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CYMDEITHAS HANES SIR DDINBYCH

DENBIGHSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRAFODION
Cyfrol 7

TRANSACTIONS
Volume 7

1958

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DINBYCH.

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Golygyddol : Editorial

THE most important anniversary in Denbighshire this year is the centenary of the famous Llangollen Eisteddfod of 1858, and before these *Transactions* reach them, members will have had an opportunity of celebrating the occasion at the September meeting of the Society. It is with very great pride that we publish in this volume an article by Professor G. J. Williams of Cardiff, the leading authority on this aspect of our literary history, on the place of 'Eisteddfod Fawr Llangollen' in the growth of Welsh literary and historical studies and in the evolution of our premier national institution. He has drawn freely on his intimate knowledge of that strange genius, Iolo Morganwg, and has traced the influence of Iolo on Ab Ithel—a native of Llangynhafal—the organiser of the Eisteddfod of 1858, and one of the founders of the Cambrian Archaeological Association.

We are indeed fortunate that such eminent authorities as Professor Williams are so ready to contribute to our pages.

* * *

Another event of 1858 worth noting was the opening of the Vale of Clwyd Railway from Foryd to Denbigh in October of that year. We have no article on the subject in this volume, but since railways were so very important a hundred years ago, I should be grateful if any railway enthusiasts among our members would prepare an article, or shorter notes, on the railways of Denbighshire for a future volume. The remainder of the Vale of Clwyd line and the Llangollen-Ruabon lines were very much in the news during 1859-60.

* * *

I am sure that the Society would wish me to convey our congratulations to another 'child of Denbighshire' which celebrates its fiftieth birthday this year. Founded at Llangollen in September 1908, the Welsh Folk Song Society has

done very valuable work in its field, and we wish it well in its second half-century.

* * *

Ymhlith erthyglau Saesneg ein cyfrol eleni, y mae cynnwys darlith fywiog Mr. Gwilym Usher ar 'Ruthyn yn y Canol Oesoedd', a nodiadau gwerthfawr Mr. D. B. Hague, aelod o staff Comisiwn Hen Gofebau Cymru, ar y Giler a Phlas Chambres. Ceir yma hefyd barhâd o erthyglau Mr. Lerry ar ddiwydiannau'r Sir, a'r diweddar Emlyn Rogers ar 'Sir Ddinbych yn y Ddeunawfed Ganrif'. Buom yn ffodus hefyd i sicrhau cyfres o erthyglau cynhwysfawr ar Eglwys Gresford. Dwy flynedd yn ôl cawsom gynhaeaf tebyg o'n hymweliad ag Eglwysi Wrecsam a Llanfair Talhaearn: gwych o beth fyddai i'r Gymdeithas ymweld â phob lle o bwys hanesyddol yn y Sir, a chael cofnodion cyffelyb yn y *Trafodion* i gofnodi'r daith. Rhaglen i'w gweithio allan dros amryw flynyddoedd a fydd hon, wrth gwrs.

* * *

Loes i galon pawb ohonom ydoedd clywed am farw sydyn un o'n Is-Lywyddion yn ystod yr haf, sef yr Henadur W. Emyr Williams, C.B.E., Ll.D. Er ei eni ym Meirionnydd, ac er cymaint ei serch at Gyfeiliog ei hynafiaid, gŵr o Wrecsam ydoedd, ac ni rwystrodd ei gyfraniad mawr i ffyniant yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol iddo wasanaethu'r dref a fabwysiadodd, a'r dref a gydnabu ei wasanaeth iddi trwy estyn iddo ei hanrhydedd pennaf.

Ychydig wythnosau cyn ei farw, y *Trafodion* hyn ydoedd testun sgwrs rhyngom, a dywedai bryd hynny ei fod ar drywydd erthygl dda iawn, ac y gofalai ef fy mod yn ei chael cyn bo hir. O'i golli, gallwn uno gyda llu'r Cymry i adseinio geiriau Twm o'r Nant:

> Colled galed y gwelir
> Fawr a thost, ar fôr a thir,
> Am ŵr cywrain, mawr y cerir ei waith,
> Perffaith araith eirwir.

It is fitting that these notes should reflect the appreciation of our members of the work put into the Society by its officials, in particular the Secretary and Treasurer. Our meetings during the past year have been outstandingly successful, thanks very largely to the careful planning and organising of Mr. Bleddyn Griffith, while the List of Members and the financial statement printed here show clearly that the industry and energy of Mr. D. B. Jones promise soon to achieve his declared target of a round thousand members.

In conclusion, I must record my grateful thanks to Mr. C. Charman, the compositors and other craftsmen at Gee's for their valuable aid in preparing this seventh volume of *Transactions*.

The Earliest Records of Ruthin[1]

By G. A. USHER

RUTHIN owed its most conspicuous appearance in medieval history to its connection with the Grey family: the famous dispute between Owain Glyn Dŵr and his neighbour Reginald de Grey in 1400, which, in itself localised[2] and petty, was destined to change the fortunes of both England and Wales. But the town owed more mundane debts to its lords also, for on four occasions after Dyffryn Clwyd came into their possession, they granted or confirmed charters which gave to the little township the coveted status of a free borough.[3] Unfortunately, these charters are not in the custody of the town: their whereabouts, if they exist, are unknown. And since the burgesses did not seek royal confirmation of these grants, the records of the central government are silent on the subject of Ruthin's liberties until the 'governing charter' of the town was granted by the first of the Tudors.[4] This charter lies outside the scope of the present enquiry, but it is noteworthy in at least one respect: to quote the Municipal Corporations Report of 1835, it 'does not notice the charter . . . . granted 12 years before, or any antecedent charter whatsoever, and it is remarkable that it speaks of them (the townspeople) as "tenants and inhabitants of the lordship only" until it arrives at that point at which they are created free burgesses in and by the charter itself of Henry.'[5]

---

[1]The substance of this article was read at a meeting of the Denbighshire Historical Society, at Ruthin, on March 29, 1958. It is a pleasure to record my thanks to the Town Clerk of Ruthin and his department, for their interest and assistance in the preparation of this paper.

[2]Lloyd, *Owen Glendower* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 29-30. The two lordships bordered on each other in the vicinity of Derwen and Gwyddelwern.

[3]Weinbaum, *British Borough Charters (1307-1660)*, Cambridge (1943), p. 146; *Report on Municipal Corporations in England and Wales* (1835), Appendix IV, pp. 2847-8.

[4]*Ibid.* p. 2848.

[5]*Ibid.* p. 2847. *Cal. Pat. R.* (1494-1509), p. 586, gives a summary of the charter.

CYMDEITHAS HANES SIR DDINBYCH

Medi, 1958.

Hyfrydwch i'ch Swyddogion yw anfon i chwi eich copi o *Drafodion*, 1958, gan hyderu y cewch y gyfrol yn un ddiddorol a gwerthfawr.

Taer ddymunir ar i'r aelodau na wnaethant hynny eisoes, dalu eu tanysgrifiad blynyddol (lleiafswm, 5/-) yn ddi-oed i'r Trysorydd — Mr. D. B. Jones, 5 Marine View Crescent, Colwyn Bay.

Gwahoddir eich ystyriaeth i'r buddioldeb o ddefnyddio i'r pwrpas hwn Archeb Banc (gellir cael Ffurflen oddi wrth y Trysorydd) neu o ddyfod yn Aelod am Oes (tanysgrifiad £5).

DENBIGHSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September, 1958.

Your Officers have pleasure in forwarding you your copy of the 1958 *Transactions* and trust that you will find the Volume of great interest and value.

Members, who have not already done so, are urgently requested to send their annual subscription (minimum 5/-) without delay to the Hon. Treasurer — Mr. D. B. Jones, 5 Marine View Crescent, Colwyn Bay.

Your consideration is invited to the advisability of using for this purpose a Banker's Order (Form may be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer) or of becoming a Life Member (subscription £5).

It is difficult to account for this strange implication that Ruthin was *beginning* its history as a free borough at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Naturally a king could afford to despise the charters of private lords, for very often these, however generously phrased, were as nothing compared with the bounty a king could bestow. The point is made clear when we compare the foundation charter of a royal borough like Conway—a crammed shop-window of fashionable privileges—with the somewhat circumscribed and more rudimentary liberties conferred upon seigneurial boroughs like Denbigh within the same decade.[6] There were two reasons for such a contrast: in the first place, no man could give away more than he possessed, and only the king's bounty was as wide as the realm itself; and secondly, although a lord might be *able* to grant away valuable rights and perquisites, he might well be *disinclined* to do so, out of a prudent regard for his prestige, his pocket, and his posterity. Prudence likewise dictated the careful examination and recording of such rights, whether currently exercised or not, particularly where political and legal changes clouded the issue: hence the crop of extents and surveys which followed the English conquest. No such survey of Dyffryn Clwyd is known, regrettably, though it is possible and even likely that one was made. In any case the first English lords here knew what they were about, for at least down to the end of the century, the Greys kept in close contact with their Welsh estates: at Ruthin itself they presided personally over sessions of the court, when particularly solemn business was transacted; their comings and goings were noted by the clerk and used by him as a rough and ready, but effective way of dating events.[7] Like their neighbours the Warennes and the Lacys, the Greys owned large estates in England: their early attachment to their Welsh possessions may

[6]For the Conway charter, see E. A. Lewis, *The Mediaeval Boroughs of Snowdonia* (London, 1912), p. 279 ff. For Denbigh: J. Williams, *Ancient and Modern Denbigh* (Denbigh, 1856), pp. 302 ff.

[7]R. A. Roberts, *The Court Rolls of the Lordship of Ruthin or Dyffryn-Clwyd* (London, 1893), hereinafter abbreviated to *'C.R.'*, pp. 7, 14, 36, 45.

perhaps be explained by their official connections with the area, for both the first English lord of Ruthin and his father had been Justices of Chester and had carried out commissions in Wales.[8]

Medieval Ruthin, then, was a *mesne* or seigneurial borough: it owed its allegiance and its origin to a feudal tenant-in-chief. The status it enjoyed was halfway between that of privileged royal boroughs like Conway or Rhuddlan, and that of mere towns like Wrexham, which enjoyed a measure of economic importance and even exercised *de facto* some administrative functions, but had no chartered existence.[9] It has already been suggested that this *mesne* status was reflected in the somewhat limited scope of the liberties enjoyed by the burgesses, but lest it be thought that this paper minimises the importance of Ruthin in medieval times, it should be added that the neighbouring borough of Denbigh, whose earliest charter has survived, also boasted a set of privileges, which both in character and extent must have appeared paltry by the side of those enjoyed by highly developed boroughs in England, or by those royal boroughs in Wales, which, new in themselves, possessed highly developed charters. An examination of some of the liberties of Denbigh will illustrate this point and serve as some indication of the probable form of Ruthin's own charter.

Its foundation charter[10] constitutes Denbigh a free borough; the burgesses, whose names are given, hold the distinctively urban tenements called *burgages*, which carry with them certain privileges, but for the rest they are simply favoured rustic tenants. The charter grants them rights of common pasture, and they are allowed to turn their cattle on to the stubble, 'in the time of aftermath, in common with other free men of Lleweny.'[11] Each burgess is granted the

[8] *Ibid.* Introduction, p. iv-vii.
[9] Cf. *A History of Wrexham*, ed. A. H. Dodd (Wrexham, 1957) pp. 26-8.
[10] J. Williams, *loc. cit.*
[11] I have commented on the special place of Llewenny in the organisation of the lordship of Denbigh in an article printed in Vol. 3 of these *Transactions*, pp. 9 ff. On the privileges normally associated with tenure of burgages, see Ballard, *English Borough Charters, 1042-1216* (Cambridge, 1913), p. xliv.

pannage of six pigs in certain woods, though the lord is careful to preserve all his rights in warren and forest. This reservation is in marked contrast with the wholesale dis-warrenning and disafforestation which is an attractive feature of the 'Snowdonian' charters. The burgesses owe suit of mill, that is to say, they must have their corn ground in the lord's mills and pay for the privilege. More important, although the lord grants the prized amenity of a free prison, he expressly reserves to himself and his heirs 'the pledges, fines and ransoms, *and the administration of justice, and everything appertaining to the administration of justice.*' Of course, justice was a source of prestige and profit to a lord, but it could also bring prestige and profit to a borough. The right to administer it in some degree was a privilege most commonly sought by enterprising townsmen, and, it is fair to add, one most frequently granted. Yet Denbigh, in terms of its first charter, could not hold its own courts: the courts which happened to be held within its walls were indistinguishable from those familiar in the feudal world outside. The lord or his steward presided, and it was the lord's pockets which gaped open to receive the profits.

The same limitations clearly applied in Ruthin, though here the evidence is of a different kind. A splendid series of Court Rolls relating to the lordship survives in the Public Record Office; part of the series—the earliest, relating to the thirteenth century—has long been in print. Their Victorian editor, Mr R. A. Roberts, supplied a text and a translation of a severely literal kind; the present remarks are diffidently offered as a twentieth-century appendix to his introduction.

* * *

The courts held from time to time in Ruthin were not the only ones in Dyffryn Clwyd, though the presence of borough and castle, as befitted the *caput* of the lordship, gave them a certain precedence. The rest of the straggling lordship was more rural in character; at Llannerch, for instance, the cases heard in the court were redolent of the

forest and the farmyard: on occasion the court itself must have resembled a smithfield. To cite the record[12] of a scandal involving the cloth:

> Matthew of Ludlow complains of Sir Ririd the Chaplain because he came to his house on the Friday before St Luke's day, and feloniously and furtively stole one red cow . . . . He (the chaplain) appeared and led the cow into court . . . .[13]

or again a tantalisingly curt entry during the high summer of 1294:

> Maddoc ap Keheylin attached because he lost the lord's hay going towards Merioneth.[14]

Was it villainy, or carelessness—the June sun, the fumes of ale, or foul subtraction—which brought him to the sorry pass of a sixpenny fine, his wages for a week? At any rate, the backcloth is unequivocally rural. At Ruthin, too, we are very much in the country: to take a typical case—

> Maddoc Goch complains of William the Miller concerning two black cows and one white found in his possession, which cows the said Maddoc lost . . . . He claims damages of 10/-, and of milk for the calves to the damage of 4/-.[15]

This is in no way surprising, for the rustic character of town life is an enduring paradox of the medieval world. But it is not the whole story, for there are entries which suggest another world, or at least the same world seen from a different viewpoint: the 'farming' of the tolls by an English entrepreneur, for instance, and the attempts of native traders to defraud him; sharp commercial practices like forestalling (the buying up of goods on their way to market with the intention of raising their price), and efforts to break the

[12]In this and subsequent extracts from the records, the spelling adopted by the clerk is retained, though where the names are incorporated in the body of the article, they are modernised. I should like to acknowledge the ready assistance of my colleagues Dr Geraint Gruffydd and Mr Frank Price Jones with this task.
[13]*C.R.*, p. 6.
[14]*Ibid.*, p. 4.
[15]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

monopoly of trade possessed by the town's market. There emerges also a picture of the division of interest that existed between energetic interlopers from the surrounding countryside, and the privileged traders of the town itself. Again, the large number of cases involving debt suggests a community whose commercial activities necessitated credit transactions. Like Wrexham, Ruthin was a meeting place for highlanders and valley-dwellers, where the primary produce of the upland farms could be exchanged for the services the town and the lowlands had to offer. And although it lacked the ease of Wrexham's communications with the settled Midland shires, and with the sizeable market that Chester represented, there are personal names mentioned in the rolls which suggest a wider hinterland than the Vale itself, and there is evidence that a pack-horse trade with Chester was in fact carried on.[16] The 'farm' of the tolls was high and progressive:

> *Memorandum* that at Michaelmas Robert le Walker received charge of the toll and stallage of the borough of Ruthin, in the presence of Sir John de Grey, to be held for the term of eight whole years, rendering . . . in the first year £18, in the second £19, and in the six years next following, each year £20 . . . .[17]

The estimate involved in these figures may have been over-optimistic, or it may reflect merely the hard bargaining of Sir John de Grey. At Wrexham in 1315, the equivalent figure for toll was £17, though there the lord received a further 70/- each year as a composition paid by certain tenants who wished to market freely without toll.[18] In any case, Robert le Walker needed to have a care for his rights if his 'farming' was to be a success.

To turn to the Court Rolls themselves. They embody, as has already been remarked, the records of several courts, some of which dealt with the business of the remoter districts of the lordship.[19] More than one court met in Ruthin itself.

[16] See below. Paragraph 8 of text.
[17] *C.R.*, p. 14.
[18] *History of Wrexham, op. cit.*, p. 26.
[19] See the general account given by Mr R. A. Roberts in his introduction to *C.R.*

Twice a year, for instance, the Great Turn was held there when the view of frankpledge would be taken and all the tenants had to appear unless they had acceptable essoins. This court had little effect upon the daily life of its suitors, however, and its high-sounding title had more reference to its formality than to its significance. More important to the man in the street and the pasture was the 'Court of Ruthin' proper, which was held every three weeks, and enjoyed a wide original jurisdiction. Its records form the bulk of the early rolls; they are of great use to the student of the early development of the town, for while in organisation it preserved the simplicities of a manorial court, in the substance of its business it often looked forward to the urban future. At the end of this paper, the records of one session of this court are given in full, with a commentary upon the details of the text. Here there is no need, therefore, of more than a few general remarks upon their nature.

The Rolls are entered in a highly technical and abbreviated Latin. Since they were never intended for the gaze of the merely curious, they are mercilessly esoteric, their involved wording reflecting the twists and turns of involved litigation. Moreover, apart from the difficulties caused by mere wording, the modern reader is often baffled by the wealth of procedural variety which lay at a medieval court's disposal. The inquest, and wager of law[20] exist side by side as means of proof, for instance; the court's choice between them is dictated by custom, though the apparently haphazard selection of diverse instruments on successive occasions may at first sight seem arbitrary to us.

Justitia est magnum emolumentum. Profit as a byproduct of justice is revealed by the most cursory examination of these records. Fines are recorded in the margins even when they are already mentioned in the body of the text; where no fine is levied, the reason is also given in the margin; in both cases the convenience of the auditors, as well as that of the clerk, is studied. (The court whose proceedings appear

[20]On these terms, see below, note 39.

below realised the sum of 4/-.) Such *amercements* or fines theoretically fixed at the lord's mercy or discretion, are abbreviated in the margin as 'mercy (*misericordia*) 6d.' Where a fine is payable to the lord in addition to damages to the plaintiff, the former is mentioned first and carefully specified, in contrast to the damages, which may well be left vague. The word 'amercement', however had long since lost its literal meaning, and had become a technical term. In some boroughs standard fines were established by charter; in all courts custom had established conventional amounts for cases of a conventional kind: at Ruthin a rate of sixpence was normally applied. Nevertheless, if the profits were small, they were certain, for except in rare cases where clemency was shown (as in the case of the incendiarist Madyn Pangy, below, for instance) the lord took his profit *from one party or the other*: his judicial sixpence might come from the defendant who had lost his case, or conversely from a plaintiff who had failed to make good his complaint (='making a false complaint').

Too much emphasis, however, can be laid upon the lord's part in the proceedings of his court, for these involved the community not only as individual litigants and malefactors, but also as witnesses, pledges, assessors (of damages) and jurors. Even the most superficial reading of the records draws attention to the marked inter-dependence of medieval men. In business, as in law, individual integrity was not enough: a man needed good neighbours willing to stand as pledges for him on a host of occasions. Moreover acting as a pledge could mean something infinitely more arduous than is commonly involved in the almost casual witnessing of a signature by modern referees. It was not to be undertaken lightly, as is made plain by the case of Robert le Walker of Ruthin, who had the misfortune to act as a pledge for the payment of a debt owed by another burgess, Henry of Brencreden, to a merchant of Chester. When the principal debtor defaulted, his pledge assumed responsibility: Robert, incautiously choosing to visit Chester, found himself clapped

into gaol there until he had paid up in full what his inconsiderate Ruthin neighbour owed.[21] Retaliation of this kind was a common hazard of the commercial life in an age when men from the next city were regarded as 'foreigners', and the central government was only beginning to grapple with the problem of regulating trade and commercial credit.

The competence of the court was wide: debt, detinue, mayhem, trespass, defamation (a feminine diversion this would appear, punished by ducking), even matrimonial cases: Ieuan Felyn is fined three shillings for causing the hue and cry to be raised in the town at night by beating his wife;[22] the wife of Robert le Walker, who runs away with another man, is placed in the pillory, which stood in the market place.[23] Mrs. Walker later caused a memorable disturbance by storming into the house of one Hamekin and attacking his wife Beatrice, 'beating her with a stick and drawing blood, and afterwards hunting her through the streets, to her loss and shame of 100/- or more.'[24]

But the court did not only enjoy a wide competence in judicial matters. It acted also as an administrative office, and as a registry of important private transactions. Thus it is in this public place, and in the eye of the world that the farm of the tolls is granted.[25] Here, too, conveyances are enrolled in order to ensure the keeping of records, and to ensure permanence—a process perfectly familiar in the Exchequer and the Chancery. Thus, for instance, on 29 May, 1296, there is a memorandum[26] of a lease by Adam le Verdon of a burgage in 'the vill of Ruthin', while on 28 August of the same year, Hugh Picot conveys to his brother thirteen acres of freehold in perpetuity.[27] Of more historical interest is another memorandum (6 March, 1296), to the effect that

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[21] *C.R.*, p. 13. On the right of distress, see Ballard, *op. cit.* p. lxv.
[22] *Ibid*, p. 46.
[23] *Ibid.* p. 39.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[25] *C.R.*, p. 14.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

> Thomas the cobbler and Howel Goch were assigned to view the watchers appointed to keep watch by night in Ruthin,[28] together with Maddoc Waghan and Maddoc ap David With.

This passage brings us face to face with two things. First, the need for keeping watch in any medieval town, even one situated in an area more settled than the Vale of Clwyd. The darkness of the medieval night fell everywhere: outside in the wide river valley, in the streets of the unlit town, and inside the little houses, their doors barred firmly until the risen sun brought back security and neighbourliness. But this was a general state of affairs; in the Vale of Clwyd special circumstances made the arrangements for the night guard of particular interest. Of the four men here appointed to inspect these arrangements, three are Welsh. This is a strange dispensation, to say the least, in a land that had only recently been conquered; it might be paralleled by the drafting of Kikuyu chieftains to administer the police force of Nairobi at the present time. Were the English tempting providence, or giving Archbishop Peckam's *gens perdu* a chance to redeem themselves after all the blood and tears of the past century? Or were these three Welshmen known Anglo-philes who had shown that in times of trouble they would throw in their lot with their English neighbours? In the context of the relations of the two races, these questions are interesting, but almost irrelevant; what is striking is the almost inevitable inference that the bulk of the *watchers* must have been Welsh too, for if this had not been the case, more Englishmen would have been employed to 'take the view'. The situation as a whole cannot be explained in terms other than of a shortage of Englishmen. For where, as in the case of the Snowdonian boroughs, sufficient colonists could be lured from the settled English shires to make their homes in a strange and hostile land, or in other words, where enough Englishmen *were* available, they were naturally employed in these key posts. It is fortunate that there is other evidence of this necessary compromise between the ideal and the

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

possible. When Robert le Walker undertakes the farm of the tolls, he draws his pledges from both sections of the population: out of a total of twenty, nine are Welsh. Again, the first membrane relating to the town court gives the names of the four *taxatores*, whose duty is presumably the assessment of damages: they are 'Maddoc ap Wian, Ieuan Boton, Martin the Baker, and Ralph of Hassal'—two Englishmen and two Welshmen, again in a position of trust.[29] Such entries are of a decisive kind in any estimate of the racial situation in Ruthin at the close of the thirteenth century. At first sight, they may not appear as significant as the infinitely larger numbers of Welshmen who appear in the guise of litigants or ne'er-do-wells; in fact, the latter prove nothing, for even in an exclusive borough like Caernarvon the Court Rolls[30] mention many Welshmen in these capacities. The entries on the Ruthin rolls show us something more than Welshmen merely living, litigating or committing offences in the town: they show Welshmen taking a full share of the burdens placed upon the community, or (to use a phrase proper only to more established boroughs), *at scot and lot* with their English neighbours.

