Many of them were soon to pass out of production, but new pits were sunk, and in the course of time the coalfield was developed to the East where two modern collieries are in production, and these, together with three or four other pits, produce between 40,000 and 50,000 tons of coal each week.

For half a century or more Henry Dennis took a leading part in sinking new mines and reorganising old ones, establishing terra cotta works, waterworks and gas works in Denbighshire and in other parts of North Wales and Shropshire—the various concerns under his control giving employment to over 10,000 workpeople.

II.

THE DENNIS FAMILY

Henry Dennis belonged to a family long settled in Devon and Cornwall. A manuscript history of the family was compiled in 1865 by his brother-in-law, Dr. F. W. P. Jago, of Plymouth, who obtained much of the information from Henry Dennis of Stoke (uncle of Henry Dennis of Hafodybwch and New Hall, Ruabon), and from Mrs. Maria Burrows (*nee* Dennis), wife of Richard Burrows, Junr., of the Probate Court at Bodmin. Dr. Jago's MS. passed into the possession of his brother-in-law, Henry Dennis, of Hafodybwch, and afterwards of New Hall, Ruabon. It was amongst the papers handed down to Henry Dennis' son—Henry Dyke Dennis—and came to light when the contents of New Hall were dispersed on the sale of the property to the Denbighshire County Council for conversion into a home for old people. Dr. Jago's account of the earlier history of the Dennis family is not without some speculative features, but the later history is supported by detailed pedigrees from 1722, obviously collected from kinsfolk who were born in the eighteenth century. The MS. as a whole, however, is of interest and as it is now safely deposited in the National Library of

Wales, it may one day attract the attention of genealogists. Having said this it may be appropriate to give a brief outline of the Cornish family from which Henry Dennis of New Hall, Ruabon, sprang.

Risdon, in his *Survey of Devon*, 1630, says that the family of Dennis derive their name from the Danes "in token whereof they bear for their Armory three Dane-axes, and were anciently written le Dan Dennis, by which name the Cornish call the Danes unto this day. An old rampier in Cornwall where the Danes encamped is by them called Castellan Dennis." After enumerating the various changes in the spelling of the name between 1066 and 1625, Dr. Jago says that since the time of Charles I. the name has been almost always spelt by every branch of the family "as it is now, viz., Dennis." Continuing, he says: "As the name Denis appears in the list of the followers of William the Conqueror in 1066, and as the name Denis, Desnays, Dacus, or le Deneis, and Dennis simply mean 'the Dane,' we must look back to the period previous to the conquest of England. In history we are informed that the Danes in the ninth century used to sally forth in their ships from their own country, and commit great depredations, both on the coasts of England and France, especially along the north coast of Normandy. We are told that in the year 876 Rollo—a Danish nobleman—was possessed of the Duchy of Normandy, and that he was an ancestor of William the Conqueror. It is probable that in the train of Rollo, who about a thousand years ago left his own country, Denmark, for Normandy, accompanied by many other dare-devils and Danish marauders, was 'Denis' whose descendant was found among the companions of William the Conqueror in 1066. Denis was an adventurer like the rest, but he was no doubt a man of mettle, and who first established the fortunes of a family which in its time has had a prominent place in Devon and Cornish records. Although the large estates and family seats as well as the high social position of the Dennis family have departed yet those who bear the name of Dennis, of whatever present rank, can at least say that they come from a lineage many centuries older than that of many who, mushroom-like in the present day, have sprung out of the abject positions in which fortune had first found them."

According to Lyson's *Magna Britannia*, in 1154 Jellanus Dacus, the Dane, or le Deneis, was Lord of the Manor of Pancras Week, and it continued in the Dennis family for five generations. Sir Robert le Deneis, the fifth in descent from Jellanus, died without male issue; his sisters and co-heirs married Sir Reginald Ferrers of Beer, and Sir Nicholas Kirkham. William, a younger son of Ralph Dacus, or le Deneis, was common ancestor of the Dennises of Orleigh, the place in the parish of Buckland Brewer, North Devon, where the Dennis family was settled for the longest period. Risdon, in 1630, said that before his time the ancient family of Dennis had enjoyed Orleigh "eighteen descents in lineal succession." But the fate so common to all old families overtook that of Dennis, and their properties acquired by marriage or inherited by descent in its different branches, "from failure of male heirs" passed by heiresses of the Dennis family through their marriages into other families and names; and so it fell from the position of property and influence it had held for more than 600 years, to a state of decline in 1700.