Such a full participation in the affairs of the town is remarkable in view of the historical situation. To begin with, Dyffryn Clwyd had shared in the long and stormy fate of the Perfeddwlad, that ancient bone of contention between Gwynedd and Powys, between English and Welsh, between Llywelyn the Last and his brother David, between two competing social and legal systems. Secondly, in the years covered by the published rolls, the Vale of Clwyd had formed the scene of some violent events associated with the name of Madog ap Llywelyn. In this context, the part played by Welshmen in the life of the town within a year of Madog's rising is, to say the least, remarkable.

The significance of Madog's rebellion in the life of the district can best be illustrated from the Court Rolls them-

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[30] *Caernarvon Court Rolls*, ed G. P. Jones and H. Owen (Caernarvon, 1951).

selves. A remarkable case heard in the court of Llannerch on 10 June, 1294, tells how Iorwerth ap Cynric ap Rhirid was accused of attempting to exact money by false pretences from the curiously named 'Thomas ap Gilchrist', and, when his tortuous demand was refused, to have acted in a menacing way towards the English authorities:

> . . . . then he, of his evil will, cursed the Constable's beard and afterwards his head, if he would not give orders to go again into France, and he swore by the body of Christ that before the middle of the month, the Constable and the rest of the English would hear such rumours that they would not wish to come again into Wales . . . .[31]

Summoned, Iorwerth, perhaps wisely did not appear, and was placed in mercy. What he meant by the phrase *iterum ire in Franciam* is not clear, though it may simply be a piece of nationalistic insolence—a gibe at the expense of an Englishman who was still a Norman to his long-memoried Welsh neighbours! But the threatening tone of the latter part of Iorwerth's remarks needs no gloss, and is given point by the fact that in that very autumn Madog raised his standard. Walter de Hemingburgh[32] tells us that it was carefully planned: the whole of Wales was to rise simultaneously on the feast of St Michael. It is possible and indeed likely, that Iorwerth knew of these arrangements, and risked the success of the whole operation by blurting out his vague threats. However, nobody in authority took action, and the insurgents took the English by surprise; in Dyffryn Clwyd they reigned supreme for some months. The Earl of Lincoln, after a forced march from Portsmouth, was ambushed near his own town of Denbigh, and was glad to escape with a handful of followers. Subsequently the king himself marched through the Vale, staying briefly at Derwen, on his way to meet Madog in battle. Events like this, which belong to national history, are of course noted in the records. But more interesting are the effects of that stormy interlude upon the

[31] *C.R.*, p. 2.
[32] English Historical Society ed. (London, 1849), p. 57.

'domestic' affairs of the area, and upon the courts themselves. The clerk seized upon the war, as we still do, to date events: *in principio guerre* (at the beginning of the war), *ante guerram* (before the war), *guerra inita* (during the opening phase of the war), are his phrases; he remembered also the absence of the lord and the arrival and departure of the king. We hear of cases which had their origins during the troubles: of Madin Kyte, for instance, who had possessed himself an absent loyalist's house and enterprisingly used it as a brewery 'in the time of Madog ap Llywelyn.'[33] Returning Englishmen sue for the restoration of property appropriated by optimistic natives:

> Richard Maysay found a pole-axe of his in the hand of Pistele Ddu, which was stolen at the commencement of the war.[34]

Brave Richard Maysay, to attempt to recover a pole-axe from a Welshman's hand in that year! In another case a defaulter blames the unexpectedness of the outbreak for his loss of another man's goods;[35] but he is an Englishman. If we are to believe Hemingburgh, it was no surprise to the Welsh, as it was certainly no surprise to the egregious Iorwerth ap Kenwric ap Ririt who cursed the Constable's beard. Perhaps the most evocative entry of all is the case at Llannerch where the plaintiff is a woman 'whose husband was with Madog ap Llywelyn the lord king's felon, and stood against the peace.'[36] She claims possession of a cow, 'which was her husband's on Saturday, the Feast of *St Michael in Monte Tumba*, at Cilken, when he was killed there.'[37] In view of the account given by Hemingburgh, it is tempting to regard this fallen Welshman as one of those involved in the very raising of Madog's standard.

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[33] *C.R.*, p. 7.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[35] *non per defectum suum sed per gu (erram) initam et inopinitam. Ibid.*, p. 35.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 5. Another entry relating to the same business says that 'the cow was hers on the same day when the said William was alive and dead', on Saturday after the departure of the lord from Dyffryn-Clwyd, at Cilken.' There were two feasts of St Michael: St Michael the Archangel, on September 29, and St Michael *in Monte Tumba* on October 16.

Unlikely as a peaceful mingling of the two races must have seemed in the circumstances of 1296, the apparent fact of co-existence remains. It has been suggested above that from the English side, at least, this must have been dictated by necessity. The well-known attractions of the Vale of Clwyd today may make it difficult to believe that settlement was sparse. But it is unlikely that the area was so attractive to thirteenth century English settlers, for forest and marsh must have covered a great deal of the ground. The clearing of these waste lands is a later phenomenon.

To conclude. The earliest court rolls of Ruthin and its lordship can be profitably studied from two points of view. In the first place, set firmly into their context of time and space, they shed a little light on conditions in post-conquest Wales—a Wales still too little known, lacking as it does an authoritative vade-mecum like Sir John Lloyd's great *History*. Yet these conditions are of peculiar interest to the social and legal historian, for they were the product, not only of conquest and exploitation (though these were of course elements in the situation), but also of accommodation and compromise. At Ruthin the English settlement, at least initially, seems to have been thin on the ground, and this very sparseness compelled the settlers to live on terms with the natives who outnumbered them and against whom they could employ no overwhelming armoury of techniques or weapons. It remains to be discovered, on examination of equivalent records in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, whether this happy state of affairs survived the period of conquest and initial settlement.

Even outside this local context, the records are valuable as illustrations of more general themes. Some of these have already been touched upon; others will be considered below, along with the transcript of court proceedings. It is unnecessary to stress the obvious limitations of this present study. The materials upon which it is based are confined to a short period of time, and are of one kind only. Obviously no student of modern Ruthin could hope to compile an

adequate account of its many-sided life from the reports of its police-court, and versatile as medieval courts were, their records do not, and cannot tell the whole story. Yet they have much to tell us, in spite of, or perhaps because of their daunting preoccupation with technicality.

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In the following translation, the entries are numbered for reference purposes.

Court of Ruthin held on the Tuesday after the Feast of St Chad,[38] *in the 24th Year (of Edward I)*

1. Jordan the Baker essoins against John of Wenlock in plea of debt (represented), by Hamekin. The first time.
2. Philip le Baxtere (essoins) against Thomas Grenehod in a plea of debt where he is the plaintiff. The first time. It does not lie.
3. Martin le Baker (essoins) against Ralph de le Pek, concerning wager of law, by Maddoc Goch. Third time.
4. Philip le Baxtere (essoins) against Ralph de le Pek, by Richard Palefrey, in a plea of debt. Fourth time. It does not lie.
5. Emma, daughter of Nicholas of Matheleshirst (essoins) against Alice, the widow of John le Parker, by Richard her brother. First time—Second time.

This part of the proceedings is devoted to the hearing of *essoins*[39] or excuses for non-attendance tendered on behalf of suitors who had cases before the court. This was an inevitable preliminary in view of the difficulties presented by the absence of adequate communications and of the bureaucratic facilities required for the enforcing of attendance. There were no policemen available to deliver a summons, and no recognised medical assistance for deciding whether an excuse of illness was genuine or not. By proferring excuses which were sufficiently plausible, a versatile defendant could stave off trial of a case from court to court for a

[38] 6 March, 1296.

[39] For an admirable account of the essence of the three-week court, and an explanation of many technicalities, see H. S. Bennett, *Life on the English Manor, 1150-1400* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 195 ff. I should also like to record my appreciation of the members of the Conway Tutorial Class who took the Court Rolls as one of their subjects of study during the session 1957-8.

considerable time. (Hence the entries above recording the number of occasions on which a party had been essoined.) The subject was an involved one, however, and was surrounded by a considerable body of legal lore. An astute or well-advised plaintiff might lawfully object to an essoin; if his objection was upheld, the excuse was invalidated—'it did not lie'—and his opponent was obliged to appear or be amerced. In paragraph 3, wager of law is mentioned: this is a frequent procedure in the court. When a case of debt was heard, where no receipts or tallies could be produced to support the word of the plaintiff, the defendant was allowed to clear himself by simple denial supported by the production of pledges to his good faith.

6. John of Wenlock complains of Jordan the Baker for wrongful detention of seven shillings of silver which he owes him by reason of a loan. The said Jordan is attached (and) is essoined. The parties appeared, and the said Jordan acknowledged (that he owed) half a mark less a halfpenny, and as to the rest, he has waged his law. Pledge (not stated).

It is clear that the proceedings recorded here took place on two occasions. Not only is this apparent from the text—the essoin followed by the apparently swift attendance of the parties—but also from the note by the editor of the text (p. 27) that after the entry 'he is essoined', the remainder of the case is enrolled in a different coloured ink. When the case is eventually heard, perhaps some weeks after Jordan's essoin, he admits liability for 6/7½d, but, by wager of law successfully denies responsibility for the remaining 4½d of the debt. A note in the margin records a fine of 6d.

7. Richard Maysay complains of Philip the baker because he unlawfully detains 12/5d., which he owes him for things sold to him; nor does it appear by tally. Pledge to prosecute, Thomas the Cobbler. Pledge to answer, Ralph of Hassal. The parties appeared, and the said Philip acknowledged himself to be the debtor, but said that he had many partners to the payment of that debt (*dixit se habere plures socios ad illud debitum solvendum*). Wherefore it is adjudged by the court that the said Philip remain debtor, and let him seek out his partners. And he is in mercy for the detention.

Here again the clerk notices that there is no tally to substantiate the plaintiff's allegation, for this makes it possible to proceed by wager of law. The question of procedure does not arise, however, for the plaintiff admits liability. An amercement of sixpence is noted in the margin.

8. Alice, wife of John le Palker, complains of William Proudfodt that she hired out to the said William one horse (to go) as far as Chester. The said William unduly loaded that horse by the burden placed upon it, so that the said horse was never afterwards able to go (anywhere) or do anything, to her loss of 10/- and more, and if he denies (it), unjustly he denies (it), whereof she has sufficient suit. Pledge to prosecute, John the Tailor. Pledge to answer, Richard of Wilton. The said William appeared and acknowledged (his fault). Therefore (he is) in mercy, and (let him make) amends to the said Alice for her horse.

Notice the pointlessness of the remark 'if he denies it, unjustly he denies it.' It is pointless, because it is a belief held by all sincere litigants: one can only assume here that, perhaps a little absent-mindedly, the clerk was recording part of Mrs le Palker's own excited evidence, and curiously preserving it in the midst of the more formal pleadings. It is also worth noticing that the amercement of sixpence, carefully specified in the margin, takes precedence over the damages, which however formidable, are left undefined by the court.

9. The aforesaid Alice complains of Emma, the daughter of Nicholas of Mathelesherst because she unjustly detains one quarter of oats. Pledge to prosecute, Amaric de Marreys pledges to answer, John the Taylor, and Adam, son of Madin. She essoins in the court after St George's Day. In respite until the said Alice comes.
10. Robert le Madd and Philip the Baker complain of Sidde, wife of William the Carpenter, because she forestalled goods which she should have bought in the market, contrary to the regulations. Pledge to answer, Laurence the ditcher. The parties appeared and as to this matter, place themselves upon the inquest. Who say that the said Sidde would have given to the said Robert half (a mark) for the price; therefore the said

Robert (is) in mercy for a false complaint. Pledge, Robert le Walker.[40]

The regulations, *statuta*, may be the privileges granted to the market in the town charter. By placing themselves upon the inquest, the parties agreed to the decision of the case by a jury. The meaning of the jury's decision is not clear. A marginal note comments merely '6d.'

11. Madin Pangy made fine for an accidental conflagration which broke out in his house without his knowledge; and he gives 12d. because he has nothing in goods. Pledge, Winn Cute.
12. Map Hon^{r} attached because a blaze broke out and burned the houses of his neighbours, as a result of his own fire being unguarded. The said Map Hon^{r} appeared, and placed himself upon the country. The country say that he is guilty. And therefore he is in mercy and at the will of the lord.[41]

The inflammable nature of houses that consisted largely of wood, coupled with the absence of effective fire-fighting arrangements made fire-raising, even of this unintentional kind, something to be firmly discouraged. The 'country' is the jury. The marginal notes record the fine of 12d, and Mab Ynyr's free pardon.

13. The same Map Hon^{r} attached for one ox (belonging to Ieuan Waghan) stolen against the peace. The said Map Hon^{r} appeared and placed himself upon the country. Who say that he is quit as regards the said ox. But they say that Joukin of Montgomery would have bought (*debuit emisse*) the said ox from Philip the Baker, and because he believed the ox to have been stolen, refused to buy the said ox, and therefore the said Joukyn was attached. He appears and says that the said Philip exposed the said ox to him for sale, and as to this he calls Philip to warranty. Pledges for producing warranty, Hanikin and Thomas the Baker; and because the said Jowkin did not have warranty, he is therefore in mercy.

Again a mysterious case. The jury, having acquitted the defendant, offers evidence as to what had really happened.

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[40] On the grievances of Welsh traders against monopoly and tolls, see E. A. Lewis, *op. cit.* pp. 175 ff.

[41] The personal names mentioned in nos. 11 and 12 are probably Madyn Pangu, Gwyn Cwta and Mab Ynyr. It should be noted that from this point onwards, all the amercements mentioned are of 6d.

It would seem that 'Joukin' showed a suspicious acquaintance with the provenance of the ox, and was here being asked to explain. Warranty: the guarantee given by the seller that the sale was above board. If the buyer's title was questioned by a third party, the seller as warrantor bound himself to defend it; the buyer was said to 'vouch' the seller 'to warranty.'

14. Thomas Grenehod was attached on the complaint of Philip the baker, in a plea of debt. The same Thomas found pledges to answer at the next court, viz., Richard of Thopecroft and William Hodles. The aforesaid Richard and William appeared as pledges, and are attorneys of the said Grenehod. The said Philip did not prosecute his complaint, but was essoined twice, viz. (by) one man, and another time by one man against the aforesaid Grenehod. And the essoin was challenged, and with justice. Therefore it was adjudged by the court that he had not appeared in person and that the essoin did not lie. Therefore the said Richard and William sought a judgement for failure to prosecute the case (*de querela non secuta*). And it was adjudged that the said Richard and William depart quit concerning the pledgery of the said Grenehod, and Philip the Baker to be in mercy for false complaint and for default.
15. Thomas the Cobbler and Howel Goch were assigned to view the watchers in Ruthin appointed to keep watch by night, together with Maddoc Waghan and Maddoc ap David With.[42]
16. Robert le Walker complains of Wenthianon Goch because, contrary to the statutes, she goes through the countryside (*patriam*) to buy goods which ought to be sold in the market of Ruthin, with respect to which the same Robert ought to have toll, to his no small damage and injury. The said Wenthianon, being called, comes not; therefore she is in mercy. She is essoined.

The record here gives a fine example of the almost rhythmic opening moves in a typical case. The court calls the defendant; she does not appear. She is therefore liable to amercement, but escapes this fate by profferring a suitable essoin.

[42]See above. *With*=probably 'Chwith' (left-handed).

Notes at Random on Eighteenth Century Denbighshire

By the late EMLYN ROGERS

[*This is the second article prepared by Mr Emrys Jenkins, in consultation with Mrs Anna Rogers, based on the rough notes of the lecture which the late Emlyn Rogers delivered to the Society at its Annual Meeting at Ruthin four years ago. The first article is printed at pages 53-66 of volume 6 (1957). We hope to publish the third article, dealing with the administration of the Poor Law, the criminal jurisdiction of J.P.'s and the fixing of wages of servants and labourers by the Quarter Sessions, in our next volume.*—EDITOR.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

MOST of the functions of the present County Councils were performed in the shires by the Quarter Sessions.[1] Here the Justices of the Peace, important persons in those days whose functions were both administrative and judicial, met and governed the County.

The number of J.P.s had been originally limited to eight for each Welsh shire, but from 1693 any number of J.P.s could be appointed. The Justices meeting together in Quarter Sessions had a great number of duties. They were responsible for maintaining certain 'county' roads and bridges and for compelling parishes and hundreds to maintain their own roads and bridges, for returning poor persons to their counties and the parishes where they had a legal settlement, for reminding parishes of their obligations to the poor, for fixing wages, for controlling public houses, for giving allowances to the wives and children of soldiers on service, for taxation for County and National purposes, and for allocating to each Hundred in the County its share of the tax to be collected.

[1]Some references will be made in this paper to Courts Leet which existed in some manors and which had lesser administrative duties and had jurisdiction over various petty offences. A Court Leet consisted of the lord of the manor or his steward and the freeholders and tenants of the manor.

The County of Denbigh was divided into six Hundreds, each of which appointed one or two High Constables. These Hundreds were divided into Townships which were the smallest unit of local government, and each Township appointed one or more petty constables. From time to time Quarter Sessions would send curt instructions to remind their officials of their duties. The following extracts from Quarter Sessions Records and other sources illustrate the working of local government in our period:

> The Easter (Quarter) Sessions April 1653 'ordered that the several Justices of the Peace doe in their severall allotments take care that Church-Wardens, Overseers of the Poor and Surveyors of the Highway, be appointed in each parish respectively to give orders that the Statutes for the Relief of the Poor be put in due execution, and that the highways be repaired, duly sett, and kept, that the High Constables are surely ordered to see that the stocks, pinfold and whipping post in each township be repaired.'

The following instructions to the High Constables of Denbighshire to collect a tax are taken from the Treasurer's Accounts 1749.

> These are in his Majesty's name to will and require you or any of you to assess, collect and leavy by way of Distress (if otherwise you cannot) on all the Inhabitants and landowners and occupiers of mills, wears, Tythes, coal and other minerals within the said Hundred, the sum of Thirty Five Pounds, Seventeen Shillings and Six Pence, which proportion falls due on the said Hundred for the uses aforesaid which sum you are to pay to the Treasurer of this county and you the said High Constables are hereby also commanded and required to bring into court at the next quarter session a Duplicate and true copy of the particular sum and sums of money by you and every of you raised and levyed on every Township and parish within your respective allotments and Divisions by virtue of this warrant as charged and sett down by you in your respective precepts to the severall petty constables of the said Hundreds to be filed among the Records of the said court Herein fail not
>
> Given under our hands and seals the fourth day of April 1749.
>
> By the Court
>
> Ex[d]. by Richard Lloyd Clerk of the peace of the County of Denbigh

Divided thus on the County		
Bromfield	35-17-6	
Isdulas	35-17-6	
Isaled	35-17-6	Remains £1-10-2
Chirk	23-18-4	
Yale	11-19-2	
Ruthin	31-10-0	
	175-0-0	

It is interesting to note what salaries were paid to some of the chief County officials. A M.S.S. Volume 'Disbursements of Public Money for the County of Denbigh' by Peter Ffoulkes (15th July, 1698, to October, 1719) has these entries:

1698. Paid the Clarke of the Peace his salary for giving out Warrants and entering orders for his year £10-0-0
1698. Paid the Treasurer for his salary for this last year £10-0-0
1699. Paid Phillip Rogers for surveying bridges in ye County etc Half Year's salary due March last £5-0-0
1699. Robt. Symon Master of the House of Correction in Ruthin for the last year's salary £15-0-0
Paid John Clement late mast'r of the House of Correction in Wrexham in full for his pretended service £2-10-0

The Clerk of the Peace however had many perquisites of office, as is shown by a document entitled 'A Table of Fees taken by the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Denbigh and allow[d] of by the Justices at the Sess of the peace held at Ruthin the 12th day of January 1724.'[2]

	£	s.	d.
ffor receiving every common Indict(ment) of felony tresp(ass) assault etc.		2	0
ffor drawing every Indict[3] upon a stat or any Sp iall[4] Indict for riotts Forcible Entry for Jury		3	4
For filling every Indict p sentm[t5] & information or appeal		1	0
For copp[6] of Indict &c 4[d] p sheet			4

[2]Order Book 3. Trinity Quarter 1714 to Hillary 1734.
[3]Indict.=Indictment.
[4]Sp iall=Special.
[5]p sentm[t]=presentment.
[6]Copp.=Copy.

	£	s.	d.
For disching[7] of every person upon Indict whose Ignoramus is found or bro[t][8] in by procese of court		2	6
For disch of any person in the custody of y[e] goaler		2	6
For every app[9] to an Indict. p[e]sentm[t] & informacon or appeal		2	6
For every rule after an appearance		1	0
For the plea of no[tt] guilty to any Indict etc		2	6
For drawing up and recording every convicion		4	0
For relinquishing a plea		2	0
For every sp iall plea		3	4
For every submission		2	0
For Judgm[t] thereupon		2	0
For discharge		2	0
For a distringer or Ven[10] ffor Jur[s]		2	0
For entring every plea Travers & recog[n][11]		4	0
For drawing up a Travers 8[d] per sheet		2	0
For Spa and Test[12]		2	0
For Lycence to compound with an inform[e] or pros[13]		2	0
For an app[e] upon recog[n] to Travers		2	0
For reading every record		1	0
For quashing every Ind[14] or p[r]sentm[t]		2	6
For reading an Evidence upon a triall		1	0
For takeing and Entring a verdict of nott guilty		2	0
For continuing a recogn[ce]		2	0
For Discharging every recogn		2	0
to the cryer			10
to him for every oath			4
for drawing ord[ers] & coppies		2	0
For takeing parish acco[tts][15] and ord[er] there[u]pon		4	0
For every warr[tt] to appoint an H[16] Constable		2	0
For every cap[17] alloct &c		2	0
For every Lycence for Badger Ale Seller besides		2	6
For swearing & registring every person		2	0
For a certificate thereof		1	0

[7]disching=discharging.
[8]bro[t]=brought.
[9]app.=? appearance.
[10]distringer or Ven.=distringas or Venire.
[11]recog[n]=recognisances.
[12]Spa and Test: Spa=Subpoena.
[13]inform[e]or pros.=information or prosecution.
[14]Ind=Indictment.
[15]accotts=accounts.
[16]H=High.
[17]Cap=capias.

We wish gratefully to acknowledge the kind assistance of Mr. M. Bevan-Evans in interpreting these contractions.

	£	s.	d.
Reg^{r} ing a conventicle 6^{d} certificate 6^{d}		1	0
attending adj^{is} of q^{r} Sess		6	8
Allowance of Certiorari 6^{s} & 8^{d} and return thereof 6/-8		13	4
Every search 1st sess 4^{d} every year after 4^{d}			4
for every Bond on the allowance of a certiorari er		3	4
for allowance & Entr nolle prosequi		3	4
for less process		2	0
allowance of a supersedeas &c.		2	6

For conceive these fees to be reasonable and do allow of same.

Jos Roberts
Edd Thelwall
Jos Lloyd.

A Wynnstay M.S. written I believe by Ellis Lloyd, brother of Bishop William Lloyd, the non juror, gives a great deal of information about the direct and supervisory activities and duties of the Quarter Sessions in the building and maintenance of bridges.