Henry Dennis belonged to the Bodmin branch of the family. While the largest continuance of the family was at Orleigh, and its most ancient residence at Pancras Week in Devonshire, they lived also at Holcombe Burnell, near the Cornish border, and a few miles from Egloskerry (near Launceston) from which neighbourhood the Bodmin branch of the family can be traced back to 1722. By about the year 1700, the family fortunes had so decayed that little else but the family name was left, and this has been handed down by the collateral descent since 1700, when there were relatives of the main branch of the family living in the immediate neighbourhood. "There is no available information," says Dr. Jago, "to enable me to state who and what were the members of the Dennis family from 1700 to 1722. There appears to be, however, good reason for supposing that they were mostly good farmers as I find that Thomas Dennis (great-grandfather of Henry Dennis of Hafodybwch, and New Hall, Ruabon), who was born in 1722, three miles from Egloskerry, was a farmer, that he had an estate of his own, of which he was wrongly deprived, and which estate went to another of the same name. . . ." The estate above alluded to would appear, therefore, to have been

the last shred of the ancient family inheritance handed down during the period between 1700 and to about 1722. Thomas Dennis, of Egloskerry, married Mary Fletcher, of St. Dominick, by whom he had four sons and two daughters, all born at Egloskerry. The eldest son, Henry Dennis (born 1745) married Grace Crocker, of Werrington, by whom he had eight children, all born at Egloskerry. The seventh child, Matthias Dennis, was born at Egloskerry in 1785. He died at the early age of 46 in the autumn of 1831. His death took place at Lostwithiel, where he had gone for a change of air during his last illness. He conducted a large business as a mercer and clothier at Bodmin. He employed at times from thirty to forty men, and had business transactions throughout the County of Cornwall. He is described as a tall and well-formed man, with dark hair and rather sallow complexion. He was married at Bodmin on October 13th, 1814, to Maria Gill, daughter of Richard Gill of St. Ervan, Cornwall (by his wife Johanna Hooper of Trevingle Farm, Bodmin). Mrs. Maria Dennis, who was born in 1794, died in 1853. There were eight children of the marriage and the fifth child was Henry Dennis of Hafodybwch and New Hall, Ruabon (the subject of this memoir).

III.

FROM BODMIN TO DENBIGHSHIRE

Born at Bodmin in 1825, Henry Dennis was educated at the Grammar School of that place, where one of his contemporaries was the well-known Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse. From school he entered the office of the Bodmin Borough Surveyor as an articled pupil. On completing his training he joined the engineering staff of the old Cornwall Railway Company (a concern taken over later by the Great Western Railway Company). He resigned, and about the year 1850, accepted an appointment with John Taylor & Son, Mining Engineers, who entrusted him with the work of constructing a tramway from the Llangollen Slate Quarries to the Shropshire Union Canal which runs from Berwyn down the vale and on to Ellesmere, Salop. Whilst engaged on this work, he lived in a part of Valle Crucis Abbey, near Llangollen. After spending a short time in Spain, where he was engaged in lead

mining, he returned to Denbighshire and became manager of Brynyrowen Colliery, then owned by John Taylor & Son. This colliery was situated near Bryn-yr-Owen farm, which is on Offa's Dyke, near Pentre Bychan, a short distance off the main road between Wrexham and Ruabon. The pit was originally sunk about 1715, when it was owned by John Mellor of Erthig. About the time Henry Dennis became manager of Brynyrowen, the colliery had two shafts to the West in the direction of Llwynenion (Rhosllanerchrugog) and two nearer the Wrexham-Ruabon road, between Croesfoel and Johnstown. Dennis lived in a house at Brynyrowen with a clock face above the doorway. He relinquished his position as manager in 1857 and entered into partnership with Mr. Glennie. They practised as surveyors and mining engineers. On leaving Brynyrowen Colliery, he was presented with a silver tea and coffee service by his agents, workmen and friends. Glennie left the firm in 1870 and Dennis carried on alone. He sank Legacy Colliery and worked it for a few years. He constructed a tramway from the colliery to the main road at Pentrebychan, to carry the coal to that point. On leaving Brynyrowen, he removed to Hafodybwch, where he remained until 1878, by which time several industrial enterprises associated with his name had been successfully launched. On leaving Hafodybwch for New Hall, Ruabon (which he purchased from Colonel Cornwallis West), he was presented by the officials of his several works with an address and his portrait in oils by R. A. Muller of London.

Henry Dennis acquired substantial interests in Westminster, Wrexham and Acton, and Hafod Collieries. He became managing director of the Westminster Brymbo Coal and Coke Co., Moss, the Wrexham and Acton Colliery, the Ruabon Coal and Coke Company, and later of the United Westminster and Wrexham Colliery Company (which sank Gresford Colliery two years after his death). These companies owned the Westminster Colliery, Moss, the Wrexham and Acton Colliery, Rhosddu, Wrexham, and Hafod Colliery, Ruabon. In 1880 the old Ruabon Coal Company went into liquidation. Hafod Colliery, together with the Brandie Coke Works, were purchased by a newly constituted firm, the Ruabon Coal and Coke Company, Ltd., with Henry Kent as chairman, and Henry Dennis as managing director. In connection with his colliery activities,

Henry Dennis established brickworks at Hafod and Pant (Rhos); he became managing director of the Glyn Valley Tramway; chairman and managing director of the Snailbeach Railway and Lead Mines in Shropshire, and was a director of the Minera Mining Company. He had interests in the Barmouth Gas Company and the Dolgellau Gas Company; he purchased and opened the Cefn Stone Quarries and connected them with the Great Western Railway; he originated the Ruabon Water Company, the Brymbo Water Company, and the Rhos Gas Company. He was mining engineer to the Duke of Buccleuch and the Earl of Hopetoun. He received tempting offers to go to America, but he declined them all and remained in North Wales to take a leading part in its later industrial development, and in the provision of services now largely taken over by public corporations. He was a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. He was chairman of the North Wales Coal-owners' Association, and represented North Wales on the Coal Conciliation Board. In due course he was elected President of the Mining Association of Great Britain (1901). Immersed in commerce, he found little time for local government, but when the Denbigh County Council was formed, he was elected one of the first aldermen "in recognition of his wonderful business aptitude and as a pioneer and captain of industry."

A Conservative in politics, he declined invitations to stand as a candidate for Parliament. When he was placed on the Commission of the Peace for Denbighshire, he sat at the Ruabon Magistrates Court. Edmund Peel, of Brynypys, usually presided over the Bench, but occasionally Henry Dennis took the chair. He used to ride on horseback to the court, and to tether his mount in the courtyard of the county buildings at Ruabon. On one occasion when he was in the chair, there was a fairly long list of cases, all of which could be disposed of by magistrates. The first case was one of simple drunkenness, and after brief evidence, and an admission by the defendant, Mr. Dennis said: "Half-a-crown and costs." The Clerk of the Court called the attention of the Chairman to a list of previous offences by the defendant. Mr. Dennis repeated the decision, and, believe it or not, every case proved that day was visited with a penalty of half-a-crown and costs! As an agriculturist, he became well known as a breeder of Shropshire sheep. He exhibited at the

Royal and other shows, and had a standing order to send sheep to Prince Bismarck. He was a great lover of horses, although just at the end of his long life he owned a Napier car, in which he travelled from New Hall to his Cornish residence—Lanival, Bodmin.

He died on the 24th June, 1906, at the age of eighty-one, and was buried at Wrexham Cemetery—five thousand people being present at his funeral. Asked to what he attributed his long life and extraordinary energy, he said: "Well, I have always been an early riser. I took plenty of exercise and I invariably got up from the table when I could eat more." He was a good horseman. When two of his children were quite young he mounted them on ponies, and on horseback himself, rode all the way from Hafodybwch to his native heath in Cornwall. Letters written by him to his wife telling of their experiences on the long journey have survived. He gives an account of the curious old inns at which they put up for the night, of visits to the ancient seat of the family at Orleigh, and of some quaint characters he met *en route* for Bodmin.

Shortly before Henry Dennis came to live and work in Denbighshire, the coal and ironstone districts of the county were poverty-stricken. It is on record that gangs of unemployed colliers had laid the country under contribution to relieve their starving condition. The promotion of Parliamentary Bills authorising the construction of railways through the main track of the coalfield, successfully carried out by Henry Robertson and the young band of Scotsmen who came to the neighbourhood in the 'forties, led to a revival of industry and to an extension of the field of trading operations, with Ruabon coal going to the London market for the first time. Henry Dennis arrived soon after the railway lines had been laid and opened, and in a comparatively short time he launched out on his own and began to develop collieries and brickworks, and to take part in several of the keen competitive struggles between rival coalowners.