The M.S. is 'An account of some Bridges taken out of the quarter Session's Records which I found in a book lent me by the Hon^{le} Sir John Trevor master of the Rolls.' It includes orders on parishes to repair their bridges at their own expense. On January 18, 1620, orders were made for the repair of Pont y Gyffylliog by the parishes of Llanrhaeadr and Gyffylliog and for two little bridges lying between Llanynys and Llanfwrog to be repaired by these two parishes. An entry states that for the repair of Pont Pentre Velin Abbot £10 was granted which was to be taxed on Wrexham. Similarly Pont y Koid was ordered to be repaired; three parts of the cost to be met by Wrexham and one part by Marchwiel. Orders for the repair of some bridges were made and charged on Hundreds as for example, Pont Llanddylas on the Isaled and Isdulas Hundreds, and Pont ar Melinddwr on Ruthyn Hundred.

The great majority of bridges dealt with were however charged to the county. Another M.S. copy of Quarter Sessions records relates:

At a quarter Sessions held at Denbigh May the 4th 1698 here now given by Ken Eyton, Roger Mostyn, John Roberts Esq and myself 302 li towards rebuilding the following Bridges:

Llanarmon dyffryn Keiriog	£100
Pont newydd in Llangerniw Pont Bryn Ynys, Pont y Skilton and Pont Rhyd Ganol	£120
Halfe Pont Bettws Gwerfyl Goch	£060
Pont y Pentir over Rug River Pont Ucha ar Alwen	£012
Mr. Cadwaladr Wynn overseer	
Pont Llangollen to repaire	£005
Pont Llanvair Dol Hayarn to repaire	£005
	302*l*

Postponed

Pont Glan Tanatt	*l*43
Pont Pentre Gwyn	*l*12

Ordered to be viewed.
Pont Llyn Rhees p(er) John Edwards
Pont newydd near Nantglyn p Mered. Gwyn
Pont Rhyd y Porthmyn to be viewed by Mr Maurice and Mr Gethin etc

Over fifty bridges in all are enumerated in this M.S. as bridges repairable by the County. It does not seem therefore that there were many Parish and Hundreds Bridges maintainable strictly by their inhabitants. The Statute of Bridges 1531 may have led to an increase in the number of County bridges since it allowed Quarter Sessions to levy a rate on all the inhabitants of a county for the 'repairing, re-edifying and amendment of such bridges.'[18] Other bridges in addition to the ones previously mentioned must have been taken over by the county for the 'Disbursements of Public Money' by Peter Foulkes has these entries:

August 1704. Paid John Jones Mason for Repairing Melin Such Bridge near Wrexham	*l*03-0-0
Oct 1706. pd. Edd. Wms of Bala mason for the rebuilding of Pont Coed y Glyn near Wrexham	*l*50-0-0
Oct 1706. pd. Tho Hughes to repair pont tan y fynwent in Ruthin	*l*02-10-0
July 10. 1712. pd. Joseph Edward Mason for the new building of Rianog Bridge in Ruabon Parish	*l*10-0-0

[18] B. & S. Webb. *Story of the King's Highway*, p. 89-90.

Even this incomplete account reveals the importance given to bridges by the Quarter Sessions. It shows J.P.s 'viewing' bridges and how more and more bridges appear to be taken over or built by the county. It became necessary to appoint a surveyor of bridges in the interests of economy and effectiveness. Whilst the county had no surveyor of bridges from 1709 to 1713, the Quarter Sessions in 1714, for a reason which appears in the following entry, re-appointed Jonathan Fabian of Wrexham as surveyor.

> This Court taking into consideration the several unreasonable certificates made by the[s] several inhabitants of this county upon the orders made by this court to them for the viewing the decayed Bridges within this County and to prevent abuses this court doth order that Jonathan Fabian of Wrexham . . . . [be appointed] at a yearly salary of tenn Pounds.

ROADS

According to both Statute and Common Law each Parish and Township was responsible for the proper maintenance of the roads within its boundaries. The obligations of individuals for annual road service varied according to their financial condition; the wealthiest had to provide implements and horse or oxen and cart as well as labour, others had to give their labour for six consecutive days every year. Parishes and Hundreds which neglected to fulfil their duties could be presented to Quarter Sessions or Court Leet and fined. There is therefore a great amount of evidence about roads in Parish Vestry Books and in Court Leet and Quarter Session Records and in the bundles of County Treasurer's Payments.

The M.S. M.2048 'Form and Manner of Keeping the Leet Courts in the Lordship of Bromfield and Yale' has a section 'Forms of Orders upon Pain' for the several manors of Wrexham Regis and that relating to Highways P.54 runs 'and therefore it is ordered that the same be well and sufficiently repaired by the said inhabitants (or several

persons concerned to do the same as the case may be) before the . . . day of . . . next under the penalty on each making default to forfeit . . . .'

In the Manor of Llanelidan Court Book 1768-1783[19] the oath to the jury given in both English and Welsh states 'You are also to look into your highways, how they are repaired and amended and whether the several persons therein concerned have done their due service towards repairing of the same and whether the Hedges and Ditches adjoining be kept low and scoured as they ought to be.'

The Welsh version runs 'Rhaid ichwi hefyd ddal sylw ar y ffyrdd fawr pa fodd yr ydys yn eu trwsio au hadgweirio hwynt ac hefyd ydyw pawb sydd arnynt ddyled i adgweirio y cyfryw ffyrdd wedi gweithio cyfran ac ydyw y gwrych-oedd ar cloddiau'r ffyrdd yn cael eu cadw yn isel au carthu fel y dylent fod.'

A defaulting township was dealt with at the Court Leet held at Llanelidan on the 27th day of October, 1774. The record states:

> We present the Inhabitants of Bryn Cyme for not repairing 9 roads of the High Road leading from Rhewl Galed to Corwen being a common nuisance for Persons Travelling that way and ought to be repaired by the inhabitants of the said Township of Bryn Cyme: therefore if the said high Road is not repaired and the nuisance therein removed before the next Court the s[d] inhabitants of the said township of Bryn Cyme—are fined and amerced to the sum of four and Twenty shillings.

Quarter Sessions records give details of orders and fines:

> Hilary 1730. On ye inhabitants of ye severall Townships of Penyclawdd Brynkinallt & Chirk the sum of L40 for not repairing the highway leading from New Bridge on Dee to Chirk Town and lying in the several Townships aforesaid.

In quarter Sessions 13 July, 1736, the Justices reminded Ruthin that the cart road leading from the pillory in Ruthin to Porth y Dref was repairable by the Parishe of Ruthyn.

[19]Llanelidan Enclosure Papers No. 102.

1730. On the inhabitants of Morton Wallicorum and Ruabon £25 for not repairing the highways in those townships leading from Aberdervin in the township of Morton.

> Another Michaelmas 1764. Morton Wallicorum for not repairing the King's highway leading from a certain place called Allt y Gwter to the House of Edward Jeffreys leading from the Market Town of Wrexham to Market town of Llangollen, being about a quarter of a statute mile in length, and about £1 will repair the same.

Illustrations could be given from all parts of the county to show that the responsibility for maintaining roads lay with parishes and townships in Denbighshire.

As the 18th century proceeded, Townships complained (Llanfwrog repeatedly) that statute labour was not enough to maintain the roads.

In Quarter Sessions, as Order Book 9 Hillary 1772 to Trinity 1777 shows, it was acknowledged that statute labour was not always sufficient, yet Townships were still fined for not repairing the King's Highway.[20]

[20]There are references to Turnpike Trusts in some of the Order Books.

The Industries of Denbighshire from Tudor Times to the Present Day

By GEORGE G. LERRY

PART II—THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

LEAD : COAL : IRON : STONE

[*This is a revised version of part of the prize essay at Rhyl National Eisteddfod 1953. The whole work will be published in three instalments. Part I, AGRICULTURE appeared last year on pages 67-96 of volume 6. Part III dealing with more recent developments, will appear next year.*—EDITOR.]

LEAD

THE lead bearing areas of Denbighshire are mainly found in the parishes of Llanferres, Llanarmon-yn-Iâl and Minera. There was also the Nant Uchaf Manganese and Haematite mine at Betws yn Rhos. Minera, however, was the parish in which from time to time the greatest activity took place, although at one period as many as 500 workers were employed at Llanarmon-yn-Iâl. Some of the Denbighshire lead mines are said to have been worked by the Romans. There was a long interval before operations on a fairly large scale were undertaken. Quantities of ore were raised from the Western end of the lode at Minera in the reign of Charles II. It was not until 1744 that important developments took place. Writing in *Y Cymmrodor* in 1883 on the metalliferous deposits of Denbighshire (and in the more favourably situated adjoining shire of Flint), D. C. Davies, F.G.S., described the two counties as—for their size—mineralogically rich, especially in the production of lead and zinc, in the mining and smelting of which a considerable proportion of the working population was then employed. In 1744 a lease was taken of a portion of the land traversed by the lode at Minera, which had been left for charitable purposes to the

citizens of Chester. The lease was taken by Mr Richardson, Silversmith and Mayor of Chester. Up to 1761 little was obtained from the mine, but from that year to 1781 a royalty of 25/- per ton, amounting to £12,533 was paid on 10,365 tons of ore. About this time the demand for lead fell and the Napoleonic wars brought the export of lead to an end. In 1799 the Minera mine was let to John Wilkinson, the noted ironmaster of Bersham and Brymbo. Wilkinson entered into partnership with Richard Kirk, who came to the Wrexham neighbourhood from Chapel-en-le-Frith about 1775, and carried on coal mining at Brynmally, Ffrwd, Lodge (Brymbo) and Southsea. His partner in the lead mining enterprise—John Wilkinson—died in 1808. Richard Kirk lived on until 1839, dying at the age of 92. (His grandson was Richard Venables-Kyrke of Penywern, and his great grandson was R. H. Venables-Kyrke of Nantyffrith, the spelling of the name being changed in the second generation.)

Between 1800 and 1816 fifty thousand tons of ore were sold from the middle part of the Minera mine. The ore was obtained from Cae Mynydd, Maesyffynnon Wen, Marian, Eisteddfod and other places in the parish of Minera. Large sums of money were spent in erecting engines to pump water from the mine, and here Wilkinson had obtained the limestone needed for fluxing his ores. A firm named Hunt and Noble worked the mines for a time without much success. Then in 1821 Kirk and Burton took the mine on lease. John Burton (1781-1860) lived at Minera Hall, and was also associated with collieries in the Coedpoeth neighbourhood. In two or three years the mine was drowned out, and it was idle for about twenty years—a period of crisis when, in addition to the water problems, Spanish ores seriously affected the market, and the industry declined. Meanwhile mining operations continued both at Llanferres and Llanarmon (where a new company operated soon after 1840). The year 1850 saw a revival of activity at Minera, and a company with a capital of £45,000 set to work. In 1853 a new discovery of lead ore was made, and for the next twenty-

five or thirty years, the Minera mine was successfully worked. It is stated that during this period 100,000 tons of lead ore, and 50,000 tons of blende, of the total value of £1,600,000 were sold at a profit of £600,000.

A return prepared by Robert Hunt in 1881 shows that in that year in Denbighshire 1,578 tons 5 cwt of lead ore, 7,055 ounces of silver, 5,602 tons 5 cwt of zinc ore, 304 tons 19 cwt 2 qrs. of manganese ore, and 18 cwts of iron ore (hematite) were produced. The bulk of these products came from Minera where 1,394 tons of lead, 6,970 ounces of silver, and 5,468 tons of zinc were raised, leaving the smaller quantities to the credit of the other lead bearing regions of the county. In addition to these totals Denbighshire produced 21,562 tons of iron ore from the coal measures.

In 1878 George Frederick Wynne, J.P., of Plas Gwyn, Minera, became Secretary of the Minera Mining Company. Born at Stafford, he left for Chester at an early age. He was of an inventive turn of mind, and his name became known over a wide field in both mining and photographic circles. His rock drill was adopted by the French company who cut the Panama canal; he designed a new dressing plant for separating the lead and the blende from the ore; he patented a vanner to separate and clean residual sand and slime; and over 300,000 of his photographic meters were sold.

After the fresh discoveries in 1853 employment at the lead mines increased; and by 1861 the number of men at work in the county was 1,100 (only a little less than in Flintshire).

The decline of the industry came later in the century. It was due to the low price of lead and to imports of lead ore from America and Australia. The Minera workings were closed in 1914. Mr Eric Wynne of Eversby, Minera, writing to the compiler of these notes on the 9th July, 1952, said:

> 'The sale of plant and machinery from the Minera Lead/Zinc Mine took place on 26th & 27th November, 1914, & it can be taken that all production of ore from the mines ceased as from about that date. Resolutions for the voluntary liquidation of the Company were passed & confirmed on the 2nd and 19th Febru-

ary 1916, and my father [G. F. Wynne] was appointed liquidator. The Minera Mines Gravel and Concrete Co. was formed by my father during 1916 for the purpose of working the gravel deposits resulting from the mine workings. I joined my father in this business on my return home after the First World War, and it was carried on until 1950. In 1950 (30th June) we ceased active trading in the gravels, and the dumps are now idle, except for the activities of another party, Lloyds Spar Quarries, Railway Warehouse sidings, Mold, who are working some of the deposits which do not belong to me. These people, however, only send the material away for ballasting and do not do any screening at all. The closure of the Minera Mines was, as you think, mainly due to the abnormally low prices of lead and zinc, which I have seen stated as being the lowest in mining history. This factor not only affected Minera, but practically every other mine in Great Britain, and caused the closing down of the vast majority of these valuable national assets. The water problem also contributed to the Minera Mine difficulties and their pumping equipment, though good in its day, was in 1914 very antiquated. By present day standards, this water problem is only a minor obstacle, though it still exists in many of the old people's minds as insuperable. This is an idea which it would be well to contradict, & if it were possible, remove.'

Lead mining operations are carried on at Llanrwst, but the site is across the Denbighshire border, and is in Caernarvonshire.

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COAL

The story of coal mining in Denbighshire goes back more than five hundred years. Mining in those early days meant little more than surface digging for coal. In 1414 the Earl of Arundel gave a charter to the burgesses of the ancient borough of Holt, near Wrexham, to dig for coal in the 'wastes' of Brymbo and Coedpoeth. Later many grants of coal bearing land in Denbighshire (including the old preserves of the Holt burgesses, then Crown lands) were made to the Grosvenors of Eaton, ancestors of the Duke of Westminster. Thomas Grosvenor, who died in 1579, owned a 'coal myne' at Wrexham, and his son and heir, Richard

Grosvenor, held land in Brymbo and Bersham. In Norden's Survey of 1620 it is stated:

> 'There is a coal myne and lead mine within this manno [Esclusham] both used and enjoyed by Sir Richard Grosvenor, Knight, said the jurors, by what right or what the profit may bee worth by the yeare they know not.'

Norden also says:

> 'Richard Grosvenor holds there six coal mines in the common called Harwood [Brymbo], and so many coal mines of the Prince within the Parish of Wrexham, as these jurors are credibly informed, are of the lord King's-majesty in free soccage, as of the Manor of Hampton Court by grant dated 20th of May in the fourth year of Edward VI [A.D. 1551].'

A. N. Palmer wrote that he had seen it stated, no doubt accurately, that letters patent under the Great Seal were passed on the 8th of December, 7th year of Charles I [1631] whereby were granted to Sir Richard Grosvenor 'all mines of coal, stone and lead, and all materials to make lead within the whole lordship of Bromfield and Yale.'

In 1653 coal was being worked by the Myddeltons of Chirk Castle at Black Park, Chirk (where a colliery remained in production until 1950). An agreement dated 29th September, 1683 (inspected by Palmer) was made between Sir Thomas Grosvenor of Eaton, Knight, and Roger Mostyn, Esq., of Brymbo, whereby the former granted the latter 'sole and ffree liberty to digg & sinke for, gett & take up Coales upon a Certayne Common called and known by the name of coedpoeth in the sayd County of Denbigh for the space & time of seven yeares for the date thereof, paying the said Sir Thomas 'eighte pitsh' of all coals there digged or the value of the same in money.' According to Edward Llwyd's *Parochialia* coal was dug 'on ye commons' at Windy Hill, Gwersyllt in 1699.

By the eighteenth century the coal mining industry in Denbighshire had become more widely established, but the methods of raising the coal were primitive, and the means of communication to centres where it was required were so

poor that in winter, owing to the bad state of the roads, the coal was stacked in the fields and carted away in the summer. When Abraham Darby discovered in 1709 the process for using coke in place of charcoal for making iron, an impetus was given to the coal mining industry, and the force of it was soon felt in Denbighshire. In 1715 John Mellor of Erthig (or Erddig) near Wrexham, was working a coalpit at Brynyrowen, Esclusham, about which Professor A. H. Dodd, in a paper published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1929, wrote:

> 'Mr. John Mellor on succeeding to the Erthig estate about 1715 found there was coal in it which might for the expenditure of £150 or £200 bring him in a yearly revenue of £200 for fifty years. A couple of years later his steward, who manages the mine along with the rest of the estate, assures him that it would be "the best work that ever was in our country . . . . if your honour could but contrive some easier way of throughing up the water besides horses"; moreover he "must have a new pump made for the water pitt." By 1721 some of these difficulties had been surmounted. A piece of ground has been hired near the pit for grazing the horses, and a new horse whimsey has been made for winding up the coal. Above all the main seam has been reached and proves "as good Coale as any in North Wales"; but the steward significantly adds; "wee shall sell very little but Sleckes till we have enough to supply your own occasions first.' This little pit in 1724 employed seven colliers, seven labourers and two carpenters, receiving wages which varied from 6^{d} to 1^{s} 1^{d} a day.'

The road maps published in *Britannia Depicta* in 1721 show three road directions to the Denbighshire 'coalpits'—one to the neighbourhood of Ffrwd and Brymbo, one to Rhosllanerchrugog from what is now Johnstown, and one to the West from Ruabon beyond the Church towards Acrefair.

By the middle of the century John Wilkinson (1728-1808), 'the father of the iron trade', and his brother William were at the Bersham Iron Works, previously conducted by their father, Isaac Wilkinson. The father had obtained coal by contract, but John Wilkinson sank pits in various parts of Ruabon and Chirk, and there will be much more to say later about his activities both in coal and iron.

In 1770 Charles Roe of Macclesfield and James Venables (exploiters of the Parys Copper Mine) started the Brynmally Colliery which was subsequently carried on until 1815 by Richard Kirk, formerly of Martinside, Chapel-en-le Frith, and later of Gwersyllt Hill, when he died at the age of 92 in 1839; his grandson adopted the name of Venables-Kyrke and the family afterwards lived at Nantyffrith, Bwlchgwyn.

In 1790 Richard Earl Grosvenor had a colliery working at Coedpoeth, and there are references to at least five pits there.

In 1793 John Wilkinson bought the Brymbo Hall estate of 500 acres, and began to erect blast furnaces, and to sink pits there. He raised coal and ironstone at Brymbo. When he died in 1808, his estate went into Chancery. The extent of his enterprises in the Denbighshire coalfield may be gleaned from the fact that by 1828 there were 41 pits on the Brymbo estate. The M.S.S. history of Brymbo Colliery prepared by Luther Griffiths (Port Talbot, and formerly of Brymbo) contained records of ninety pits and levels on the Brymbo Hall estate—one, the Smelt colliery (re-opened in 1934 and more recently electrified) is still working.

The contemporaries of John Wilkinson in East Denbighshire included the following:

Thomas Jones of Llanerchrugog Hall, Rhosllanerchrugog, who acquired collieries close to his ironworks, including Gardden.

T. E. Ward, who leased the old workings of the Myddeltons at Black Park in 1805 and employed 300 men; he also owned Plas Kynaston Colliery, Cefn Mawr.

William Hazeldine of Shrewsbury, who secured collieries and erected ironworks in the Ruabon area.

Edward Lloyd Rowland (son of Edward Rowland, Gardden Lodge, Ruabon, High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1815) sank about thirty pits in the neighbourhood before his failure in 1823.

Between 1820 and 1830 the coal trade was stagnant, and mining properties were offered for sale. One of this

number, the Watkin Rhees Colliery, Ruabon, comprising a colliery, blast furnace, engine, machinery, buildings and railroads, was put up for sale in 1823 'under the direction of the assignees of John & Charles Wright'.

The hopes of continued prosperity in East Denbighshire inspired during the later years of the 18th century were not realised. By 1830 depression was general and industries needing coal moved to districts where the mineral resources were richer. At this time it was believed that the trade slump, the riots caused by the evils of the 'Truck' system of paying wages in kind and the competition of South Wales and the Midlands, meant the end of the coal and iron industry in Denbighshire. New demands and new uses for coal and an increasing population, however, enabled a number of North Wales mines to continue; in the course of time new pits were sunk to provide gas and household coal, and later for the railways and steamships, and later still for the engineering, steel, chemicals, brickmaking and other coal using industries which sprang up in the county.

During the period covered by the Wilkinsons and the Ruabon and Chirk pioneers, several colliery ventures were launched in other parts of East Denbighshire. In addition to Brynmally, already mentioned, the Ffrwd and Southsea pits were worked by Richard Kirk (1747-1839); John Burton of Minera Hall (1781-1860) was connected with the Coedpoeth collieries, in addition to the Minera lead mine; John Thompson, coal and ironmaster (1769-1852) is said to have worked the Summerhill pits, in addition to his ironworking operations at Ponciau, Brymbo and Ffrwd; and William Rowe (1789-1860) of the White House, Bersham, the Court, Erthig, and Mount Street House, Wrexham, surveyed the Brymbo collieries in 1809, and was controller for the Wilkinson trustees in 1829.

A new chapter in the history of the Denbighshire coal industry opened soon after 1840 when Robert Roy, Henry Robertson and a number of Scotsmen came to the district and began operations in the Brymbo district. They sank new

shafts, revived the Brymbo Ironworks, and chiefly through the initiative and drive of Robertson, built railways to convey the products of the area to the districts where they were needed.

Robert Roy (1795-1873) bought the Wilkinson estate out of Chancery; Henry Robertson (1816-1888) invited Wm. Henry Darby and Charles Edward Darby to manage the pits and ironworks while he concentrated on the work of bringing railways into Denbighshire, and carrying them over the Dee and Ceiriog valleys to Shrewsbury and beyond.

James Sparrow of Gwersyllt Hill (1824-1902) took over the Ffrwd ironworks and collieries in 1855; Thomas Clayton of Brynmally Hall (1825-1896) took over Brynmally Colliery in 1849, and sank pits at Ffosygo, Gwersyllt and New Broughton. And about the year 1850, Henry Dennis of Hafodybwch, and New Hall, Ruabon (1825-1906) came from Bodmin in Cornwall to lay a tramway at Llangollen. He was soon managing the Brynyrowen Colliery, and ultimately he became a captain of industry in North Wales owning collieries at Westminster (Broughton), Wrexham and Acton (Rhosddu) and Hafod (Ruabon). He had extensive industrial interests in other districts, and at one time the concerns under his control afforded employment to ten thousand people.

By 1854 twenty-six collieries were operating in Denbighshire according to the list for that year given by H.M. Inspector of Mines. They were:

ABERTERFYN, Ponkey (Ponciau) owned by Thomas Williams & Co.
AFONEITHA, Ruabon. Robert Williams, L. Kay, J. Lloyd.
AFONEITHA (gin pit), Ruabon. John Wright.
BLACK PARK, Chirk. T. E. Ward.
BRYMBO, Brymbo. Brymbo Coal & Iron Co.
BRYNMALLY, Brymbo. Brynmally Colliery Co.
BRYNYROWEN, Ruabon. John Taylor & Son.
CHRISTIONYDD, Ruabon. T. E. Ward.
CHRISTIONYDD, Ruabon. E. Morris.
COEDPOETH, Wrexham. John Burton.