For a long period neither coalowners nor miners in North Wales were fully organised. A disastrous strike occurred in 1882, and a more general stoppage affecting the other coalfields took place in 1893. The stoppage in 1882 was due to the action of the masters in reducing wages. The miners had previously

terminated a sliding scale arrangement under which the wages paid were governed by the price of coal, provision being made for the miners' accountants to inspect the employers' books. When a 5 per cent. reduction in pay was imposed, the men ceased work and were out for seven weeks. Serious rioting took place in one or two districts of Denbighshire, and although police and military were called out the Riot Act was not actually read. The masters contended that they were compelled to reduce wages owing to a fall in the price of coal. At one meeting James Sparrow, who owned the Ffrwd ironworks and colliery, told the miners that all the money his pit had made in the previous six months would not pay for a suit of clothes, and that his other collieries had been compelled to stop payment altogether owing to the slump in trade. When owners and men met to discuss the position, the owners' figures were challenged, but Henry Dennis offered to meet any of the men and to produce for their inspection the books of the Wrexham (Rhosddu), Hafod and Westminster Collieries to prove his case. After much distress, the men resumed work practically on the old terms, although one or two concessions were made by the owners. The strike of 1893 was a much more serious affair, and it was only settled after a conference at the Foreign Office in London, under the presidency of Lord Rosebery, when a Conciliation Board was set up and Henry Dennis was the member chosen to serve on it to represent North Wales.

IV. THEN—AND NOW

A man of great energy and tenacity of purpose, Henry Dennis rose early each day and before breakfast over a cup of black coffee, he smoked a cigar and dealt with his correspondence. His chief lieutenants from the various works had to be there to meet him and receive directions, and everything had to be completed by 8.30 a.m. at which hour each member of his household was required to be present for the morning meal.

On the walls of the rooms on the top landing of his home where his sons slept, huge paintings of Napoleon crossing the Alps and of other outstanding events in the career of the French emperor were hung. In this connection one with a life-long

knowledge of New Hall associations expressed the opinion that Henry Dennis regarded Napoleon as one of his heroes. In this he was not unlike other architects of their own fortune who flourished in his day. In *The Pageant of the Years*, Sir Philip Gibbs has a reference to Lord Leverhulme (then Mr. Lever) from whom he rented a country cottage on the slope of Rivington Pike. "Mr. Lever, in his fine bungalow at the top of Rivington Pike," he says, "was . . . indifferent to the poverty of his two young tenants who paid him ninepence a week. He invited us to drive up there and used to pace up and down his verandah talking very often about Napoleon for whom, as a self-made man with great ambitions, he had a hero worship. At his works at Port Sunlight he had a fine collection of Napoleonic relics."

Henry Dennis lived for the numerous commercial concerns under his control. True, he promoted his own material interests, but he provided work and wages for several thousand people chiefly in an industry frequently disturbed by disputes and strikes, and sometimes by riots. To form an accurate estimate of his contribution to the industrial life of East Denbighshire, and other areas, due account must be taken of the controversial events which occurred at regular intervals in the coalfields of Britain. It would be a mistake, however, to be so overwhelmed by the knowledge of the bitterness aroused by recurring stoppages over conditions of employment as to lose sight altogether of the moving spirit in the various enterprises. It is not without significance that when County Councils came into existence after 1889 the Denbighshire councillors—many elected by the voters from mining areas—chose Dennis as one of the first aldermen. Of course, at that time, the great majority of the electors in East Denbighshire were Liberals and Nonconformists, and the member returned to the House of Commons—Sir George Osborne Morgan—used to boast that he was carried to Parliament on the backs of the miners of Rhos. Their sons and grandsons joined the Labour Party, which gained its first substantial foothold in Parliament in the year Henry Dennis died. The acute ideological divisions over the nationalisation of the mines had not begun to gather momentum in the years when Dennis's principal ventures were becoming fully established. Our social patterns have changed

since then. The character of many industries has changed, too, and obligations accepted and taken for granted now were not then recognised. The era of the Miners' Welfare Fund, of pit-head baths, and model housing schemes, had not dawned. Henry Dennis was a typical Victorian coalmaster—a keen man of business and a hard worker. He and his contemporaries took risks for profit; they had not accepted the social responsibilities undertaken almost as a matter of course by a later generation of employers in many industries. But Dennis was not an absentee capitalist. He spent his life amongst his workers. In the constant clashes between Capital and Labour, which were ultimately to lead to a new order, he regularly found himself vigorously opposing the demands of the miners, but he remained on to the end of a long life, directing the numerous works he had established or re-organised, and laying plans for new works, completed since his death, from which the district benefits in fairly large scale employment.

The causes of deterioration in the relations between masters and men, which ultimately led to the nationalisation of the coal mines, have been the subject of bitter political controversy. Fluctuations in wages, regulated at one period by the rise and fall in the price of coal, led to angry disputes in which hard things were said and done. No scheme for ascertaining the basic facts of the case existed then upon which both sides were able for any length of time to agree. One Denbighshire coalowner—a member of the Society of Friends—used to declare in his later years that he always regretted the employers had not done more for the labourers in the pits. This leads one to conclude that if there were times when partly organised bodies of dissatisfied workmen were inclined to ignore trade losses, there were other occasions when the masters could have made more concessions. The result of it all was that suspicions grew and hard bargains were struck, sometimes when the general wage level was low. Later the machinery of the conciliation boards failed to prevent periodical collisions, bringing in their wake suffering and distress to whole communities. With it all, it has to be recognised that masterful characters like Henry Dennis, with all their faults, assisted materially to revive trade and industry in a district often decaying through the closing of mines, and now happily more prosperous.

They invested their capital in numerous undertakings, and conducted them personally.

Residing in the neighbourhood where the bulk of his workmen lived, Dennis met them constantly face to face. No doubt he was regarded as a man from whom concessions were hard to obtain. Most of the miners believed he owed more than he gave to those who won the coal upon which his fortune was based, but they also knew they were dealing with a man who began as an employee and by his own exertions raised himself to the position of authority which he held. It is perhaps idle to speculate as to what the reactions of men of this calibre would be to the modern set-up of the mining and allied industries, or to the conditions of what in 1952 we know as the Welfare State. Even so, it is surely permissible to observe that their successors in the newly constituted national boards have not been free from strikes, or from rising costs and labour shortage. Despite some regrettable social blemishes which marred the work, the achievements accomplished under the old dispensation, even in a small coalfield like North Wales, helped, if only in a minor degree, to place British industry in the strong competitive position it held before the whole commercial fabric was shattered by two world wars.

The vital task of regaining that position in world markets, as well as at home, will be advanced, or retarded, in so far as opportunity is given for the display by the new controllers at all levels of the initiative and drive that distinguished the old adventurers.

APPENDIX

Henry Dennis of Hafodybwch and New Hall, Ruabon, was married in 1859 at Lostwithiel to Susan Hicks Stephens of Lostwithiel. Of this marriage there were six children—three dying in infancy. The other three were Susan Dewan (born January 31st, 1862), Henry Dyke (born November 10th, 1863), and Walter Pen (born December 26th, 1864). Susan Dewan Dennis married John Moorhead Power, son of Sir William Tyrone Power of Annamacerrig, Ireland, and had no issue. Henry Dyke Dennis married in 1892 Mabel, youngest daughter of Samuel Thornton Jagger of Dinbren Hall, Llangollen (son

of Thomas Jagger and Sarah Crabtree, his wife, of Halifax, Yorkshire), and had issue as follows :—Susan Doreen (born 1893), Mabel Marjorie (born 1894), Henry Victor Thornton Dyke (born 1897), and Patrick Gill Dyke (born 1899). Walter Pen Dennis married in 1895 Jane Woodford Manton, sixth daughter of William Woodford Manton of Northamptonshire, and had issue :—Henry Manton Pen (born 1897), Vivienne Josephine, and Michael Christian.

GEORGE G. LERRY

DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

The allocation of Charges and County Rates within Denbighshire in the late Seventeenth century.

The Wynnstay Papers, deposited in the National Library of Wales, shed a great deal of light on local government in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. These, in conjunction with the various records of the Quarter Sessions, Vestries and Court Leets present a fascinating account of County and Parish affairs in this period in Denbighshire.

In MS 83 (NLW) there are copies of documents relating to the delivery of the records of the temporalities of the diocese of Norwich to William Lloyd, the non-juror, who had already held the bishoprics of Llandaff and Peterborough. He was the son of Edward Lloyd, Eglwysegle, vicar of Llangower, Merionethshire, from 1645 to 1685. The bishop appointed his brother, Ellis Lloyd, of the Inner Temple, Attorney-at-Law, of Ludlow, who had married the heiress of Edward ab William ab John ab David of Penylan, Ruabon, as his steward, and it is from his records, contained in the same volume of manuscripts that the following data has been taken. ⁽¹⁾

In the 17th century, the county had long been established as the administrative unit for raising national taxes, maintaining the King's highway, bridges, etc., within its boundaries, and allocating, through the Quarter Sessions, to the several Hundreds their quotas, which, in turn, were raised by the various parishes and townships.