COEDPOETH, Wrexham. Jonathan Jones & Co.
DOLYDD, Vale of Llangollen. Dolydd Co.
FROOD, Wrexham. Johnson Edwards.
GARDDEN, Ruabon. George Walmsley.
GROES, Ruabon. Johnathan Davies & Co.
MILL, Pentre Christionydd. R. C. M. Wright.
PENTREFAWR, Wrexham. Daniel Owens.
PENTRE BYCHAN, Ruabon. Gomer Roberts & Co.
PLAS ISSA, Ruabon. Samuel Giller.
PLAS KYNASTON, Cefn. T. E. Ward.
RUABON, Ruabon. New British Iron Co.
RUABON COAL & COKE WORKS. Ruabon Coal & Coke Co.
SOUTHSEA, Wrexham. Southsea Co.
VRON, Wrexham. Maurice & Low.
WESTMINSTER, Wrexham. Westminster Coal Co.
WYNN HALL, Wrexham. William Kenrick.

Several of these mines were small concerns and in 1841 the number of miners employed in Denbighshire was approximately 2,000.

By 1901, thirty-eight collieries were working in the county. They included several pits which were being worked for coal and fireclay. The number of miners then was 10,520, and the output of coal for the year was 2,399,776 tons. During the next ten years deep pits were sunk in new areas, and preparations were made to meet the situation arising through the closing of a number of the older mines. W. H. Darby of Brymbo had foretold the extension of the coalfield to the East, and the sinking of deeper shafts to win the coal from the earth. His prophecy was fulfilled when two large collieries were opened at Gresford and Llay Main. These new ventures, involving an outlay of hundreds of thousands of pounds, were to give a new lease of life to the coalfield. History repeated itself for, just as in early Victorian days when several mines 'drowned out' were replaced by new pits sunk in another tract to the South and East, so now the two new collieries North East of Wrexham began to absorb a substantial number of colliers from pits which had been

abandoned, or which were shortly to go out of production. By 1914 the number of mines had been reduced to twenty-six (including Gresford, but not Llay Main). The number of miners was 12,663, and the annual output of coal was 2,644,996 tons. Sinking operations at Llay Main began in 1914, but owing to the war, operations were suspended, and the colliery did not go into production until 1923. Employment was eventually found for nearly 2,500 men and boys at Llay Main, and by 1929 the output of coal at this one colliery was 1,037,592 tons in the year. (In 1934 the number of miners at the other new colliery, Gresford, was 2,200. In that year a terrible disaster occurred at Gresford, and, following explosions, 265 men lost their lives. An official report of the Government inquiry into the disaster was published by H.M. Stationery Office in 1937.)

In 1936 the number of miners in the Denbighshire field was 10,214 and the annual output of coal was 2,619,605 tons. When war broke out in 1939 only eleven collieries (including three or four small pits) were working.

In considering these figures the changes that ha

two pits. Two or three of the smaller pits which were working during the war have closed down, leaving the main operations to be carried on at Llay Main, Gresford, Bersham, Hafod and Ifton (in addition to Point of Ayr, Flintshire). At each of these collieries reorganisation schemes have been undertaken by the Board. The pits are fully mechanised; the coal is cut by machines, loaded on to conveyors, and drawn to the shaft by rope haulage. The Board has been revising the haulage system, and driving new tunnels underground; and electric battery locomotives are being introduced. In some of the seams machinery is installed for loading the coal mechanically on to conveyors; the locomotives are not only for coal haulage, but for underground trains to carry men to and from the coal faces. Gresford, Llay Main, Hafod, Bersham and Ifton all have modern surface equipment for handling and cleaning the coal. A large new washery was erected at Gresford in 1950.

Llay Main, Gresford and Hafod possessed pit head baths before nationalisation of the mines; baths were opened at Ifton in 1952, and an installation at Bersham, planned at the time of writing these notes has since been opened. At Point of Ayr (Flintshire) where both shafts are sunk within forty yards of the Dee estuary, an extensive reorganisation scheme is in course of execution. It includes a new 350 feet deep shaft. The report of the National Coal Board for 1951 reviewed the work carried out in five years under single ownership. Dealing with the industry as a whole, it was reported that output was seven to eight million tons greater in 1951 than in 1950; output per man year was the highest for half a century; and output per man shift was the highest ever. Only a few more miners were employed, and each miner on the average produced about ten tons more coal than in the year before. In the North Wales area the pithead proceeds amounted to £6,316,708, and total costs were £6,375,112. The loss before charging interest was £58,404. The saleable tonnage of coal raised in North Wales in 1951 totalled 2,338,274 tons compared with 2,188,012 tons in

1950. In the North West Division (which includes North Wales), the loss in 1951 was £197,087 compared with a loss of £503,323 in 1950. With all the reorganisation work which has been carried out at the Denbighshire collieries since 1947, and the amount of money spent on new plant and equipment, it is expected that a more favourable balance sheet will be possible at an early date.

In addition to deep mining, open cast methods of obtaining coal have been in operation in various parts of the country since 1941. Large quantities of coal have been obtained by open cast working in several areas in the Denbighshire coalfield. War conditions compelled the Government to develop this method of supplementing the supply of deep mined coal. In 1941 the mines were in private ownership, and the proprietors were unwilling to undertake this development, partly because of uncertain economic factors, and partly because it is a civil engineering rather than a mining process. The Government, therefore, decided to undertake the task, and the responsibility for it was given to the Ministry of Fuel and Power. In 1947 the Government resolved, in view of the urgent need for a higher output of coal, to prolong the period of open cast coal working to 1951, and it is to continue for a further period on a diminishing scale.

In 1943 five and a half million tons of open cast coal was raised in the country; by 1948-9 the total had reached twelve million tons. The production of coal by open cast methods is not a commercial proposition; the average loss has been placed at 2/8d. per ton; but owing to the imperative need of the country to obtain more coal, the Government resolved to continue the scheme for a limited period in the hope that in a year or two the output of deep mined coal will rise to a figure high enough to enable the export of the mineral to make a decisive contribution to the vital task of setting right our national economy. In Denbighshire open cast work was undertaken at Vron (Southsea), Lodge (Brymbo), Black Lane, Plas Power Park, Ponciau (Brynyr-

owen), Tygwyn (Vinegar Hill, Rhos), Black Park, High Barracks, Windy Hill, Pentrefron (Plas Mostyn, Coedpoeth), Christionydd (Wynn Hall) and Gardden Lodge (Ruabon). Up to 1952 the tonnage obtained by open cast methods in these areas was about 1,250,000 tons.

After the passing of the Mining Industry Welfare Fund Act, the Miners Welfare Committee appointed by the Board of Trade, spent thousands of pounds in the neighbourhood of the Denbighshire collieries in the provision of miners' institutes, recreation grounds and canteens, and the local authorities have in recent years erected a large number of houses in the mining districts and are continuing to add to the number each year.

[Fuller information as to the leading personalities in the Denbighshire coal mining industry, and detailed accounts of collieries, will be found in Mr Lerry's *The Collieries of Denbighshire* (Wrexham 1946)—EDITOR.]

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IRON AND STEEL

The ironstone deposits in Ruabon mountain were extracted and used on a limited scale from an early date. Forges at Pontyblew, Chirk, and at Abenbury, Wrexham, date back to the seventeenth century, but it was not until 1763 that Wrexham and Ruabon became busy iron centres, and then mainly through the enterprise of John Wilkinson of the Bersham Iron Works. His brother and partner, William Wilkinson, was later sent to France, where, adopting the Bersham methods, he superintended the erection of State ironworks and cannon foundries. Nearly twenty years before John Wilkinson was born, Abraham Darby, the Coalbrookdale Quaker, had discovered a way to use the coke in the smelting furnaces, and in 1721 Charles Lloyd of Dolobran introduced this method at Bersham where he rented a furnace from John Roberts of Hafodybwch. Coal was obtained from Rhos pits belonging to Thomas Meredith of Pentrebychan. Lloyd did not succeed in business, and eventually—in 1754—Isaac Wilkinson, father of John Wilk-

inson, took over the Bersham works. Isaac Wilkinson came from Cumberland. His son, John, was educated at Kendal; another son, William, went to the school of Dr Priestley (one of the founders of modern chemistry and the discoverer of oxygen, who married Isaac Wilkinson's daughter). The site of the Bersham works was regarded as eminently suitable to the conditions of those times because ironstone and coal and water power were available. In 1761, Isaac Wilkinson removed to Bristol, and a little later a new company was formed by his two sons, John and William, to take over the Bersham works. John Wilkinson had been extending his experience at Midland ironworks, and William had been with his father at Bersham. Great progress was made in the next few years, and Bersham became noted for the production of cannon, shells, cylinders and iron pipes. The works was rebuilt, pits were sunk, new furnaces were secured, and a patent was taken out for boring cannon. The Wilkinsons extended their activities to the Midlands and their name became known far and wide. More than one biography of John Wilkinson has been published; A. N. Palmer has told the story of his connection with Bersham, and a full scale account of the activities of the three Wilkinsons—Isaac, John and William, is given in a book by Dr. W. H. Chaloner of Manchester University.

When James Watt took out his patent for making steam engines in 1775, the cylinders for what became known as Boulton and Watts' engines were made either at Bersham, or at one of the works controlled by the Wilkinsons.

About this time—1775—a report was made to the French Government on British methods of smelting iron ore with coke, and casting naval cannon, which has a direct connection with the Bersham Iron Works and the Wilkinson brothers—John and William. The report (which is not so well known as an earlier one made by Gabriel Jars of Lyons in 1774) was made by Marchant de la Houliere, an infantry brigadier in Louis XVI's army, who had made experiments in the coke smelting of iron ore in 1773. He

made a journey through the main iron working districts of England to study the new methods that had been adopted through which it was believed British naval cannon had been proved to be superior to those in the French warships. Marchant de la Houliere's report was recently translated with notes by Dr W. H. Chaloner. De la Houliere visited Broseley and there saw John Wilkinson to whom he gave a letter of introduction from Messrs. Boulton and Fothergill of Birmingham. In his report de la Houliere observed:

> 'Being a zealous military man and having the interests of the King's service at heart he was suddenly seized with the idea of bringing to France an experienced man, capable of fulfilling this object [i.e. securing for the French Navy the advantages which the British Navy obtains from the use of coke smelted iron], he ventured to drop certain hints to an eminent iron-master [John Wilkinson] who owns four foundries and has brought the casting of cannon to the highest pitch of perfection, to the effect that an Englishman who would come to France, and cast them in a similar manner would make a large fortune. This gentleman replied that an Englishman could have no confidence whatever in our Government and our Ministry, when they had the power to dismiss him at any moment, but if it were a question of a private arrangement between individuals, then he saw a tidy profit was to be made, with all the benefits accruing from an assured market or a long term basis. He also said that he would send his younger brother, who is unmarried, and manages quite a large cannon factory on his (elder) brother's behalf. I replied that I would willingly go into an equal partnership with him, that I would give him suitable security, and that on my return I would lay the proposal before the Ministry. He told me that he would want a guaranteed market for twelve years at least, absolute certainty of exact payment for goods supplied, exemption from all taxes on coal, and above all freedom to export to wherever he could find a market for them all cannon, cannon balls and bombs manufactured in excess of service requirements, for these Englishmen never set a limit on their field of trade. I told him that this might do very well in times of peace, but should war break out the most that he could expect to receive would be permission to export to allied or neutral powers. At this stage we parted, I promising to write to him.

Next day—August 19, 1775—de la Houliere was at Bersham Foundry. Armed with a letter from John Wilkinson, he saw

the younger brother, William, and inspected the forges and foundries at Bersham, together with the cylinders and pumping barrels that were being made for the new steam engines. He refers to his visit as follows, according to Dr Chaloner's translation:

'On August 19, 1775, at Bersham Foundry in Denbighshire in the Principality of Wales, two miles from Wrexham, and twelve from Chester, 80 cwt of cast iron were placed in four . . . reverberatory furnaces in my presence. In one of them was placed half a broken cannon, which might have weighed 15 cwt., and 5 or 6 cwt of crude pig iron, which had been smelted some time previously in a blast furnace using coke. In another reverberatory furnace was placed a damaged forge hammer which might have weighed from 7 to 8 cwt. To this was added some of the same iron referred to above, in order to bring up the charge in each of these furnaces to between 20 & 21 cwt. The two others were filled with the same quantity, and the same quality. It was 9.30 a.m. by my watch when all four were charged. By noon these masses of iron were in a state of complete fusion. The plugs were withdrawn from the tapping holes, & I saw a 32 pounder cannon run into the mould. The surplus metal was allowed to run into channels moulded in the sand for the purpose, in order that it might be used in a later melting. Cylinders from fire or steam engines are melted up and cast again in the same manner. They can be made 76 inches in diameter, together with working barrels for pumps, water pipes, cannon balls, bombs, plain or toothed wheels, pinions, plates, grids, doors & porches—in general all sorts of things we make of wrought iron. These reverberatory furnaces are heated with raw coal straight from the mine and are stoked for two hours before they are charged with crude, or scrap iron. This is not done until the vault is white hot, and then pieces of cannon, anvils, hammers, old scrap iron castings, or bars of pig iron, are put in, and within two hours and a half the whole consignment may be seen passing through the pouring gate to be cast into the desired shape.'

In a later section of his report de la Houliere adds:—

'I have reason to think that this Englishman [William Wilkinson] would not be long in arriving. He would ask perhaps 200 to 300 guineas for the expenses of his removal, but my reply on that score is, that within 4 or 6 months this cannon foundry would be in such an advanced state of erection as to make it possible to

> cast two 32 pounders a day, and a larger number of smaller calibre. I will point out that it would be opportune to come to a prompt decision on this proposal, and either accept it, or reject it, because this man may be dissuaded from emigrating either by his own thoughts on the subject, or by the advice of others, and if a break with England occurred before he arrived in France, he would not be able to come here without being outlawed and held guilty of felony, whereas if he had taken the step in time of peace, he would be allowed, by virtue of his rights as an Englishman, to follow up a business on which his fortune depended. The Ambassador [M. le Conte de Guines] is in a position to seek out and verify that the persons with whom I ventured to open negotiations have a capital of over £80,000 invested in their foundries, that they are entrusted by their Government with the supply of naval cannon, that they have made many for the Dutch, and sent considerable supplies to Constantinople, that they are no mean upstarts, but persons of good breeding, actuated solely by that spirit of gain which is all too common in their nation. I do not think we can make a better arrangement in order to be sure of having cannon as good as the English. At least we must fight with equally good armaments.'

William Wilkinson went to France in 1776, and from 1777 until December, 1780, was manager of the State Ironworks on the Island of Indret near Nantes. The concern, the erection of which he superintended, was equipped with cannon boring machinery similar to that at Bersham works. Between 1781 and 1785 William Wilkinson carried out another task for the French Government. In association with de Wendel and Tonfaire, he built the State Ironworks of Montcenis at Le Creusot (Saône-et-Loire).

Henry Cort's invention of the puddling process which came in 1783, and the introduction of steam power in place of that provided by the wheels of the water mills, brought many changes and developments in the iron industry. In 1792 John Wilkinson purchased the Brymbo Hall estate of over 500 acres, and began operations there. He erected blast furnaces and sank pits. Before his death in 1808, he had a bitter dispute with his brother. Stockdale in *Annales Carmoelenses* says that William Wilkinson collected a number of men at Wrexham, and marched with them to the Bersham

Iron Works where with sledge hammer and other instruments they began to break up the expensive machinery. Intelligence of this reached John Wilkinson, and he collected a still larger number of men who followed his brother's example, with the result that the works became a great wreck! After John Wilkinson's death, there was long drawn out and costly litigation over the disposal of his estate.

The end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 caused a disastrous decline in the iron trade; in subsequent years local ironmasters failed, furnaces were blown out, and ironworkers and miners became idle. The position was not eased until Roy and Robertson began operations at the Brymbo works which eventually led to the establishment of the steel industry there.

When John Wilkinson was busy at Bersham, Brymbo, and at the works he set up elswhere, a number of his contemporaries in the Ruabon area, including Thomas Jones, Llanerchrugog Hall, Edward Lloyd Rowland of Plas Bennior and William Hazeldine of Shrewsbury (who built a foundry at Pontcysyllte to supply the iron for Telford's aqueduct), had all been active in establishing ironworks, and sinking coal pits. Thomas Jones built furnaces at Ponkey and Llwynenion, and Rowland owned blast furnaces at Acrefair, a rolling mill, a number of puddling furnaces and thirty coal pits. When the slump came, the number of furnaces in blast fell. In 1844 Robert Roy speaking at a Wrexham meeting at the time of the extension of the railway line from Chester, explained that only half the mineral field had been carried by the railway to Wrexham, that the balance of distress would preponderate towards Ruabon, that only five blast furnaces were at work instead of fifteen, that 3,000 were out of work, and that, taking five persons per family, 15,000 people were deprived of the means of subsistence by the stopping of the various works in the neighbourhood.

Ten years later George Borrow, on his journey to Llangollen by night from Ruabon, told of the red glow of the

Cefn furnaces. The British Iron Co. of Acrefair, and later the new British Iron Co. weathered the storm and the latter actually continued working until 1888, but long before this the East Denbighshire ironmasters had been left behind in the main race, and the industry passed to other parts of the country. The Brymbo works remained and was to continue on new lines. A number of foundries continued working in Denbighshire after 1888. They included the Eagle Foundry, Wrexham, which is still in operation (1952). It is in Tuttle Street probably on, or near, the site of the foundry set up early in the 19th century by Edward Jones, ironfounder and ironmonger, son of Thomas Jones, Ironsmith, Town Hill, Wrexham, and brother of Thomas Cambrian Jones, the poet. The Eagle foundry, later carried on by a W. Chadwick, was in 1884 acquired by Messrs Cadworth and Johnson, who in 1892 were described as Iron and Brass founders, Engineers and Millwrights, employing forty skilled workers. They were engaged in the production of iron and brass castings, and in making and repairing engines, boilers, colliery gear and loco. engines for roads and mines. The business continues to this day under the direction of Mr T. P. Johnson (son of the late Mr W. E. Johnson of Gwern Alyn, Wrexham, and partner of the late Mr James Cadworth).

The Cambrian Iron Works, Wrexham, established round about 1877, belonged to Messrs Powell Brothers and Whitaker. They were known as iron and brass founders, and as agricultural and general engineers. For many years they produced mowers and reapers, chaff cutters, cake mills, root pulpers, field rollers, and patent potato raisers (for which they received many gold and silver medals, and first prize at the Royal Show at Newcastle in 1887). They also manufactured iron and brass castings, and during the First World War, were busily engaged in making munitions. Subsequently the Cambrian Iron Works was taken over by Rogers and Jackson Ltd., who are suppliers to the engineer-

ing and allied trades. The foundry at the Cambrian works went out of production after the change of ownership.

By 1952 there were five foundries working in Denbighshire—one at Rhostyllen, one at Bwlchgwyn, one at Llanrwst, the Eagle Foundry, Wrexham, and the Criterion Foundry (Wrexham Trading Estate).

At the Bersham Foundry, Rhostyllen, semi-repetition castings are produced. (In a new factory adjoining the foundry Wynn Products Ltd. make the patent Wynn Straight Through valves in cast iron, malleable iron and other metals, and they are being exported to various parts of the world.) The Llanrwst Foundry and the Pentresaeson (Bwlchgwyn) Foundry of Taylor Bros. are both engaged in the production of all kinds of iron castings. (The recently established Criterion foundry will be referred to in a section of this account dealing with the Wrexham Trading Estate.)

The one large concern which survived the troubles of the earlier and later decades of the 19th century was the Brymbo works. It entered upon a new era in 1842 and in 1885 became the birthplace of the steel industry of North Wales.

Steel making was introduced to Denbighshire by Henry Robertson of Palé, Merioneth, the Scotsman who came to the Wrexham district in 1842 when the heavy industries were decaying. By his energy and enterprise over a period of forty years, he gave a new lease of life to the neighbourhood. New collieries were sunk, railways were constructed, and the steel industry was established at Brymbo in 1885—three years before his death. Speaking at Palé in August, 1883, he said: 'I am proud to have done so much to develop the rich mineral field of Wrexham, and I cannot forget the memory of those who laboured with me in that useful effort. I have been a pioneer of the Brymbo and other branch railways, and indeed I hope we shall be able to introduce the Brymbo Steel Company—a new industry to that district.'

When he delivered this address Robertson was considering the possibility of establishing a steel works at

Brymbo. His colleague, W. H. Darby, had died in 1882, but his son, J. H. Darby, was making a special study of steel making. He was sent by his father to various works to collect all the information he could. Peter Williams of Brymbo was sent on a similar mission to Russia where work on the Basic Open Hearth process was in progress. In 1884 Robertson instructed J. H. Darby and Peter Williams to erect an experimental furnace at Brymbo. As a result of this step, Robertson decided to instal a steel plant and founded the Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd. Operations began in 1885. In January of that year a new era opened with the charging of the first Basic Open Hearth Steel furnace in the British Isles at Brymbo. A month later a sixteen ton steam hammer began forging ingots; a second hand rolling mill bought from Barrow was erected;—rolling commenced in August, and the first deliveries of steel to customers were made in September. The first consignment sent out was to the Alyn Tinplate Co. at Mold, and the steel bars were sent on a farm wagon drawn by a team of six horses.

The steel works was beginning to develop when Henry Robertson died; it did not grow into a large unit like those which were to be erected elsewhere later, but its products earned for the Brymbo works a great reputation for the special types of steel upon which they concentrated. The Company's success was largely due to the leadership of J. H. Darby, Sir Henry Robertson (son of Henry Robertson), Peter Williams and J. S. Hollings, and the staffs of metallurgists, engineers and skilled workers they succeeded in assembling at the Brymbo works.

During the 1914-18 war, Brymbo steel was used in considerable quantities for the production of torpedo nets for the protection of vessels against submarine attack. Two special lines were also given priority—steel for the manufacture of certain parts of the delicate fuse mechanism of a particular type of shell. During the 1930-31 trade depression, the Brymbo Steel Works closed down. The Steel Co. (the ordinary shares of which had been bought by Baldwins in

1918) went into liquidation in 1930. The works at Brymbo remained closed for over two years, Sir Henry Robertson, however, succeeded in re-opening them. He was then over seventy years of age and he told the writer at the time that he only wished he was fifty years younger to tackle the job he then had on hand. A new company was formed in 1933 and in the following year with a few major alterations in plant, the works went into production once again. Trade revived and the Brymbo Co., with its electric furnaces, played a prominent part in the Second World War. Sir Henry B. Robertson died in 1948 at the age of 86. After graduating in science at Jesus College, Cambridge, he succeeded to heavy responsibilities on the death of his father, but he worked hard to promote the industrial development of East Denbighshire, and was associated with a series of enterprises in the Wrexham district, in addition to those he had in Lancashire, for more than half a century.

In 1952 the managing director of the Brymbo Co. was Mr Esmond Morse (since 1948 Guest, Keen & Nettlefold have been closely associated with the works). The Brymbo Co. employed 1,330 workers in 1951. The Company provided the matters of forgings for aircraft and automobiles with raw materials in the form of billets between two inches and four inches square in plain Carbon and alloy steels; and the wire drawer with billets of many qualities. Since 1906, the Company have specialised in the manufacture of Silicon Steel, which has the special properties needed for electrical equipment. This type of steel is rolled into bars. After rolling and heat treatment, the sheets go to the stamper for the production of the luminae from which transformer cores, rotors and stators of dynamos are built. Basic Pig Iron is also produced to make Basic Open Hearth furnace charges. By-products are Blast Furnace Slag used in the production of Tar Macadam for road construction, and Basic Slag at the Basic Open Hearth Plant which is used as a fertiliser in agriculture.