This may be illustrated from the manuscript :

“March the 20th, 1697, att a generall meeteing at Wrexham to make a Division of the 5100 £ charged on the county of Denbigh on the Act pass^d that Granted his Majesty 3^sp. pound the same was divided as followeth :

On Bromfield	1045 - 10 - 00
Issalet	1045 - 10 - 00
Isdulas	1045 - 10 - 00
Ruthin	0918 - 00 - 00
Chirkland	0697 - 00 - 00
Yale	0348 - 10 - 00

(1) Wynnstay Papers (N.L.W.); *Powis Fadog* II, 391; Palmer: *Hist. of the Parish of Ruabon* mss.; *Dict. Nat. Biog.* XXXIII, 435—6.

In the
Hundred
of Bromf^{ld}
are two
allotmts, vizt.

The First
w^{ch} is $\frac{1}{2}$ of y^e
Hundred
& $\frac{1}{40}$ and
containes

Wrexha
w^{ch} is $\frac{1}{4}$ of y^e
Hund: & $\frac{1}{40}$
over, & cont.
y^e Town^{ps} of

Ruabon
w^{ch} is $\frac{1}{8}$ of y^e
Hund: want^s
 $\frac{1}{120}$ & is divided
into 3 pts. viz^t

Gresford
w^{ch} is $\frac{1}{6}$ of y^e
Hund: wanting
 $\frac{1}{120}$ & contains

Bangor
w^{ch} is $\frac{1}{12}$ of
ye Hund: & cont.

Holt w^{ch} is
 $\frac{1}{8}$ of ye Hund:
wanting $\frac{1}{20}$ &
contains

The second
w^{ch} wanteth
 $\frac{1}{40}$ of $\frac{1}{2}$ of y^e
Hundred
& contains

Wrexham Regis $\frac{1}{8}$ & $\frac{1}{60}$
Wrexham Abbott $\frac{1}{15}$
Esclusham $\frac{1}{5}$
Bersham $\frac{1}{8}$ wanting $\frac{1}{15}$ of ye 8th
Brymbo $\frac{1}{11}$
Minera $\frac{1}{15}$
Abbenbury $\frac{1}{16}$
Stansty $\frac{1}{24}$
Broughton $\frac{1}{24}$
Acton $\frac{1}{24}$
Gourton $\frac{1}{60}$
Beiston $\frac{1}{60}$
Burrashova $\frac{1}{60}$

Ruabon & Coed } $\frac{1}{3}$ Coed X^h is $\frac{1}{20}$ of
Christioneth } Ruabon
Christion: Ken } $\frac{1}{3}$ X^h Ken 2 pts &
Dynynlle Ucha } Dyn: ucha y^e 3^d
Morton Wall } Mort: Wall is half
Morton Angl } $\frac{1}{3}$ ye 3rd part
Dynyn: issa } Mort Angl $\frac{1}{3}$ of ye half
Dyn: issa is 2 p^{ts} of the halfe

Arbistock is $\frac{1}{40}$ of the hundred
Eglwseagle is $\frac{1}{40}$ of the hundred
Trevidd bychan $\frac{1}{120}$ of the hundr:

Allington is $\frac{1}{3}$ of y^e Parish
Burton & Llay $\frac{1}{3}$
Gwersylt is $\frac{1}{9}$
Gresford- $\frac{1}{9}$
Erthig $\frac{1}{3}$ of Gresford
Erlas $\frac{1}{3}$ of Gresf^d
Burras Riffery $\frac{1}{3}$ of Gresf^d

Pickill $\frac{1}{3}$
Eyton $\frac{1}{3}$
Royton & } $\frac{1}{3}$ { Royton one-half^e
Seswick } & Sesw^t ye other

Holt and Liberties $\frac{2}{3}$
Sutton }
Dutton Diffeth } $\frac{1}{3}$
Dutt y braine }
Cae Dutton }
Ryddeley }

Marchwiell is $\frac{1}{20}$ of the hundr.
Sontley $\frac{1}{8}$ of y^e parish

“Divided on the severall Parishes and Townships in Bromfield as followeth :