The Brymbo Steel works actually stand on the site where iron was first produced by John Wilkinson at the end of the 18th century. The 'Old No. 1' Blast Furnace was built in 1798, and the stone structure is still standing near the present furnace. Caello Brickworks, established in 1870, produce silica bricks for steel furnace construction, and fireclay bricks and blocks for blast furnace linings; also fireclay liners, sleeves, and nozzles for ladles. The present blast furnace was built in 1908.

Writing in 1952 of the steel industry in North Wales (now represented by the Brymbo works in Denbighshire, and the Hawarden Bridge (Shotton) and the Darwen and Mostyn works in Flintshire), Sir Geoffrey Summers, C.B.E. (a director of John Summers & Sons of Shotton Steel Works) had the following to say about Brymbo:

'At Brymbo in Denbighshire, the Brymbo Steel Works Ltd. with open hearth furnaces, four modern electric hearth furnaces, rolling mills and ancillary plant, produce principally silicon and other alloy steels. The demand for alloy steel is increasing, and Brymbo would, therefore, seem to have a considerable contribution to make to the Welsh iron and steel industry in the future.'

Considerable extensions and developments at the Brymbo works were announced in 1957.

* * *

STONE QUARRYING

Quarrying for slate, sandstone, silica, limestone, clay, sand and gravel gave employment to approximately 790 people in Denbighshire at the end of 1951. The number of workmen employed at the quarries varies so considerably from time to time that exact information is difficult to obtain. Certain quarries are only worked intermittently. The following is an official list of the quarries in the county in 1952:

Mineral	*Name of Quarry*	*Situation*
Slate	Clogau	Horseshoe Pass, Llangollen
Silica Group	Bwlchgwyn	Brymbo
	Nantyffrith	Bwlchgwyn
	Nantyffrith No. 2	Bwlchgwyn
	Nantyffrith No. 3	Bwlchgwyn
	Tir Celyn	Minera
	Garth Sand Rocks	Trevor
	Penyfoel No. 1	Llanarmon
Sandstone	Cefn No. 2	Cefn, Ruabon
	Graig Goch	Nebo, Llanrwst
	Hafoty Arddwyfaen	Cerrigydrudion
	Tanyffordd	Llanrwst
Limestone	Graig	Llanarmon
	Chirk Castle	Trevor
	Colomendy	Loggerheads
	Pistyll Gwyn	Llanarmon
	Sandy Lane	Erryrys
	Raynes	Llysfaen
	Llysfaen and Pentregwyddel	Llysfaen
	Penmaenrhos	Llysfaen
	Llanddulas	Llanddulas
	Parc-y-Meirch	St George
	Llanarmon Lime Works	Erryrys
	Minera Lime	Minera
	Aberduna	Maeshafn (Mold)
	Plas Gwilym	Old Colwyn
	Graig	Denbigh
	Graigddewart	Ruthin

Mineral	*Name of Quarry*	*Situation*
Coal	Pentrefron Opencast	nr. Penrhos, Brymbo
	Gardden Lodge Opencast	Gardden Lodge, Ruabon
Clay, Sand or Gravel	Llay Sand	Llay
	Maesmynan	Afonwen (Caerwys)
	Hafod	Ruabon
	Gwersyllt	Gwersyllt
	Penybont Brickworks	Newbridge
	Ballswood	Llay
	Llanypwll Sand	Llanypwll
	Llwynenion Brickworks	Rhos
	Llay Hall Gravel	Cefnybedd
	Gardden	Ruabon
	Pant farm gravel	Gresford

(One or two of these quarries, given in the official list for Denbighshire, have Flintshire addresses: i.e. Caerwys and Mold.)

From the foregoing list it will be seen that only one slate quarry remains in production. It is situate on the Horse Shoe Pass, near Llangollen. Slate quarrying has never been a major industry in Denbighshire, although it once prospered on a small scale in the Llantysilio and Glyn Ceiriog districts for many years. It was well established in the latter area in the 17th century, and received a fillip in both districts when the Ellesmere canal was extended to Chirk and Llangollen. Later the construction of the railways, and of the Glyn Valley tramway gave a further lease of life to the industry, but transport costs were a handicap. The Glyn Slate quarries went out of production in 1947, leaving one survivor—the Clogau near Pentredwr, Llangollen.

Limestone quarrying in East Denbighshire, especially in the Minera and Chirk Castle districts, received an impetus

in the early days of the Industrial Revolution when lime was required for the ironworks, in addition to new demands from agriculturists.

Stone and lime were sent to Liverpool by sea from Llanddulas where a pier was built in 1822. (It was replaced by a new wharf in 1947.) To-day at the Llanddulas Quarries of Kneeshaw, Lupton and Co., loads of roadstone, chippings, fluxing stone and ground limestone are sent out by road, rail and sea. These quarries employ about 85 men. The I.C.I. Ltd., at Llysfaen, employ 100 workers. Over 70 people are employed by Limestone Products Ltd. at St. George, near Abergele, where since 1923 this concern has been producing limestone in lump, various grades of crushed stone, ground stone, burnt lime (lump and small) and hydrated lime. The Minera Lime Co., Wrexham, where 100 quarrymen and Kiln workers are engaged, was established in 1865, but limestone was quarried at Minera at an earlier date. Most of the lime now produced at Minera is supplied to the Brymbo Steel Works and to a steelworks in South Staffordshire. The demands of local builders, of the chemical industry, and of farmers are also met, and limestone flour is produced for stone dusting at the collieries.

The Chirk Castle Lime and Stone Co., Ltd. of Vroncyssyllte, was formed in 1877 to lease the lime rocks then being worked at Chirk Castle and Vron, and across the Shropshire border at Bronygarth. The Vron rocks had been worked for many years previously, and lime was taken by canal to Salop and round into Cheshire. Lime burning increased after the opening of the Shropshire Union canal about 1800. Later the Vron branch line connecting the works with the Great Western Railway was constructed. The present products of the concern are tarred and bituminised macadam, and chippings for road purposes, limestone for steel works and for road work, burnt lime for steel and chemical works, for building and for agriculture. In 1933 the Company also took over the Nantmawr Limestone Quarries where lime and crushed stone are produced.

The Bwlchgwyn Silica Co., Ltd., Bwlchgwyn, produce high grade silica stone for refractory purposes. The Bwlchgwyn Silica reserves are said to contain the best quality silica in the kingdom. In recent years there have been considerable developments at Gresford and Llay in quarrying for sand and gravel.

(To be concluded)

Giler, Cerrig-y-drudion, Denbighshire*

By DOUGLAS B. HAGUE

GILER is situated in the parish of Cerrig-y-drudion in the hundred of Isaled, Co. Denbigh. Giler, and the parent house Plas Iolyn stand within half a mile of one another on the south bank of the Marddwr, about two and a half miles east of its confluence with the Conway. Both, and the third 'family' house Voelas, situated three miles to the west, lie on the old drovers' route from Gwynedd to England, which has been perpetuated by the present Holyhead road (A5). They stand near the watershed between the Conway and the Dee, at an altitude of 900 ft., near the upper limit of the rough and exposed pasture. The site is open to the north and east; but some shelter is afforded from the other quarters by the slopes of Bryn and Garn Prys. The bleak and inhospitable appearance of the country side belies its considerable reputation as a cattle rearing area.

In essence Giler consists of two separate houses set end to end on a E.W. axis (Pl. 1). Other examples of two or more houses similarly disposed occur in N. Wales. This represents the Welsh custom known as *byw cyd* or living together, which is a manifestation of the importance of family ties in Welsh social life. The strength of patriarchal bonds caused even adult and married children to continue living under the same roof, or in a house immediately adjacent. *Cf.* Gwydir, Braich-y-saint and Carreg in Caernarvonshire,[1] and Park, Llanfrothen, Merioneth.[2] The older, principal house on the E. is entered through a porch added to the N. front.

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*I am indebted to Mr J. H. Wooton Davies for permission to reproduce this much shortened version of an account commissioned by him in 1954. Also to Mr Bob Owen for his help and company during one memorable visit to Giler. Finally to Mr R. J. Thomas and his colleagues in the N.L.W. for the most kind and patient assistance.

[1] R.C.A.M., *Caernarvonshire*, Vol. I, No. 656, ditto Vol. II, No. 1380, ditto Vol. III, not yet numbered.

[2] *Arch. Camb.*, XCVII, pp. 98-112.

Other additions include a detached gatehouse dated 1623, an early 17th-century stair wing to the S. of the older house, and a porch to the W. house which is entered from the S. Access between the two houses has been made and blocked at different times. Flanking the courtyard entered through the gatehouse are two late 17th-century outbuildings.

The house is built of local rubble consisting of split lava boulders and coarse gritstone. The slate roofs are modern but the timbers are old. The N. eaves of the E. house are finished with a hollow chamfered eaves course, but over the W. house this is continued on a plain chamfer. The copings of the W. gable are original, those on the E. have been renewed but the old rounded kneelers have

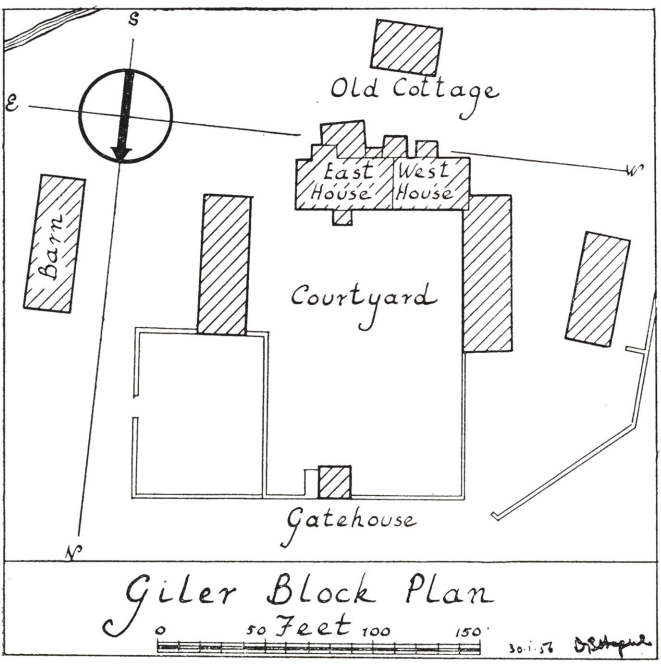




Plate 1. GILER: MAIN NORTH FRONT

survived. The tops of all the chimneys have been either rebuilt or repaired. The fenestration has been little altered although some modern window frames and cills have been fitted, and one wooden lintel has been replaced by one of concrete. The original window frames in the E. house have wooden mullions with a small ogee mould on the inside. In no case have original glass or glazing bars survived.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The 1623 gatehouse (Pl. 2a) is clearly not the earliest building on the site, but the dates and builders of the earlier portions cannot be settled with certainty.

It seems likely however that the first part was built by Rhys Wynn[3] *ob.* 1606-7, or for him by his father Cadwaladr ap Maurice, who is said to have received a grant of Voelas from Henry VIII in 1545-6.[4]

The early history of the site of Giler is not known, but its close siting to Plas Iolyn may represent a desire to consolidate the old family home by establishing themselves as near as possible to it. Their juxtaposition might also be due to the friendship of the poet Rhys with his more famous cousin Capt. Thomas Prys of Plas Iolyn, the poet privateer.

Rhys was a poet of some standing and at the time of his death in 1606-7 he was certainly living at Giler, this was clear from the exchange of *cywyddau* between him and Thomas Prys.[5] In one friendly diatribe it is alleged that Rhys spent most of his active life philandering in Hawarden. His father who died in 1611, not only outlived his son Rhys, but also his grandson William. This is proved by the survival of

[3]N.L.W. MS. 7008 E.; 'Llyfr Sion Gruffudd', a book of pedigrees collected by Sion Gruffudd of Car Cyriog, *ca.* 1697 gives the following pedigree—(p. 49) 'Robert Price Esq[r]. ap Thomas Pryse ap Robert Pryse ap Tho. Pryse ap Rys wynn ap Cadwaladr ap morys gethin ap Rys ap meredydd'. The association of Rhys Wynn with Giler is first mentioned in J. E. Griffith's Pedigrees (1914). p. 189.

[4]J.E.G. *op. cit.*, p. 326, but no confirmation of this grant appears in published Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic Henry VIII.

[5]N.L.W. Mostyn MS. 144, pp. 82-94.

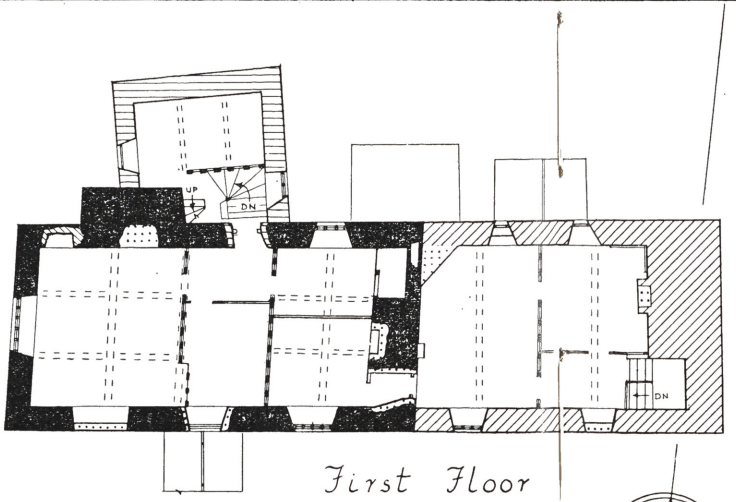
a lament on the death of his son William who had settled in Bath, which Rhys must have written before 1606.[6]

Rhys had three other sons, Thomas, Cadwaladr and Robert—nothing is known of the last two save the record that they were living in 1596.[7] It seems probable that the second house at Giler was built for one of these, but it is largely to Thomas that the house owes its present form and appearance. Not only did he live there, but he seems to have secured the entire house for himself at an early date, converting it into a residence of suitable size and dignity for one holding the rank of High Sheriff. This culmination of his social career took place in 1624 and the completion of the gatehouse[8] during the previous year shows a determination to ride the crest of the wave of fashion. Thomas married Elizabeth the daughter of John of Penmachno, possibly she was of humble stock, although the date of the marriage is not known, in 1623 the arms he used were those of his father and the initials T.P.W. were his own.

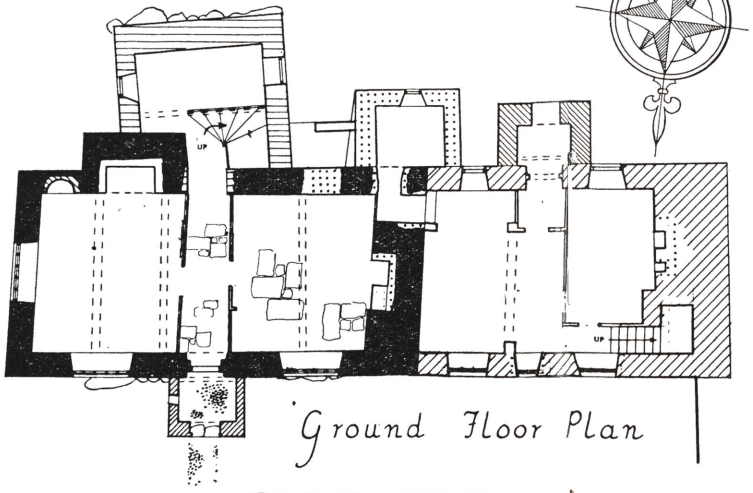
Their only son Robert was responsible for some building activity as indicated by the survival of a date-stone bearing his initial and the date 1658, the year in which he was High Sheriff. Although reset in the outer face of the courtyard wall E. of the gatehouse, it seems likely that Robert's building did not form part of the house proper.

Little is known of his son Thomas save the date of his death in 1664, and the fact that his eldest son Robert (1653-1732) was the most famous and last member of the family

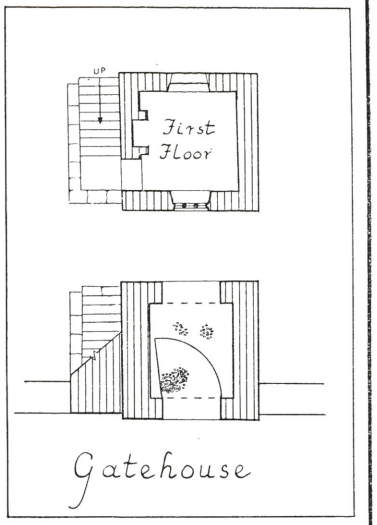
[6]N.L.W. Llanstephan MS. 54, p. 259.
[7]J.E.G. *op. cit.*, p. 189.
[8]Other gatehouses in N. Wales include Plas Mawr, Conway, built in 1595: this is the earliest and one of the largest and has been little altered. See R.C.A.M. *E. Caernarvonshire*, No. 185 Madryn and Cefn Amwlch both in Caerns. are of the same type and size as Giler. The large gatehouse at Gors-y-Gedol in Merioneth dating from *ca.* 1630 is rather unorthodox in form. The latest and largest, Bodfel (*ca.* 1640) in Caerns.; in this case the gatehouse was all that was erected of a grandiose building scheme that came to nothing owing to the Civil War, the entrance passage of the gatehouse was blocked in order to convert it to normal domestic use. Other gatehouses are at Glyn Cywarch (house dated 1616) and Plas Rhiwedog (house dated 1664), both in Merioneth.



First Floor



Ground Floor Plan



Gatehouse

Legend

- Ca 1560
- Ca 1600
- Early 17th Century
- 1623
- Probably 1623
- 18th Century
- Uncertain and 19th Century
- Modern

GILER

CERRIG - Y - DRUDION

Denbighshire

Scale of Feet. 10 0 10 20 30 40

30.1.62

to be connected with Giler.[9] A later and famous descendant was Sir Uvedale Price (1747-1829) well-known for his essay on 'The Picturesque', however, there is no evidence that he ever even visited Giler.

Later occupation of the house has not resulted in any major alterations or additions.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Although no original glazing survives in either house, some windows still have their original frames. Almost all the wooden floors are of old oak, but some appear to have been re-arranged. Unless otherwise described the ceilings are plastered.

The East House is of two floors with a disused attic. On the ground floor it consisted of two rooms, that to the E., having a projecting fireplace on the S. wall whilst that on the W. had a gable-end fireplace. Originally the principal E. room was entered directly from the front door in the N. wall. The present partition to the left of the entrance passage is probably an early 17th-century insertion, its head-beam is not parallel with the principal ceiling members. Parts of the partition on the opposite side of the passage are original and this smaller W. room beyond must have contained the original stair to the first floor. Although there is now no visible evidence of this stair it would by analogy, have been in the blocked recess to the S. of the fireplace. The stair was

[9]The marginal illustrations on the map of Denbigh and Flint by William Williams, of *ca.* 1720, now at Gwydir, includes a prospect of Giler (Pl. 2b) showing a layout so lavish as to make it manifestly clear that the artist had never seen the buildings himself. The gatehouse is much inflated and the outbuildings flanking the courtyard are shown as two-storeyed blocks with attics. In the same panel is a faded and mutilated engraving of the arms of the Hon. Rob. Price—

1, *Gu. lion ramp* for Marchweithian.
2, *rose* (*gu.*) imaginary arms for Hywel ap Rhys.
3, gryffin gu?
4, (*Gu.*) *a chevron* (*erm*) *between 3 man's heads and affrontee* (*arg*) for Ednyfed Fychan.
5, *Vert a stag* for Llywarch Holburch.
6, *Arg. two trefoils slipped sa. a chief of the last* for Rodd of Foxley co. Hereford.

probably removed when Thomas ap Rhys Wynn occupied the whole house in order to make communication between the two houses. To replace the stair the S. wing was built, about half the area of which was taken up by a wooden stair which must have been similar in form to the present one which replaced it in the last century. The partitioning in this wing and its roof and indeed all the early 17th-century woodwork, are of typically poor quality and show some evidence of haste; they contrast unfavourably with the original work best seen in the ceiling of the E. room on the first floor.

The E. room had its fireplace remodelled and over it is a modern replica of the arms and initials of Thomas Prys Wyn that appear in the gatehouse. The room is lined up to dado height with a mixed collection of late 16th and early 17th-century oak panelling; to the E. of the fireplace is a mid-18th-century mural cupboard which has double doors of raised bevelled panels. The west wall is formed of the inserted partition of post-and-panel type. South of the modern central entrance is a pair of blocked early 17th-century panelled doors. As both sides are moulded, the doors cannot have been made up of old wainscoting, but equally clear is the fact that the upper panel and frames of each have been added to replace an earlier upper pair, as the rail at the level of the joint is moulded on top. This may, however, represent nothing more than a repair to the top of the doors. The position of the original hinges is not clear.

The West room has no features of interest. The partition against the passage contains some good quality work with a chamfered horizontal rail; of these two sections which flank a piece of late plasterwork, the northern one seems to be an original feature.

The entrance passage has a slate-paved floor, its sides are formed of the partitions already described. The front door (Pl. 3) of planks heavily studded with nails, and having large external strap hinges with hammered chevron decoration and fleur-de-lis terminals—if not original is certainly



Plate 2a. GILER: GATE HOUSE



Plate 2b. GILER: AN EARLY 18th CENTURY DRAWING

early 17th century. It hangs in a massive, crude frame, chamfered on the outside and rebated on the inside. Part of the wooden threshold has been cut away. Two odd dowels in the head are difficult to explain unless it was made up of re-used material. The opposite doorway leading to the S. wing now has no door, but small crooks survive in the N. face of the E. post.

The *East House*, first floor. This consists of four bedrooms, the fourth in the N.W. corner being accessible from the W. house only. It is impossible to recover the 16th-century arrangement of rooms, and even the 17th-century plan modifications are obscure. Modern partitions have separated the central bedroom from the landing, and formed two bedrooms out of the W. room.

The largest room, that at the E. is lit by one original window in the gable wall which has modern mullions and cill. In the N. wall a similar window has been blocked, but this retains a dado and a head consisting of re-used wainscoting of *ca.* 1600. The fireplace in the S. wall has been completely blocked; to the E. of which is a mural cupboard with doors of similar design and date to those in the room below. The door is modern, but the old opening has been widened and heightened a little; the door is hung on re-used 16th-century S hinges. The most impressive feature of the room is the fine late 16th-century ceiling. This consists of two cross beams together with two secondary beams and joists. All, save the W. beam are beautifully cut and have well-formed stopped chamfers. Possibly the W. beam, but certainly the partition below it, are 17th-century insertions.

The remaining first-floor rooms contain some very rough partitioning and a mixed collection of 17th-century doors.

The attic over the E. house is now disused, but as planned in the late 16th-century the space was intended for use. It was lit by an existing window in the E. gable and two narrow slits in the opposite gable, these latter were blocked when the W. house was built. The original internal arrangements can only be conjectured owing to alterations



Plate 3. THE FRONT DOOR AT GILER

both in the 17th-century and in recent times. The roof is supported on four trusses of two different types. The outer ones are of slighter construction than the inner, and consist of plain principals with cambered collars and open apexes. It is possible that these date from the late 16th-century, but more likely that they date from an early 17th-century reconstruction of the roof.