On Wrexham Parish	287 - 10 - 03
Gresford Parish	200 - 07 - 09
Bangor Parish	087 - 02 - 06
Holt Parish	156 - 16 - 06
Marchiwell Parish	052 - 05 - 06
Ruabon Parish	200 - 07 - 09
Erbistock Parish	026 - 02 - 09
Eglwyseagle Townships	026 - 02 - 09
Trevi Bychan Townght	008 - 14 - 03

1045 - 10 - 00

“Divided on the severall Townships in Ruabon the above charge of £200 - 07 - 09 as fol :

On Ruabon & Coed Xtioneth	66 - 15 - 11
On Christioneth Kenrick	44 - 10 - 08
On Dynynlle Ucha	22 - 10 - 09
On Dynynlle Issa	22 - 10 - 09
On Morton Wallicor	33 - 08 - 00½
On Morton Anglicor	10 - 11 - 07

200 - 07 - 09” (2)

Each township, as a rule, had two assessors and one or two collectors, the names of whom are given for each township in the parish of Ruabon.

Ellis Lloyd, in the diagram appended, shows clearly the principle upon which the County Rate was apportioned between the various parishes and townships within the Hundred of Bromfield.

EMLYN ROGERS.

Postal Misdemeanours in Eighteenth-Century Liansannan

The Information of David Evans Post Boy or Rider belonging to William Owen Deputy Postmaster of Conway taken upon oath before me Owen Holland Esqr. one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said county this nineteenth

(2) The discrepancy of ½d. is not remarked upon (Ed.).

Day of January 1769. Whereas William Barbett was this day brought before me by my Warrant to the Constables of Conway for misbehaving in his Duty as a Rider to the said William Owen Deputy Postmaster of Conway by Loitering on the Road wilfully misspending his Time so as to retard the arrival of the Mail & Bags of Letters from the Post office of Llansannan to the Post office of Conway it being the next Post Town or Stage, the said David Evans declares that Monday the 16th day of this instant Jan^y he set off from Llansannan Post office about Eleven that day with the Packet and that he brought the said Packet as far as a Place called Bryn y Goriau being within a mile and a half of the Town of Conway and that there he met William Barbett who stopped him with the Pacquet about a Quarter of an Hour and insisted upon his turning back to Llansannan with that Horse Will^m Barbett ride on from the Post office and then he forcibly took took the Horse which had the Packet on from him and took it on towards Conway further this deponent saith not.

DE The mark of David Evans.

Carnarvon.

The Information of Henry Parry Ser^t to Will^m Owen Deputy Postmaster of Conway taken upon oath before me Owen Holland Esqr. one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the sd. County in relation to Will^m Barbett's loitering and misspending his Time wilfully retarding by that means the arrival of the Mail & Bags of Letters from the Post office of Conway to the Post office of Llansannan in the County of Denbigh being the next Stage who saith that the 17th of this Instant Jan^y that Wm. Barbett detained the Packet from Conway to Llansannan by not setting out with it after it was ready and delivered to him near an Hour in the Town of Conway, and further this deponent saith not.

HENRY PARRY.

(From Caernarvonshire Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1769.)

NORMAN TUCKER.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

DENBIGHSHIRE is the last of the North Wales counties to form its own Historical Society ; but a great deal of useful work on the county's history was done during the years preceding its foundation, and largely by those who were active in promoting it. Mr. Ellis Hughes's map of Denbighshire, showing the homes of its most eminent sons in all ages, led to approaches from the schools to the L.E.A. (which set an admirable example to other authorities by publishing and circulating the map) for a handbook to elucidate the names commemorated in it. The response was the compilation and publication in 1946 of Mr. Hughes's *Eminent Men of Denbighshire*—a pioneer work of its kind, which will long remain of value not only to the schools to which it was primarily addressed, but to all who care for their county's past. To the interest aroused by these two publications may be largely attributed the formation of the Denbighshire Teachers' Local Studies Committees set up by the L.E.A. These committees not only organised a number of very fruitful conferences on local history at both ends of the county, but they also initiated projects of a more permanent character, some of which have only come to fruition since the Historical Society came into being.