The two central trusses are of massive design with plain ties, each show signs of modification and earlier arrangements which are difficult to reconcile with their present position. These and some other re-used purlins show evidence of windbracing, which not only would seem unlikely in such a confined space, but would suggest a date nearer the middle or beginning of the 16th century than at the end. It is clear they have been re-used, and it is easier to postulate that they came from a smaller, and older building, which had three roof bays only. The fact that only two occur here suggests that only two were available when Giler was built. This house could never have been roofed with less than four trusses and it would seem reasonable to consider that this pair of principals antedate the house than to postulate that they are coeval with it, and that the other two trusses had to be replaced in the 17th century. Both central trusses show evidence of having had a filling of wattle but retain fragments of later plank partitions.

The S. stair wing is clearly an addition and all its surviving timber is of rough workmanship typical of the early 17th century. High up in the gable wall is a rectangular recessed panel with a plaster finish which bears the date 1623 outlined in white pebbles. These figures neither look old, nor fit the vertical proportions of the panel. It is probable that it originally contained a stone panel inscribed with this date, and perhaps initials, set in vertical pairs. The wing is bisected by a partition from E. to W. and extending through both floors. Although the upper half, which looks very improvised and may have been repaired, it is certain that the partition is an original feature. As already



Plate 4. GILER: THE SOUTH ELEVATION

stated the present stair is 19th century but must follow the design of the stair it replaced. It is lit by a window at a high level with splayed jambs and internal cill; the wooden mullion is original, and unlike those surviving in the main block which have a small ogee mould, this has a simple chamfer. From the landing, a narrow twisted stair leads to an attic room above the bathroom, with a roof consisting of a single roof truss with a morticed collar. From the head of this stair a rude disused stair leads to the attic over the main house. The awkward way in which this cuts the ceiling below, and the adjacent partition is clear proof that when built these attics were not reached by a stair in this position.

The porch is of a type common in the area in the 17th century. The opening with-out door, has an elliptical head cut from a single stone, and there is a small window in the E. wall. Internally the walls and ceiling have been plastered; externally the walling is not of such good quality as the gatehouse.

Although it is clearly of the 17th-century workmanship it is impossible to correlate it with either the gatehouse, or the S. stair wing.

The West House, although of the same width is not so long as the earlier building. When built a certain degree of privacy was intended as its entrance on the S. is remote from the N. door of the older house. Although the masonry and the rounded eaves course are the same as in the E. house, the fenestration is much less pretentious. The windows in the N. wall all have diagonally set wooden mullions, and are smaller than in the E. house. Its S. front has small square windows; a solid porch probably of the early 18th century has been added to the entrance. Covering the junction of the two houses is a 19th-century single storey lean-to which is now reached from the W. house. It is clear that the original internal arrangement of rooms was similar to that in the older house, although none of the original ground floor partitions have survived. In this case, although the present wooden stair is quite modern, its position in the recess N. of the W. gable fireplace is clearly that of the earlier one.

When built, the principal ground floor room was set at the W. end, containing a large fireplace with the stair by its side. In modern times this order has been reversed, the E. half, formerly the small apartment or buttery, which had no heating, has been combined with the destroyed screen passage to form a kitchen with a modern stove set at its E. end. The earlier fireplace at the W. has been reduced in size and now heats a small parlour.

The present kitchen has a modern floor and one of the ceiling beams has been replaced by one of reinforced concrete. The front door retains its massive original frame and wooden threshold, but the small window in the centre of the N. elevation is a recent insertion with a frame roughly made of old wood to harmonize with others in the facade.

On the first floor the house is almost equally divided into two rooms by a partition of very rough character. Here, as in the E. house, the early 17th-century partitioning is extremely badly set out; no real effort has been made to stop the partition against the walls with a solid post: in this case, there is a rough post against the N. wall and an equally shoddy panel terminates it against the S. wall.

The W. bedroom has a modern floor with a ceiling and main beam plastered. A small blocked fireplace in the W. wall has a chamfered stone shelf, which is a simple, but unexpected refinement. Set in the upper part of the S.W. angle of the room are two odd sections of early 17th-century panelling. That on the W. wall is of very richly recessed small square panels, the opulent character of this section makes it impossible to consider that the whole room was once wainscoted in this style. It may once have formed an over mantle here or elsewhere, or alternatively it may have been salvaged from a bed or similar piece of furniture. The panels in the S. wall are of usual early 17th-century design.

The E. bedroom has a modern floor, the central beam, that against the E. wall and the ceiling, are all plastered. The room is lit by two original windows, that in the N. wall has a central diagonal mullion like those on the ground floor.

The original entrance seems to be the one still in use, although this has been widened and the cill cut. In the centre of the partition is an inserted and now blocked door which was hung by two old S hinges and one of butterfly design. The E. ceiling beam is supported on a corbel near the centre of the E. wall. The S.E. corner has a diagonal blocking of uncertain purpose. It appears to be of solid construction and in the attic above this corner, carries a considerable burden of stone rubble.

This attic space has no windows, and it seems the present ceiling joists of the first floor were never intended to carry a floor; some of them are older, with stop-chamfered joists re-used on their sides. The main roof timbers are original but of poor quality, with low ties which support the view that the attic space was never used. The only feature of interest is that around the top of the triangular space, already noted in the description of the E. bedroom. The removal of the heap of rubble in the corner might reveal the purpose not only of this blocking, but also the curious blind dormer that pierces the roof at the junction of the two houses. Unless connected with this blocking and a curious fragmentary concavity visible in the top of the S. wall, this feature, which appears to be unaltered and never to have contained a window, or date tablet, must remain a mystery. It certainly cannot be connected with any part of the older house, as the old W. gable of this, with original windows to its attic can be seen intact from the attic of the W. house. There is no evidence that the triangular space below ever housed a fireplace, the flue of which would almost certainly have been discharged into the flue in the gable of the older house. An explanation which can only be regarded as both unlikely and a very alien concept for any vernacular builder to pursue, is that it is a purely aesthetic feature to enhance the S. elevation.

The S. porch is severely simple in design. In contrast to the shaped lintel of the N. porch, this has a crude, massive stone lintel. It cannot be closely dated, but the single roof

truss apparently purposely made, has a neatly morticed collar which is unlikely to be later than the beginning of the 18th century, and may well be considerably earlier.

The gatehouse (Pl. 2a) as already noted, is the only dated part of the building; and is also the most attractive feature of the whole group. It consists of a wide, but low passage, spanned each end by an elliptical arch of thin voussoirs. As in other examples, it was intended for pedestrians only. It is square on plan, and has four gables and a stone mullioned window over an archway lighting the small room over the passage. Its otherwise perfect symmetry is violated by the tall square chimney on the E. side. The roof has been re-slated, and modern aluminium rainwater heads bearing the date 1623, have been fitted at each corner. The original outer door has survived; this consists of a large single door carried on two strap hinges hung from the E. side of the opening. Both it, and the original central wicket are lavishly furnished with doornails.

The upper room is reached by an external stair against the E. wall which leads up to an opening with a modern door to the N. of the fireplace. The stone windows have curious label mould consisting of three plain orders; the S. window has only recently been opened. Over the fireplace is a large white-washed plaster panel framed and cut with strap decoration, it contains the date 1623 and the initials T P W. In a central shield set in scrolled escutcheon are the arms of Thomas ap Prys Wynn; (1) (*Gu*) *a lion ramp.* (*ar. armed and langued az.*) for Marchweithian; (2) *a rose* (*gu*) *imaginary arms for Hywel ap Rhys.* (3) *a lion ramp.* (*ar*) *holding a rose sprig* (*prr*) *in the dexter paw.* (4) (*Gu*) *a chevron* (*erm*) *between 3 man's heads erased and affronte* (*arg*) *for Ednyfed Fychan.*

OUTBUILDINGS

In the yard S. of the house are the remains of an old building which contains one massive stop-chamfered cross

beam and a smaller fragment used as a rear lintel. Although much altered it seems that this is the 17th-century cottage described by Bezant Lowe,[10] which then had a beam bearing the following inscription: R.E.P. 3044 1051. The 1051 is almost certainly a misreading of 1651, the 3044 might be 30, 44 representing the ages of Robert Price H.S.D. 1658 and Elizabeth his wife *obit* 1661.

The two outbuildings flanking the courtyard appear to date from the 17th century, have little refinement save for a chamfered eaves course. The W. building now subdivided at a low level has a roof of seven bays, the principals having double collars. In the angle between it and the W. house is a 19th-century threshing circle. Opposite, the E. building has a very rough roof of eight bays, the principals are of crucked type, much repaired and most have had low ties added. Detached further E. is a well-built large barn with a roof of five bays consisting of queen-post trusses. It has the usual large central doors with two rows of ventilating slits in the side walls. Half of the small detached building standing N.W. of the house which has a loft with dormers and an external stair probably dates from the 18th century.

[10]Bezant Lowe. *Heart of Northern Wales,* Vol. II, p. 495.

Plas Chambres

[*Notes on some Elizabethan plaster-work brought to light after a fire in Plas Chambres, Denbighshire, in February, 1958.*]

By DOUGLAS B. HAGUE

THIS account does not purport to be a description of Plas Chambres, which is a somewhat complicated structure. There is no visible evidence that the house is older than 1598, but the structure may well date from earlier in the sixteenth century. There appear to be several modifications and additions made during the 17th century; and good wainscoting and a stair were added early in the 18th century. Finally, more recent accretions have resulted in the present plan. Fortunately the fire was restricted to the ground floor N.E. room of the 16th-century main block—with very slight damage to the room above (Pl. 5).

The fireplace beam had been half destroyed by the fire, and in extinguishing the blaze some part of the Queen Anne panelling was pulled down. This revealed a typical narrow Elizabethan strap-work plaster frieze—and the original timber frame of the earliest structure. There was also some later plaster work in the form of a shield of arms—but this and a smaller shield on the frieze had been chiselled flat in order to accommodate the later panelling. From the evidence revealed the structural development of the house would appear to be as follows.

Period I; a timber framed structure with wall panels plastered internally and the present stone fireplace with chimney breasts exposed. These are nicely worked and chamfered, and with a similarly finished beam were clearly intended to be seen.

Period Ia; is so called because I was not at the time able to prove that it is separate from period I, but I suspect that it is. To confirm this theory would have entailed removing some of the frieze and lifting floor boards in the room above to note the earlier finish (if any) of the joists



[R.C.A.M. Crown Copyright]

Plate 5. PLAS CHAMBRES. PLASTERWORK REVEALED AFTER FIRE

carrying the plaster ceiling. This is the only dated work in the building and is clearly marked 1598 in a panel of the frieze on the left of the fireplace. Of the same date is the existing moulded ceiling (Pl. 6), which received very sympathetic treatment from the early 18th century joiners, who reconciled their classical cornice to the cruder Elizabethan design.

In a panel to the right of the fireplace is a small mutilated quartered shield flanked by the letters CG. With the exposed fireplace, plaster frieze and ceiling, went contemporary oak wainscoting which fitted tight against the



[R.C.A.M. Crown Copyright]

Plate 6. PLAS CHAMBRES: CEILING PANEL OF 1598

frieze. This panelling was probably removed in the early 17th century, and sections of it are now fixed in the hall. This seems to me the most reasonable explanation, but it could be proved were any further sections of the late panelling removed.

Period 2. This is clearly marked by the plastering of the chimney breasts and the beam as indicated by the nailed lathes thereon, and also the main walls. The large plaster shield over the centre of the fireplace seems coeval with this; the apparent joint or vertical crack between it and the adjacent plaster is probably due to the individual handling of the actual plaster moulding. As in the smaller shield the quartered charges had been obliterated. It was flanked by the initials H (sinister side broken off, presumably C) and AC. The outline of the mantling could easily be traced and its florid design clearly indicated a 17th century date.

Period 3; the fitting of the 18th-century panelling, and subsequent periods present no great difficulties, the former was most probably fitted by John Chambres who was High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1713. The room has been little altered since, a pleasant regency niche was devised in the end wall, and a fireplace now removed, appeared to be modern and 'not in taste'.

THE DATE OF THE PLASTERWORK AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE ARMS

The balance of evidence is in favour of all the plaster work having been done for Harry Chambres in 1598 and later. It has been suggested[1] that Plas Chambres was built by Henry Chambres the husband of Elizabeth Dutton several generations before, and I will not question this. The tiny fragment of timber framing visible could not be dated, it could be 1500 or 1590; the most likely explanation is that the family had an earlier house on the site. I believe that in 1598 Harry Chambres had the ceiling and plaster frieze

[1]Mary Unwin. Denbigh. Hist. Soc. Trans., Vol. III, 1954, p. 9.

made. The arms in the frieze and the initials CG represent his parents. John Chambres and his wife Dorothy Goodman of Ruthin. Their arms would have included Chambres—*Az.* a dexter arm embowed, couped at the shoulder, in armour *or*, in the hand proper a red rose, barked, slipped and leaved *vert*, and Goodman—Per pale *erm* and *sa.* an eagle displ. with two heads *or* on a canton *az.* a martlet of the third. By deductions, these two must have been married about 1550 and may well have been dead when the plastering was done. I do not doubt the date 1598, and believe that in its original form with the oak wainscoting Harry would have set a panel bearing his arms and those of his wife in the centre. This might have been a carved wooden panel, removed with the wainscoting, but whatever the material, its design would have been of the rather stiff Elizabethan form. It is possible that other arms of his ancestors are still *in situ* behind the present wainscoting. Obviously no Welsh squire would put any but his own arms in a central position, so the large panel must have borne the quartered arms of Chambres and those of his wife Anne Ffoulkes whom he must have married about 1575. These were: *gu* 3 boars heads erased *ar* in pale. As the style of these arms is late they must have been erected towards the end of his life. The bishop's transcripts of registers are all too late to record his demise, and his name is not included in the list of wills proved at St. Asaph;[2] but some information can be gleaned from the Chirk Castle papers deposited in the National Library of Wales. In the marriage settlement[3] of 1614, between Harry's son John and Anne Midleton, niece of the first Sir Thomas Midleton of Chirk, mention is made of Harry living at Plas Chambres with his son; this is another example of the Welsh custom *byw cyd*, as noted at Giler and many other houses in North-west Wales. Apart from progeny this union precipitated a rather unpleasant suit between the two families in 1621-3.[4] It is recorded that

[2]N.L.W. St. Asaph Diocesan Papers.
[3]N.L.W. Chirk Castle Papers. MS. 5386.
[4]N.L.W. Chirk Castle Papers. M.S.S. 5381-5.

Anne's father Charles Midleton died on Good Friday 1621 at Plas Chambres ' . . . being thether removed in a horse-litter in the time of his sickness and within a few dayes before his death from the Castle of Denby. where he lately dwelled . . . . ' Whilst on his death bed or just afterwards some dirty work was alleged to have been done. They ' . . . did keepe and detayne . . . goods and chattles . . . bills bonds . . . deeds of mortgage note books . . . . ' etc. and questions were asked about the contents of the deceased's 'leather budgett'.

The fact that in this rather acrimonious case Harry Chambres was not called upon to give evidence or indeed is mentioned at all in the proceedings suggests that he no longer moved in material circles: perhaps he held an incorporeal watching brief. It can be stated therefore with reasonable confidence that this shield must have been set up between 1614 and 1620 by Harry Chambres. He and his son were then both living at Plas Chambres, although the latter was a burgess of Denbigh, and presumably a person of some consequence as early as 1597, and had of course married a Midleton. The initials H(C) and AC can only represent Harry and Anne, there being no later christian name beginning with an H,[5] indeed with the eye of faith and a little fore-knowledge the outline of the arms can still be traced on two of the quarters.

[5]History of Powis Fadog, Vol. V, p. 385-8.

Excursion: Gresford Church

ON Saturday, the 14th September, 1957, the Society visited Gresford. The Society was welcomed by the Vicar, Canon W. V. Lort who gave an introductory talk on the Church and its history. Addresses on various features of the Church were given and are published separately in this volume. The speakers were Lady Clement Jones, Miss E. M. Preen, Mr. D. Leslie Davies, and Dr. Mostyn Lewis. In the case of Miss Preen and Mr. Davies the accounts published are much fuller than the actual addresses given in the church.

The Society is greatly indebted to the Vicar, not only for his kind welcome, but also for his helpful co-operation. He gave every facility to the speakers before the meeting and his own account of the history of the Church was very much appreciated. After tea, the members made their way to Trevalyn Hall at the kind invitation of Lady Clement Jones. The Hall was the ancestral home of the Trevors, whose Chapel was visited by the Society in the afternoon. With Sir Clement, Lady Clement Jones conducted the party over her home where they had laid out many of her family's treasures which are of intrinsic and historical value, and the Society greatly enjoyed this opportunity of close inspection of them. The visit to this Tudor mansion proved a most enjoyable climax to a successful day. Mr. J. Idwal Jones, M.P., expressed the thanks of the Society to Sir Clement and Lady Jones for their gracious hospitality and for the great trouble they had taken to make its members welcome. The meeting, which was very well attended, was organised by Mr. Howel Williams, to whom much praise is due for the excellence of the arrangements.

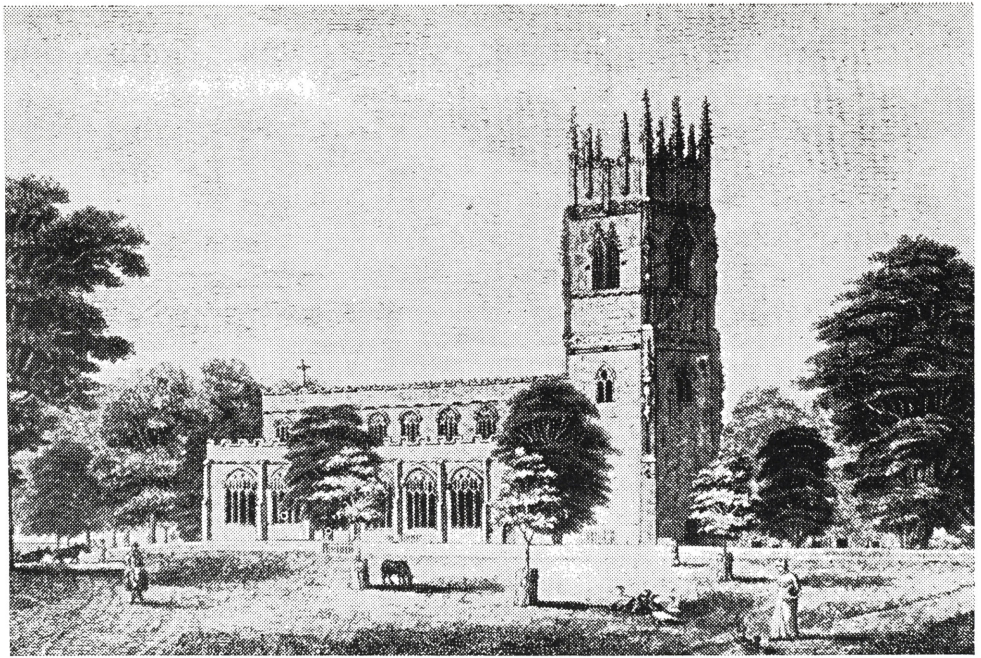


Plate 7. GRESFORD CHURCH, c. 1800

'THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GRESFORD CHURCH'

By D. LESLIE DAVIES

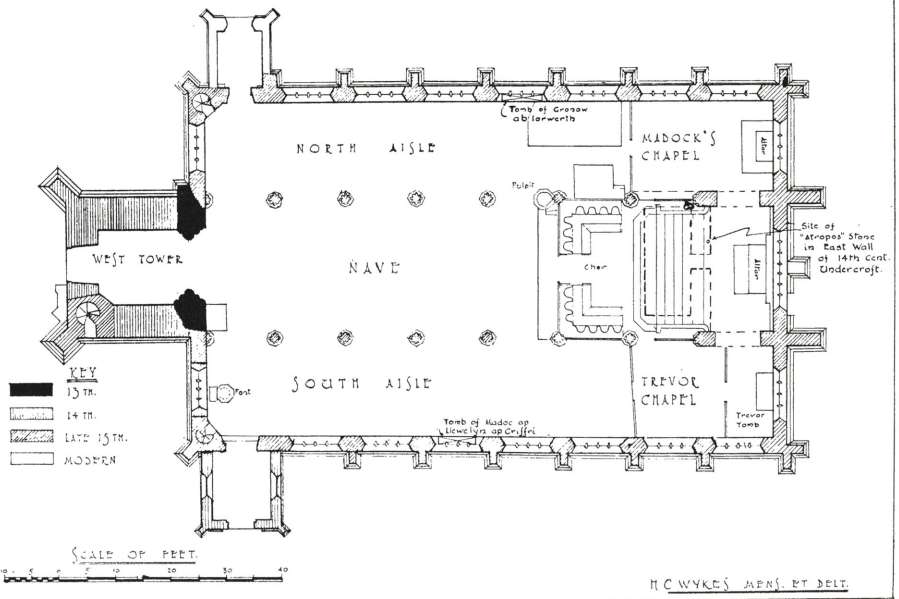
This church, whose beauty is unsurpassed anywhere in the Principality, has inspired much scholarly attention and devotion. Canon Lort has told us of Chancellor Trevor Parkins, who lived in Gresford throughout his very long life and spent many years in unravelling the story of the church. He first published his findings in a lecture given to a learned society at Oxford in 1848, 60 years before his death. Vicar Fishbourne, who retired in 1916 also published a brilliant History, and upon this I have had to lean very heavily.[1]

The main fabric the worshipper sees from his pew, that is the East, North and South—but not the West—of the church, is clearly of the late Perpendicular period. We are able to date the east window of the Maddock chapel, depicting the life of St. Anne, and the birth of the Virgin, on the evidence of Sampson Erdwick,[2] for it is inscribed 'Jno ap Madoc Vaghan and Margaret his wife. Ao 1498'. This is held to be the year in which the Perpendicular fabric was completed. That date would accord perfectly with stylistic details of the building.

But clearly the church is very far from being of one date, and there are many features which show that structural changes have been made at different times. A glance backward to the west wall of the south aisle, for example, will show not only a Decorated window, but the distinct traces in the masonry above the Tower arch of the gable end of an earlier building. The Sacrarium too has some unusual features, for it is, as has been somewhat irreverently remarked, perched at the top of a flight of five steps; and, even more unusual this, it has a wooden floor. On either side

[1]E. A. Fishbourne, *All Saints', Gresford*, ed. 1924.
[2]Harleian Collection, Cat.Lob. MSS., Vol. 1.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, GRESFORD.



of the Sacrarium are two window-like openings whose function at first sight is obscure. Then again the curious may wonder why the Earl of Derby should present that fine East window to the church, a church whose interior is far more splendid than that of its neighbour, Wrexham, which has been an important town for centuries, when Gresford village was but a small huddle of houses. These are but a few of the pointers which suggest that the story of the development of the fabric of this church is by no means a simple one.

How far back there has been a church here it is impossible to say. The fact that forestry experts have recently pronounced the great yew tree to be upwards of seventeen hundred years old has led to much speculation involving the three Iron Age camps in the immediate vicinity, the disputed line of the Roman road joining Bovium and Ffrith, and the 'Atropos' stone[3] found in the 1908 restoration.

Let us start rather on surer ground, with Domesday Book, for unlike neighbour Wrexham, Gresford is noted in Domesday. Indeed this is the earliest reference to the church. King William's commissioners record in the Survey that there was 'a church and a priest' in Gresford in 1086. Where this church stood there is no evidence. It may have stood within the periphery of the castle of the Norman lord who established himself a mile to the north of the present church within the defences of the earlier Iron Age camp, known as the Rofft in later times and which was afterwards occupied by a Powysian successor. If so, any traces of this have been removed when the gravel pit obliterated the motte-and-bailey castle before the late war. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is not unreasonable to believe that the Domesday church was built on the site of the present church. It might be argued that the 'Atropos'

[3]This was found in the foundation-wall of the fourteenth century church. Some consider it to be native Roman; others of Romanesque date. The less venturesome see it as twelfth century grave-stone. The figure may be classical, of Atropos, who severed life's thread with the shears. On the other hand it may represent one of the mediaeval martyrs bearing the instrument of her martyrdom.

stone, already pressed into dubious service for an even earlier date, may, by virtue of ornamentation which has some suggestion of a Romanesque origin, rather than provincial Roman have belonged to this church. Such speculation is, of course, fraught with danger.

To place the story of the church in its true perspective, it is necessary to go back to the confused times of the English and Norman invaders, to the time of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn. He, in the middle of the eleventh century, cleared the English out of our parts—from the neighbourhood of Holywell, Mold and Wrexham. His success was short lived, for just three years before Duke William vanquished Harold at Hastings, Harold had re-established English dominion in Maelor Gymraeg. This is very evident from the picture Domesday gives of this district, for Domesday treats the whole of the lower Dee Valley (which included the old parish of Gresford) as a part of Cheshire, and therefore as part of Lichfield diocese.

In accordance with the well-known pattern of Norman conquest, William deputed the Earl of Chester, Hugh of Avranches, to subdue the borderlands in these parts. He again in turn sent his knights to Doddleston, Pulford and Marford, where they established motte-and-bailey castles as strong points of Norman dominion, from which to overrun Powys Fadog. They were not to enjoy their supremacy for long, for the Welsh fought back, and soon brought about a complete reversal in the fortunes of the Normans. For, possibly as early as the time of Rufus, from their home in the bleak moorlands around Cyrn-y-Brain, the 'progeny of Ken' burst out, impelled by pressures about which we may only surmise, and fanning out in the fertile lowlands on the Welsh bank of the lower Dee valley, re-established Welsh supremacy which was never successfully challenged until the final Edwardian conquest. The Norman invaders and their English henchmen were driven across Pulford Beck and across the Dee itself, and Maelor was freed for two centuries.

For generations, in fact right up to the sixteenth century, most of the free tenants in the parish of Gresford claimed descent from one or other of the leaders of this dramatic folk movement.[4] Evidence of this is to be found within the walls of the church where the arms of Ithel ab Eunydd, of Sandde Hardd, and of Elidir ap Rhys Sais occur in different places. It is to this period, no doubt, we are able to assign many place names in the old parish which are clearly corruptions of Welsh words. There are for example, Gamford (Gamffordd), Pistle (Pistyll), Caia (Caeau), Ithel's Bridge, Lavister (Llawystr) and Ubbutykill (still used by the older people) for Heol pwll y Kiln, just over the border at Acton Smithy. These may be paralleled in many a border parish.

The great interest of all this to us in our study of the fabric of the church lies in the fact that there can be little doubt that it was the Welshmen who recovered Maelor Gymraeg who built the earliest church of which any structural remains are to be found today. A. N. Palmer in a note he left in his papers in Wrexham Borough Library tells us that at a jury held at Gresford on the Feast of St. Michael 1333 it was declared that the church at Gresford 'was first built (or rebuilt on the site or on another church) by Trahaearn ab Ithel (ab Eunydd) and his five brothers'. This Trahaearn is known to have lived at the end of the twelfth century. This must be the lost document of Lewys Dwnn to which Fishbourne refers[5] which stated that 'the six sons of Ithell ab Eunydd, Lord of Gresford and six other townships, jointly gave the land on which to build a church'.

We are now able for the first time to form hypotheses with some degree of assurance. Not that we are able to say very much of this church other than to suggest its dimensions. If the wall immediately above the tower arch is examined, the outline, faint but unmistakeable, of a gable-end of steep pitch may be discerned. The masonry on either side of this

[4]T. P. Ellis, *The First Extent of Bromfield and Yale*, 1924.
[5]British Museum Additional MSS. 10013 folio 71A.

gable is clearly of a different date. This is seen more easily in a photograph Fishbourne prints in his History, and which was taken sometime in 1867, at the time of Archdeacon Wickham's restoration. This has generally been taken to mark the eastern end of the Early English church, which was built on the land given by the six sons of Ithel.

The west wall of this church was eighteen feet four inches in length. It was not until the 1908 restoration that the eastern limits of the thirteenth century church were defined. During this work, which will be described later, the undercroft which is immediately below the present altar steps, was cleared out. That is to say, the undercroft of the Decorated church appears to have been tacked on to an earlier building, no doubt the Early English church, since the external plinth of this, the first church, is seen on the internal wall of the undercroft which was the external wall of the Early English church. It is clear, then, that the east end of the Early English church stood where the present Nave meets the chancel, and that the West end of that church is the same as the present West end of the Tower within the limits defined by the outline of the gable already mentioned. The Tower arch was, of course, cut out of the wall in a later stage of the Church's development. No traces of any aisles have been found, but the external walls seem to have been four feet thick to make the aisleless church a mere foot broader than one of the present aisles.

On the outside of the church, in the angle formed by the junction of the North aisle and the Tower, is a buttress which has been pronounced to be of Early English design, and therefore of a date with this Early English church. There is, however, some doubt as to the function and date of this buttress. It is, however, regarded by all architects who have written about it as being of the Early English period in style.

Of this church, then, all we have left to us is the western gable end, the lower courses of the East wall in the

undercroft, and a disputed buttress in the angle formed by the junction of the north aisle and the tower. Its limits on the north and south cannot be defined without excavation.

THE DECORATED CHURCH

The simple church, single-aisled, built on land given by the sons of Ithel ab Eunydd stood for perhaps a century, and there it remained a humble building overtopped by the encompassing trees, for much of the wood, four leagues long which Domesday speaks of, must have stood throughout mediaeval times. The fourteenth century was a period of change, especially in ecclesiastical architecture. The border lands where Bromfield marched with the County Palatine, were by no means an exception to this rule. The little narrow church must have been virtually pulled down to be replaced, with the exceptions we have noted, by a much larger church. Very little of this Decorated church can be traced, but just enough to make the search worth while, and to allow us to suggest the plan of this Decorated church with reasonable confidence.

The West wall of the Early English church was retained, and a low tower was built against it, to make the two lower stages of the present tower. This was very plain, as were other local towers of this period. The tower arch, still *in situ,* was cut through this wall. Notice here that this plain arch of three chamfered orders dies off where it abuts on the North wall of the Tower, as we shall see, so as to make the tower arch central. Possibly the disputed Early English buttress may be involved in an explanation. The Tower was not completed and embellished until after the Reformation.

Now the most striking part of the Decorated Church to be seen from the body of the church is the window in the West wall of the South aisle. This is a good example of the later Decorated style, and probably its stonework is original —at least on the inside. Why this window was retained when in the fifteenth century the rest of the nave was rebuilt no-

one can venture to suggest. The South porch, which in the eighteenth century was turned into a vestry is usually attributed to this period. The square-headed windows are a later insertion. It should be noted that this porch was not bonded into the South aisle. Over the South porch is a representation of the Virgin Mary. (The North porch was erected as a memorial to those who lost their lives in the 1914-18 War.) A South aisle (and possibly a North aisle also) was built of the same dimensions as the present aisle, that is as wide as the older nave. It is possible that the lower courses of this South aisle, up to the cills, were retained in the Perpendicular re-building.

So much for the west and south of the church. What of the East end? The great problem which has perplexed students for generations is why was such a fine church built in Gresford. Edward Lhuyd counted a mere twenty houses round the church when he came here at the end of the seventeenth century[6]. Although the parish was immense, covering nearly twenty thousand acres, yet it was adequately served by chapels-of-ease. Holt and Isycoed were well provided for. The people in Allington and Burton may as early as this have had the boardland chapel of St. Peter to save them the journey up Marford Hill, a hazardous journey on a dark night. For the Welsh townships of Llay and Gwersyllt there was the Chapel of St. Leonard. Nothing remains of this now, except the name Pontycapel, which marks the site. It is, however, mentioned as early as Pope Innocent's *Valor.*[7]

To account for the existence of this fine church, Vicar Fishbourne advances the theory that Gresford was in mediaeval times, the site of 'some wonder-working images or

[6] *Parochialia*, pp. 142/3.

[7] All that remains of the boardland chapel of St. Leonard is its bell which still hangs, *teste* Lady Clement Jones, at Trevalyn Hall. The late A. N. Palmer noted several references to the Chapel at Pont y capel, notably in the Survey of 1507-8. This speaks of holdings of Dafydd ap Gr. ap Dafydd Sutton *Usque ad viam ducet de molia de Wershult (Gwersyllt) usque capell Scti Leornardi et in latit ab aqua de Aleyn.* Holograph note in Wrexham Public Library.

sacred relics' which attracted pilgrims from all over the Kingdom during the Middle Ages.' He believed that a more splendid Perpendicular church was planned with the view to ensuring an uninterrupted passage for pilgrims through the church, such as the Decorated church would not have furnished. This we shall discuss later.

What appears to have taken place at the eastern end was this: a chancel was built on to the eastern end of the Early English church, extending from the line of the eastern wall of that Early English church to a point level with the topmost of the present altar steps. Beneath this was an undercroft, which may still be seen. So that the Decorated chancel and its undercroft were something in the nature of an outshut against the earlier east wall. This structure was not entirely symmetrical. From north to south it measured eighteen feet two inches, which is roughly the measurement of the west wall of this Church, while from east to west it was between ten and twelve feet long. That there was no south aisle to this chancel was established in the 1908 renovations, when a plinth was found on the south wall of the undercroft, as may still be seen. In this case, the piscina of the Decorated period now in the South wall of the Trevor Chapel must have been brought here from somewhere else in the church.

What was the function of the undercroft? Fishbourne, no doubt basing his theory on some tradition which has not come down to us, believed that this was the 'treasure chamber, or strong room' made necessary to hold the vast wealth which was accumulated from the offerings of the pilgrims who came to pay their devotions to the 'wonder-making relics'—whatever they were the undercroft was certainly not designed for ornament. There is no embellishment whatsoever. The roof is coved, and it is lit by two narrow windows which are heavily barred. For many years, until it was cleared out in 1908 it served as a stokehold, being entirely filled by a massive heating apparatus, whose fumes and dirt were a source of the utmost annoyance to worshippers and cleaners.

While in no way attempting to discredit Vicar Fishbourne's theory which is admirably conceived and most ingeniously worked out, it is permissible to point out that this undercroft may have performed another function. It strongly resembles the not uncommon charnel-vault or *capella carnaria*, as he himself suggests, where the bones of the long deceased unwittingly dug up in the churchyard were reverently placed, which Wrexham was known to possess[8]. There is, however, no evidence of the stone altar which usually was set up in such charnel-houses. It should be remembered that where such chambers have been undoubtedly proved to be treasuries it is almost unknown for them to have an external door. The entrance to Gresford's fourteenth century undercroft, unlike that of Malpas for example, entry to which is from the inside of the church, is a doorway in its south wall. This opens on to the churchyard. There is no evidence that communication could be made into the undercroft from within the Decorated church itself. The drawbacks of such an arrangement are obvious.

The corner-stone of Fishbourne's theory that Gresford was a celebrated place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, is a lease dated 1543. Parfew, Bishop of St. Asaph from 1536-55, it will be remembered, wished to make Wrexham the seat of his diocese in place of St. Asaph. His palace was to have been the vicarage at Gresford. Arrangements went so far as to draw up a lease of the vicarage for 99 years. From this lease Fishbourne argued that pilgrims from all over the country made their devotions here and, of course, left their 'Oblaytions, offryngs and the like'.

Since Fishbourne's *Architectural History of the Parish of All Saints, Gresford* is out of print, it may be as well to quote the preamble to the Bishop's lease:

> 'To all Christen people . . .
> 'Wyllyam Whyte clerke, vycar of the parysh church of Gresford . . .
> 'Knowe yow that forasmuche as of late tyme meny and dyv(er)s oblatyo(n)s, offrrynge, ffru(i)ts, obventyones, emolume(n)ts,

[8]A. N. Palmer, *History of the Parish Church of Wrexham*, p. 183.

> commodytyes, p(ro)ffyts, casualtyes and advantag(e)s wer yerly from dyvers parts of this Realme browght, gyven and offerd at and yn the sayd churche of gresford, as then yn dyvers places off england wer used and frequentyd by reason wereof as well the churche of the sayd paryshe was strongely and breutyfullye made erecte and buylded . . . . The sayd parysh church of gresford ys and fallyth successyvely in some decaye aswell for lacke of owtward reparatyones, as wythin forth by wantyng of utensyles and requysyte ornaments . . . . '

There is enough in this lease to give point to Vicar Fishbourne's theory. Unhappily it does not tell us what attracted the people who came 'from dyvers parts of the realm'. Not that the theory stands or falls by this interpretation of Bishop Parfew's lease, as will be seen when we consider the Perpendicular church.

Indeed by a process compounded of reasoning and inspired guesswork, Fishbourne was able to go so far as to suggest that the actual wonder-making relic was a statue set up in the Lady Chapel. There were, of course, many objects of pilgrimage at this time besides the more famous shrines of St. Thomas at Canterbury, Our Lady of Walsh-ingham, and Derfel Gadarn at Llandderfel. I would remind you of the proved existence of wonder-working effigies in the Stanley church at Mold which housed the very famous Ddelw Ddu.[9]

It is, of course, only a surmise that the object of veneration in Gresford was a statue to the Virgin. Certainly Gresford Church contains several representations of the Mother of Christ in different parts of the Church. Besides the one already mentioned over the South porch, there are others in the windows and possibly one among the carvings of the bench ends of the stalls. The niche in the chancel stall of the Lady chapel at Gresford is, however, very simple and unprepossessing when compared with that which held y Ddelw Ddu.

It does not even suggest why the pilgrims brought their gifts. We know that Wrexham church too was the object of

[9] *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1921, p. 351.

pilgrimage at this time as is seen from the *Valor* of 1535 where a supplementary Return records 'Offeryngs to Images in ye church' to the amount of 'ii. vi. viii.'[10] Although the small sum realised would suggest a local clientele, it was certainly not enough to warrant the building of a treasury in Wrexham. These may have been the offerings of hopeful cripples to St. Giles, their patron saint, and patron saint of Wrexham, and to the Virgin whose representation appears as often in Wrexham church as it does in Gresford. No written evidence has been produced to prove what it was that attracted pilgrims to Gresford.

Negative evidence, indeed may be produced to suggest that Gresford did not attract local pilgrims. Such evidence is the will of Sir Lewis Talbot, drawn up in 1458. In this arrangements are detailed for pilgrimages to be made on the testator's behalf to several shrines, to 'Walsingham, Canterbury, Our Lady of the "pewe", St Michael of the Mount' and to many others, but no mention is made of Gresford. But then, neither Llandderfel nor Mold are mentioned.

THE PERPENDICULAR CHURCH

What the Decorated church looked like we can have very little idea. All we can say is that if the sole surviving window in the west wall of the south aisle is any criterion, then that church was one of graceful proportions. No written description has come down to us, nor do we even know when it was built.

With the Perpendicular church, that is, practically all the church we can see inside its walls, it is a different story. Gresford is one of the interesting group of late fifteenth century churches known as the Stanley churches. They are to be found in the districts where the influence of that important family was paramount during the reigns of Richard III and Henry VII, in south-west Cheshire and the nearby parts of the counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire. Among

[10] Archdeacon Thomas, *History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, Vol. 3, p. 295.

them may be numbered Wrexham, Gresford, Holt, Mold, Malpas and Tarvin. Of these Gresford is the nearest to the original conception of their planners and is very much the Cheshire church. Holt and Mold, for example, were hastily completed before a clerestory could be built. Gresford too is remarkable as being the only one to keep its original rood and parclose screens.

These churches possess many unusual common features, and their chief characteristics is their spaciousness, their admirable lightness and their delicate dignity. None of them can outshine Gresford. There is, for example, the long continuous range of aisle and clerestory windows, often battlemented, as is the clerestory when present. An entirely characteristic frieze of beasts is another feature, shared by Mold, Tarvin, Gresford, and, less obtrusively, by Wrexham. These Stanley churches are planned 'through', for they have no structural division between nave and chancel. The easternmost bays, as in Gresford, form a chancel which is flanked by side chapels, themselves bays of the aisles, which are screened from the chancel by parclose screens just as the chancel is divided off from the main body of the church by a rood-screen.

The Stanleys owed their political influence to a certain pliability of character which, although in the end the undoing of Sir William Stanley, enabled them to identify themselves with the winning side throughout the troubled days of the Wars of the Roses. This adaptability was not unrewarded and there is no doubt that the first Earl Derby and his brother Sir William Stanley were wealthy enough to be patrons of an ambitious church building-scheme throughout these border lands. Sir William was supreme here for ten years, but in the end Henry had him executed on a charge of complicity in the imposture of Perkin Warbeck. The interest to us here is that Sir William, besides being made Justiciar of North Wales by Henry, was granted by him the lordship and castle of Holt. Here he lived, when not at Ridley, the 'fairest gentleman's house in all Chester-

shyre' as Leland called his other residence, which is visible from this parish in the Peckforton Hills. It is unlikely that Sir William, who lived but three miles from the church, would not take great interest in its building. There can be no doubt whatever that on stylistic grounds the church is a Stanley church, and it is a reasonable conclusion, that Sir William's wealth was heavily drawn upon by the builders in the early stages of its building at least.

In the case of Mold church, a casual inspection will leave no-one in doubt that the Stanleys had much to do with its building. For throughout Mold church may be found many of the heraldic devices which that family used. There are the arms of Man, for the Stanleys were Kings of Man, the legs of the eagle or griffon and even the stag's head caboshed is to be seen. In Wrexham church too, there is clear evidence of the influence of this family for here again we find the arms of Man and in addition are carved heads, admittedly re-tooled, said to represent the first Earl and Lady Margaret Beaufort his wife, so providentially royal.

There is no such evidence that Sir William Stanley played any part in the fifteenth century re-building of Gresford, if we except the doubtful stag's head which Miss Preen notices in the window of the north aisle. There is, however, as with Wrexham and Mold, a tradition that the church was built or completed by Henry VII to show his remorse at the unjust execution of the man whose belated treachery—and Bromfield cavalrymen—decisively settled the fortunes of war at Bosworth. With the first Earl there is no doubt that he at least was the patron to whom we owe the great East Window.

Whatever reasons impelled them to set to work, it must have been soon after the dragon of Cadwaladr was carried to victory at Bosworth that the builders started on the church we now see. They kept the tower of the Decorated church, and the west wall of the south aisle, and possibly the lower stages of the south wall of the south aisle. It may be that they intended to add a new tower later, but what happened

was that they tacked on the present nave and clerestory to the old west end.

The east end was the focal point of the church for it housed the rood-screen and the great east window, soon to be filled with its magnificent glass.

The old east wall was cut down to within three feet of the ground level and this truncated east wall was used as the stone reredos of the new church and was, it would appear, so used until the ordinances of the later Tudors. Behind this stone reredos was built a short 'blind' bay, still standing, whose walls were pierced to allow of a processional path from Lady chapel to the south chapel. At least this is the only reasonable theory, first published by Fishbourne, to account for the position of the post-Reformation sacrarium, and the vestry now beneath it. Such later writers as Crossley[11] treat the proposition as axiomatic. Fishbourne goes even further and asserts that such a processional path must have been essential to secure decorous passage for the pilgrims he believed thronged the church in the Middle Ages. The low, round arches, now hidden by curtains in the chancel, but plainly visible from either chapel show the positions where the processional path was entered from each chapel. In the course of Vicar Fishbourne's renovations in 1908 the steps down to that path from the Trevor chapel, very much worn, were effectively preserved and displayed, and may be seen behind the wainscotting. The church now built was of eight bays, with a nave of five and a chancel of three bays, counting the blind bay, separated from one another by the Rood-screen, happily still in its original position. The north and south aisles of the church are of the same width as the nave, which is itself as wide as the tower. The nave clerestory, which so well lights the church shows the same sense of symmetry as distinguishes the rest of the church whose fenestration is everwhere simple, but superb.

[11]The principal works of the late Fred H. Crossley used here are:— *Arch. Camb.* 1935. pp. 349-52; *ibid* 1946, pp. 17-23; Chester Arch. Society, 1940, pp. 107-10; References, as with Fishbourne's *History*, are too numerous to specify.

Nowhere in the church do we experience the feeling of over-repetition which mars so many Perpendicular churches. Clerestory and nave are battlemented in the Stanley manner as is the eastern facade. This battlementing gives that illusion of height so necessary in a church whose cambered roof would otherwise present an appearance of flatness. How great a loss this lack of battlements may be is seen at Holt which was no doubt left unfinished at the Reformation.

Such then was the church we owe to the patrons who made the fifteenth century church possible, whoever they may have been. Beautiful as it is to-day, we may only imagine its influence on the people of the parish when it held its full complement of stained glass. There can be no doubt that the church was originally conceived in Crossley's vivid words, as a coloured lantern to give full play to the art and devotion of the glazier, the wood-carver and the stone-mason with each bearing an equally important part in the conception of the master mind who designed the church.

In the composition of the church the tower plays an essential part. Yet much of its charm derives from the fact that the builders of the Stanley church left the low fourteenth century church tower as it was. The tower gains much from the contrast between the extreme simplicity of the older, and lower stages and the more elaborately contrived upper stages, for clearly the builders made a virtue of necessity. It may be that they saw what dangers over-elaboration might bring from their critical inspection of Wrexham's great tower, and deliberately kept the very simple earlier tower. It may, on the other hand, be argued that the failure to bond the new building into the tower and south porch points to the intention to build a new tower at a later date. Whatever the true story there can be no doubt that the tower we now delight in was the fruit of a brilliant piece of improvisation. It is a great pity that the masons who worked on Gresford's tower did not match its design elswhere.

Work on the Perpendicular tower could not have begun before 1512, for the will of John Roden proved in that year, begins: 'Item I woll that when the steeple shall be newe made at Gressforde . . . . ' In the same way we know that the figures which surmount the battlements were not set up until after 1582, for John Leach in his will proved in 1592 bequeathed 'X shillings to the pynnacles of Gresford steeple'. These 'pynnacles', in the graphic word so entirely appropriate, 'crowned' the tower by enriching the battlemented tower by contemporary figures, whose identity has not been established in all cases. Much damage was done to these and to other parts of the tower in a great storm which brought down considerable masonry in August, 1835.

All the figures on the parapet are cut in front only, their backs being unfashioned as if speed in completion was vital, yet the execution of the stone carvers was most satisfactory. Of these figures we may remark a king sitting cross-legged, very much at his ease, yet holding a sword aloft in his left hand. Other figures are to be seen, less exalted but equally pleasing; a man fast asleep holding his head up with his hand; a soldier with a sword and some weapon which may be a halberd, and a pilgrim complete with staff, who appears to be saluting. Together they form a most impressive frieze from whatever viewpoint and whatever the changing hour or season.

In the angles of the tower are several figures. One of these, that in the south-west buttress added at a later date to house the vice of the tower, is held to represent Henry VII by some, notably by Fred Crossley. Archdeacon Newcome (incumbent from 1847 to 1881) goes so far as to identify a dragon, 'the cognizance of the Prince of Wales', which he saw resting on the left shoulder of the king. Fishbourne, who took an innocent delight in disproving the theories of his predecessor, points out that there was no Prince of Wales when that part of the tower was built. The animal figure does seem to be rather that of St. Mark's winged lion or else

the winged calf of St. Luke. As for the other figure, far from being crowned it has its head bare with locks flowing freely, and its right hand raised in benediction.