I may refer to two works which appeared last year, both of them owing their inception to the plans of the Local Studies Committees. Mr. Idwal Jones's *Atlas of Denbighshire*, with its bold, clear maps illustrating almost every phase of political, religious, economic and social life in the county from early times to our own day, will in future be indispensable to all local teachers of geography and history ; Mr. Frank Price Jones's *Story of Denbighshire through its Castles*, written with a simplicity which should readily attract the interest of pupils in modern schools and junior forms in grammar schools (to whom it is directed), and illustrated by some excellent photographs, more of Mr. Idwal Jones's maps, and some well-conceived imaginative reconstructions by Mr. Marston of Colwyn Bay, will also interest a far wider circle; for there is sound scholarship behind it, and the notes for teachers at the end of the book make an admirably concise and selective bibliography of county history. The

L.E.A. is to be warmly congratulated on its enterprise in sponsoring and circulating these works in so attractive a form. Our county Historical Society starts its work under excellent auspices, and with much of the spade work already done. Its activities since its foundation two years ago are summarised in the Hon. Secretary's report.

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The death of Alderman T. J. Roberts of Ruthin has robbed the Society of one of its keenest and earliest promoters, as well as the county of a wise administrator and a zealous educationist. As vice-chairman of Council he presided over several of the early meetings, and his genial leadership will be greatly missed.

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It is with pleasure that we acknowledge the receipt of publications issued by several of the sister societies of North Wales. The Merioneth Historical and Record Society is to be congratulated on the completion, with the issue of No. 3 (1951) of the first volume of its *Journal*. It contains the first authoritative history of Bala Grammar School (written by Dr. R. T. Jenkins), a descriptive list of printed maps of the county, contributed by Miss Gwyneth Lewis of the National Library, a note by Mr. A. J. Taylor, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, correcting the hitherto accepted dating of the completion of Harlech castle, and a number of shorter articles on county seats, families and documents, with eight pages of beautifully produced illustrations.

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The 1951 volume of *Transactions* of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club includes the forty-third report of the committee (a reminder that with the exception of the Powys-land Club it is now the *doyen* of the North Wales societies), followed by contributions which are of the greatest moment to general as well as local historians. Professor Jones-Pierce's article on "Mediaeval Settlement in Anglesey," illustrated by a large-scale folding map, gives us a new and revolutionary conception of Anglesey as mainly a land of bond communities till the rise of the *gwely* as late as the twelfth century, and carries a stage further those researches into the Welsh land system in the

middle ages which future historians of Wales will neglect at their peril. Professor Glyn Roberts, under the title "Wyrion Eden," tells the story of the Anglesey Tudors during the two centuries after Ednyfed, showing the effects of participation (or otherwise) in the Glyn Dŵr revolt on the various branches of the family, including the Griffiths of Penrhyn. A group of eighteenth-century letters from the Penrhos collection at U.C.N.W., edited by the College Librarian, throws sidelights on the *Morisiad Môn* and on contemporary social life in Anglesey.

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The publication of the twelfth (1951) volume of *Transactions* of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society has been unavoidably delayed, but both it and its successor are in the press, and meantime, the first volume of the Society's Record Series has appeared and the second will be in the hands of the public before this volume appears. Volume I (*Caernarvon Court Rolls, 1361-1402, 1951*), consists of an abbreviated translation of the records of four courts operating in the borough during a period (allowing for gaps) of a quarter of a century, edited, with a brief introduction and a photographic reproduction of a sample portion, by Mr. Hugh Owen (who first discovered the rolls) and Dr. G. P. Jones. It is an invaluable source for the municipal life of Caernarvon and the relations of garrison and Welshry a century after the conquest. Volume II, which is more than twice as bulky and bound in cloth, consists of a transcript of Edmund Hyde Hall's very full and detailed *Description of Caernarvonshire* (1809-11), edited from a MS. in the U.C.N.W. Library by the College Librarian and amply illustrated with reproductions of the author's careful series of parochial road maps.

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Volume XXIV (1951) of the *Proceedings* of the Llandudno, Colwyn Bay and District Field Club includes brief but expert descriptions by the leaders of ten historical excursions (with a number of illustrations) and a summary of an address by the County Archivist on the Tudor J.P.s in the county

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May we offer our thanks to all our contemporaries for their courtesy in initiating the exchange of publications, and our congratulations on the very valuable contributions they are

making towards a fuller understanding and a more vivid appreciation of our national story? We hope the present volume will be found to give earnest that our own Society, although the latest of the group to mature, will not be found wanting in this joint endeavour. I cannot conclude without a warm expression of thanks to the assistant editor, Mr. Price Jones, who has undertaken the bulk of the work of seeing this volume through the press.

A. H. D.