ALTERATIONS IN REFORMATION AND LAUDIAN TIMES

Except for the earlier parts we have noted, the church was not forty years old when the King made his break with the Pope. The passage of those years had not been kind to the church as may be seen from the preamble to Bishop Parfew's lease of 1543 already quoted, for it talked of 'decaye for lacke of outward reparatyons'. It is certain that great changes would have been made inside the church. Any wonder-making images or relics would be immediately cast out, and with them the Rood. The altar became the communion table and, robbed of its mystique, would be brought into the congregation. There could be no place for a processional-path under the new order. The openings above the processional-path which Fishbourne believed served some sort of supplementary rood-gallery, but which Caröe thought led to a minstrel gallery, would become functionless. We have no knowledge as to what happened to the ritual arrangements during the short supremacy of the Puritans, for the books of parish record do not begin until the Restoration.

It is not until the time of Archbishop Laud and his 'forward' policy, aimed at standardising doctrine and ritual, that we may suggest what the arrangements were in the chancel, and here again the hypothesis is Fishbourne's. The eastern gallery—if it was a gallery and if it had not been destroyed earlier—would have been taken down, and the wall-reredos which stood to the west of the processional path, cut down to two feet six inches. The processional path was turned into a chamber of low headroom by boarding it over, and the ceiling of this chamber served as the floor of the sacrarium, as it still does. Access to the chamber below the sacrarium, and thence to the undercroft, was gained by turning a small east window into an outside door. The

evidence in favour of this hypothesis Fishbourne found in the will of Anthony Lewys of Burton who died in 1634, which is quoted in full in Palmer's *History of Gresford* (p. 154). The apposite passage reads: 'I do further give and bequeath towards the raysing of the Floore within the said church ten or twelve inches higher then it is now, to the end to make the church the lightsomer, and to new pave it, as also to make the church the lightsomer towards the making of new suteable pews . . . . for the somme of £200 . . . ' Fishbourne argued that although no specific mention is made of work in the chancel, this admits of the interpretation that enough money was available to cover all that Anthony Lewys details in his will, and the additional work Fishbourne described. Vicar Fishbourne was a very adroit controversialist.

Sir Stephen Glynne noted when he came here in 1885 that the chancel had been 're-modelled' in 1871, although he does not give his evidence for saying this, nor does he give details of such work.[12] It is unbelievable that Vicar Fishbourne did not know about this work. Whenever this work was carried out, and there is nothing at all to disprove Fishbourne's theory that the present ritual arrangements date from Laudian times, the subsequent history of the church is the story of the efforts of different generations of churchgoers to maintain their heritage according to their own lights and in the prevailing fashion of their time. This struggle is still going on. Before we discuss the re-arrangement of the Chancel in Laudian times, however, we must consider the timber-work of the roof.

THE TIMBER WORK

Cresford church was built when the Perpendicular style achieved its highest degree of development. Its timber work is of a parity with its stonework in the elegance and symmetry of its design and the grace of its execution. It is not to be wondered at that it has inspired the devotion of succeed-

[12] *Arch. Camb.* 1885, p. 124.

ing generations of scholars. Of these none is more respected today than the late Fred H. Crossley who esteemed the Perpendicular and especially its timber carving above all others. This farmer's boy who became first the avid student and later the acknowledged authority on Perpendicular timber work actually supervised much of the restoration in the church and published important work on the subject. These notes owe very much to his work.

THE ROOD-SCREEN

Just as we have seen that the stonework of the fifteenth century Gresford church, perhaps because its foundation was bound up with the establishment of the Tudor dynasty in England, is essentially English, so it is with timber-work. Affinities have been found between it and many churches in Cheshire and even with work as far afield as Herefordshire and Yorkshire. In fact Crossley claims that he can point to a series of screens which came from the same 'shop', which he said was either in Ludlow or very near to it. A ritual screen in a 'through' church is the most satisfactory way of separating nave and chancel, and, as is easily imaginable in Gresford, helps to create the feeling of profound mystery, so much desired in the middle Ages.

The Rood-screen was set up, clearly in the position its planners designed it for, to create a chancel of three bays. Its Central doorway is of two bays which are slightly narrower than the other six bays which make up the rest of the screen. Our county possesses thirty-two Rood-screens, most of them in the Welsh idiom. That at Gresford is very similar to Llanrwst's very fine screen, which is said to have come from Maenan Abbey. Although both are vaulted in the English manner, the vaulting at Llanrwst is tierceron, while that at Gresford is lierne. As Crossley points out, it is a strange paradox that in details of carving, as much as lay-out, Gresford should be so essentially English, while some of the English screens in the Borderland show detail which is typically Welsh. In Gresford the tracery heads are uniform

in the English manner, as are those in Middleton (Shropshire) and Aymestry, while the wainscotting in Astbury in Cheshire and Hughley in Shropshire show such Welsh characteristics as 'open tracery cut in the upper halves of the panels and varied in design'. The liernes are arranged in stellar form over the centre of each bay. The standard of carving in the bressummer in Gresford is inferior to that in other parts of the screen. This, Crossley charitably attributes to some mutilation which occurred during the 1813-20 renovations, when damaged parts were replaced by exact mouldings in cast-iron, unhappily so very much the fashion at that time, as one would expect in a district where both Wilkinson and Telford did much of their best work. The dark-brown paint which renders the screens so lifeless was applied at this time.

There is little doubt that the rood-screen had a loft, for the mortice-holes of the parapet are still to be seen. The superstructure of this screen could not have been very heavy for the timbering is very slight, so slight that Fishbourne believed an additional and more substantial gallery was needed—hence the openings on either side of the Sacrarium which now contain memorials. When the rood itself was taken down there is no record. Fishbourne suggests that it may have been during the reign of Edward VI in accordance with the royal injunction. Nor can we suggest why the rood-screen should have been spared, for Wrexham's screen was pulled down by order of the Bishop in 1662. There is, however, no tradition of any local magnate ensconcing himself on the loft in the manner of Elihu Yale at Wrexham and Sir Watkin Williams Wynn at Llangedwyn.

The parclose and chapel screens of two bays only, are contemporary with the rood-screen and in the same manner. Although a little less competently carried out they may be compared with those of Astbury and Malpas. Their function was to shelter the occupants of the stalls from draughts, and to balance the rood-screens, in which we see the same motifs, the featherings and the vine leaves.

THE CHOIR-STALLS

Gresford is the only church in the neighbourhood with original choir-stalls. Neither the churches at Wrexham and Mold nor Valle Crucis itself, show evidence of ever possessing these amenities. From this, and from the fact that they are 'returned' it has been argued that Gresford was at one time collegiate, but no written evidence of this has come down to prove that this is so. As Crossley points out, it is possible to cite examples of returned stalls in churches which could not have been collegiate, of which Nantwich is a leading example, for Nantwich was but a chapel-of-ease of Acton. These stalls produce further stylistic evidence of the existence of a central 'shop' which provided timber work for many churches in the later Middle Ages, for Crossley has shown 'strong affinities' between the carving in Gresford church stalls and other churches such as in Halsall and Tong, notably in the mouldings of the capitals, and in the elbow-knops and poppy-heads.

There are fourteen choir-stalls in all, and on the undersides of eleven will be found exuberant and uninhibited carvings which will delight the social historian as much as the conoisseur of mediaeval art. They will stand comparison with the more famous misericordes in St. David's or at Chester. Why licence should have been extended to the carver of misericordes in later Middle Ages is not entirely clear. We can but accept them with gratitude. Gresford's choir-stalls are complete with desks and stall-ends, although the smaller desks in front of them are modern, and date from the time when choirs began to take precedence over choir-stalls—a Puseyite innovation with which Crossley had not learnt to reconcile himself.

Particularly admired are (starting from the south-east end): the third, which shows a Devil in the form of a raging dragon wheeling three women into the mouth of Hell; on number five, a cowled fox in his pulpit preaching to eight fowls, a biting commentary on the burning professional topic of the time—the poaching of the itinerant preaching

friars on the preserves of the parochial clergy; number six, a most charming Annunciation with the lily pot and supporting Virgin and angel. In fact, an ingenuous and most human *pot-pourri* of themes which suggests that complete and blind acceptance of rule need not always have been requisite throughout the Middle Ages. In passing it may be noted that the stone carver also was licenced to embellish his work in the same carefree manner permitted to the wood carver. Grotesque gargoyles abound and especially commanding attention, but rarely noticed, is the representation of the Devil tempting the dishonest ale-wife to give short measure, a subject which seems to have touched the carvers at Gresford very nearly, for she is here represented twice. Less grotesque, but as vivid, is the carving on the choir-stall ends. Especially worthy of attention are the full length angels standing on the tops of the lower pilasters, with their wings stretched behind their heads to make elbow-rests. These are all different and represent the various ranks in the hierarchy of Heaven. There is a fully-feathered angel holding a shield, and another, crowned, with two pairs of wings. Yet another is robed in an alb and wears a Tudor cap. Crossley draws attention to comparable angels at Tong, Halsall and Beverley St. Mary's in far-off Yorkshire. At the 'return', angels give way to grotesque animals—to a bear muzzled, to a dragon, to a human head, and to an animal eating a smaller animal.

THE ROOF

Gresford's roof, which bears a striking similarity to that of Malpas a few miles away over the border, is of the same date as the rest of the timber work, and provides the perfect finish to the church.

The roof is of the camber-beamed type such as one would expect in a church designed to show off its glazing to the best advantage. The clerestory in which glass takes precedence over stone, weakens the structure so much that a high-pitched thrusting roof is impossible. The plumber's art

had by the end of the Perpendicular period developed to such an extent as to allow leadwork to be used where previously a sharp slope was needed to take away rain water. Here in Gresford, as elsewhere, the camber-beamed roof is so low as to give the impression that it is a ceiling.

The crossings are embellished by carved bosses of crow's feet design. Most attractive demi-angels with outstretched wings terminate the principals, and the ends of the great rafters between bear lesser angels. The effect is very satisfying. Much work has, of course, been done throughout the many years of its life to keep it in repair. The Wardens' accounts bear ample evidence of this. Between 1813 and 1820, for example, hundreds of pounds was spent on such work. In 1817 alone, over £500 was spent on plumbers, plasterers, blacksmiths, and carpenters.[13] The worn-out parts were replaced, not by good matured oak, but by deal, 'plaister' and, as with the rood-screen, by exact castings in iron. Fortunately for succeeding churchgoers, the craftsmen after the Napoleonic Wars were not lacking in integrity as were their employers in good taste, for the cast-iron demi-angels must have weighed well over a hundredweight each. These stayed securely in their allotted places until taken down in the last renovations in 1930.[14] One of these very durable angels may now be seen on the floor near the Trevor Chapel screen.

In an effort to secure a 'dim religious light', so much sought after at the time, the roof too was treated with some dark paint. The effect of this may be judged by comparing the roof as now restored with the screens, from which the paint applied at the same time has yet to be removed. All this deterioration of taste began more than twenty years before Queen Victoria came to the throne, as may be seen from the sympathetic comments of Archdeacon Wickam,

[13]Gresford Vestry Books.

[14]In that year, under F. H. Crossley's supervision, the whole of the roof of the north aisle was taken down, owing to damage done by the death-watch beetle, and much timber replaced. In the following year similar renovations were made in the roof of the chancel. The heraldic decorations here are of the same date.

incumbent from 1847 to 1881, which Fishbourne quotes: 'An organ' (it was a barrel organ, by the way) . . . 'was erected at the west end in the year 1813, and an organ loft . . . in plaister and cast-iron, painted dark to correspond both in colour and design, with the opposite chancel screen, which was mended in parts deficient, with casts from the original carved oak; a cheap and sure way of close imitation of fretwork . . . all owing to the good taste of the late vicar the Rev. Henry Newcome.'

This organ-loft, known familiarly as 'the swallows' nest' was fortunately not erected to last for ever, and had to be removed as unsafe. Access to it was made by means of a doorway cut in the wall below the line which marks the line of the Early English West gable, and its outline may still be traced. It was taken down in the course of the 1867 renovations. Archdeacon Wickham was responsible for renovations in 1867, the year in which similar alterations were made in Wrexham. As in Wrexham, the old pews were taken out, whitewash removed, and modern tiles were laid. In addition to this in Gresford the level of the floor was lowered, and Clayton and Bell were called in to re-set the great east window. One remarkable innovation of Archdeacon Wickham was to set up a heating apparatus. He chose, unhappily, to put the furnace in the undercroft, and for fifty years the parishioners were constrained to suffer 'noxious sulphurous fumes' which, with dust and ashes that continually rose from the store of coal and from the furnace under the boarded floor of the chancel in what is now the vestry must have been a great trial to them. No doubt, to some their presence was not without its salutary warning!

It is not therefore to be wondered at that in 1908 the indefatigible Vicar Fishbourne embarked on further necessary renovation. He cleared the undercroft and set up a heating apparatus outside the church walls. In the course of this, he made several discoveries which enabled him to date the earlier fabric as we have seen above. He made the existing vestry by lowering the processional path behind

the fourteenth century altar to its present level, panelling the walls, in a most pleasing manner, with timber taken from the old pews. At this time the foundations were strengthened and the accumulation of centuries of soil was removed to bring the plinth into the light of day. After this no major alteration has been made to the church, for the side chapels had already been renovated by the 'parishioner and private owners' five years previously. One final 'tidying-up' accomplished at this time (1908) was the building of the dwarf walls on either side of the altar steps, which released the parclose screens from former abutments.

It is impossible to cover every aspect of the history of the development of the church in the space available. No mention has been made of the peal of bells, one of the Seven Wonders of Wales. Nor has mention been made of the books of record, so well preserved. It is hoped that since Canon Lort has kindly consented for work to be done on these that some account may be given of them in a future volume of the *Transactions*.

That Gresford Church was spared 'utter restoration' at the hands of the professional architects during the last century is entirely due to the care and solicitude of many generations of Gresford people who had always kept their church in sound repair. It is pleasant to think that our Society made it very clear during its visit last September that it is not unmindful of this.

MEMORIALS AND COATS OF ARMS

By MISS E. M. PREEN

THESE notes on some of the older memorials and coats of arms in All Saints' Church, Gresford, were compiled to illustrate a tour of the church, starting in the south aisle and proceeding round the walls to the entrance to the Lady Chapel in the north aisle. For this report the items have been grouped according to age, beginning with the oldest.

Two fourteenth-century tombstones remain from the earlier church building and occupy arched recesses in the north and south walls. The one in the south wall is the older by a generation, and by its inscription and by a passage in *Brut y Tywysogion* it has been identified as belonging to the tomb of Madoc, Lord of Eyton, Erlisham and Borasham (Bwras), who died in 1331.

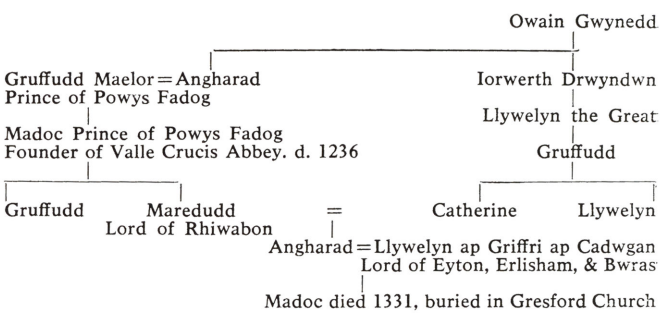
The inscription, carved along the edge of the slab, reads: HIC IACET MADOC AP LLEWELIN AP GRIFFRI.

Brut y Tywysogion says of the year 1331: 'Y bu veirw . . . . Madawc ap Llywelyn y gwz gorew erioed a vv y Maeloz gymraec. nos wyl Mathias apostol diwet mis chwefr (aur) ac y kladpwyd en y eglwys ehvn en grefford.' (There died . . . . Madoc ap Llywelyn, the best man who ever lived in Maelor Gymraeg, on the night of the Feast of Mathias the Apostle at the end of February, and was buried in his own church at Gresford.)

Madoc was descended from Elidr ap Rhys, one of the Welsh leaders who are reputed to have taken East Denbighshire from the English about the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century, and he and his family, famous in later times as the Eytons, bore the coat armour attributed to Elidr, ermine, a lion rampant azure, that is a blue lion on a white shield that is patterned with black spots like ermine tails.

Through his mother, Angharad, Madoc was closely connected with the royal houses of Powys and Gwynedd as

the following short table shows. Angharad was the daughter of Maredudd, Lord of Rhiwabon, and his wife, the Princess Catherine, sister of Prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.



A stone effigy lies on the tombstone, and it is carved to represent a man dressed from head to feet in chain armour and a surcoat with *genouilliéres*, or knee-pieces, elbow caps, and ailettes on the shoulders. Ailettes, made of leather, were defences designed to protect the head and arms from glancing blows, and this is one of the very few effigies on which they can be seen.

The fronts of the surcoat are turned back to show the edges of the hauberk or shirt of mail, and of the haketon, the quilted garment worn beneath for comfort. The haketon and the ailettes are decorated with fringe.

The right hand in a gauntlet holds a partly drawn sword attached to a sword belt and slings. Spur straps are on the feet and the head in a hood, or coif, of mail rests on a pillow.

The left hand and arm are covered by a shield on which, as well as on the surcoat and on the ailettes, is carved a lion rampant. There is no trace of cutting in the stone to represent ermine.

On the wall behind the effigy are ten small shields which no doubt recorded the coats of arms of families connected with Madoc's by marriage. Rubbings have yielded

no evidence of carving, so it is likely that they were painted, indeed faint markings can be seen on two of them.

Madoc married Angharad, daughter of David Hen of Llai, and it is her nephew, her brother's son, Gronw ap Iorwerth ap David, whose tombstone is in the north wall.

This stone is most beautifully carved. At the head is a sleeve of chain armour and a patterned gauntlet from which a sword, beside a lance, passes under a large shield.

Round the border of the shield is carved: HIC IACET GRONW F IORWERTH F DD CUIS AIE DS. ABSOLWAT, for which there was not enough space on the shield, is added just above it. Diagonally across the shield are two lines and between them three mullets or five pointed stars—'on a bend, three mullets' in heraldic terms.

Below the shield are designs of foliage, including oak leaves and acorns and at the foot is a lion's face.

'No better instance of the happy mingling of parts (i.e. heraldic shields, swords, inscriptions in lombardic capitals and foliage), so as to constitute a completely beautiful whole, can be given than the slab of Goronwy ap Iorwerth ap David of Llai, in the north aisle of Gresford Church,' wrote J. Romilly Allen, F.S.A. in *Arch.Camb.* 1893.

The coat of arms of Gronw's family was the one attributed to the founder, Sandde Hardd, son, according to Lewys Dwnn (vol. II, pp. 264 and 356) of Cadrod Hardd, of Bodavon, Anglesey: vert, semée of broomslips, a lion rampant or, that is, a golden lion on a green shield patterned with sprigs of broom.

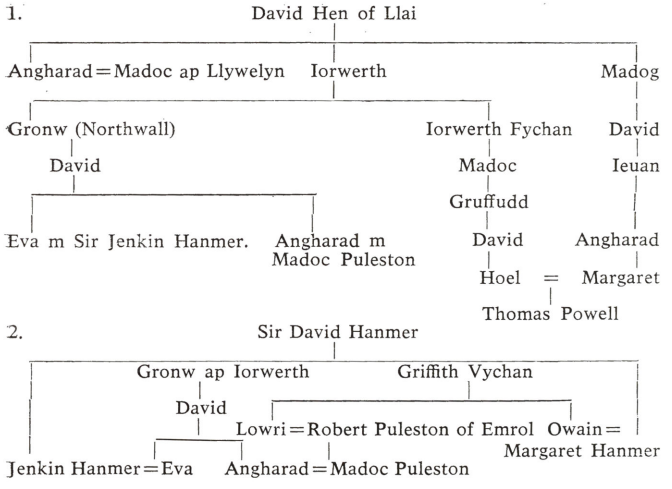
Gronw, however, seems to have adopted this new device—'on a bend three mullets', and it was taken later by some of his descendants, the Pulestons of Hafod-y-wern. Three shields on their memorials in St. Giles' Church, Wrexham, have argent, a bend sable with three mullets of the field.

Several small shields, some obscured by heating pipes and some by the organ case are below the edge of the stone,

and, like those in the south aisle, the accessible ones yielded no results when rubbings were taken.

The marriages of two of Gronw's granddaughters, the heiresses of his son David, are links with the circle of Owain Glyn Dŵr, for Eva married Sir Jenkin Hanmer, Owain's brother-in-law and her sister, Angharad, married Madoc Puleston, whose mother was Lowri, Owain's sister.

The tables below illustrate these relationships as well as the connection between 'Gronw Filius Iorwerth' and 'Hoel ap David and Margaret his wife', who gave a window to the church in 1500, and their son, the first Thomas Powel of Horsley, who also gave a window.



Three fragments of carved stone offer interesting problems.

Part of a sepulchral slab was found at Pant yr Ochain when the foundations of an old barn were removed, and in 1867 it was given to the church, from which it had probably been moved at the time of re-building. On it is carved a shield with a rampant lion, two four-petalled flowers, and

the letters C IACET GRIFFRI AP /- all that remains of the inscription. A sword blade and two leaves, evidently part of a pattern, are below the shield.

It has been suggested that this is part of the tombstone of the paternal grandfather of Madoc ap Llywelyn, Griffri ap Cadwgan, who married Jonetta, the sister—or daughter—of that famous Robin Hood like character, Fulke Fitz Warine of Whittington Castle, but the little that remains of the initial letter after AP does not suggest a C.

Near the organ lies a damaged figure found in 1908 under the buttress outside the east window. It is dressed in a stiffly draped garment with cape like sleeves. The hands hold an open book and a friendly little dog is jumping up by the feet.

Mr. Crossley in 'English Church Monuments' calls it 'a layman robed in a ganache—date about 1350. This rare garment had a tippet coming over the arms as far as the elbows, and was lined with fur.' Archdeacon Thomas says it is 'an effigy of one in Minor Orders wearing cowl, tippet and pleated cassock with short sleeves.'

The third fragment is a piece of carved stone found, also in 1908, under the floor of the church, built into a foundation wall.

The Rev. Mr. Fishbourne describes it thus: 'It is four-sided, 2 feet 8 inches in height by eight inches in width, the four sides are rudely carved and differently treated, the top is also carved. On one side is a female figure holding a huge pair of shears in one hand and some trefoil emblems in the other; on the other sides there are no figures but mouldings, one of them being chevrons; the lower half of the stone is left quite in the rough and was evidently meant to be sunk in the ground. Some believe it to be Romano British; others that it is a mediæval headstone to a woman's grave of about the twelfth century, which seems to be more probable.'

The supporters of the view that the stone is Romano British believe that the figure is Atropos, the third Fate, who 'with her abhorred shears slits the thin spun life', spun

to a thread by one of her sisters, and mixed with weal and woe by the other.

If it is mediæval the figure may be a female saint. Two early Christian martyrs, SS. Febronia and Macra, who endured torture and mutilation, were represented in pictures and statues holding shears, and it is a sad thought that the intercessions of S. Macra were sought by sufferers from cancer.

The Font and some ancient glass remain in this part of the church from the re-building period—the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Of the Font the Rev. Mr. Fishbourne wrote:

> 'The Font is of the same date as the church, octagonal in shape, with a figure in high relief, but rather battered in each panel. These are 1. The crowned Virgin and child. 2. An angel with a shield. 3. St. Leonard with chain and manacles. 4. Winged lion —St. Mark. 5. St. Edmund, King and martyr or Edward the Confessor with orb and sceptre. 6. St. Sytha, with rosary, key and book, or loaf. 7. St. James as a pilgrim. 8. Angel with a scroll.
>
> 'On the tapering part beneath bold rib mouldings cross one another in basket fashion. The pedestal is octagonal, with niche like panels, ogee-headed, separated by projecting buttresses, which are rather mutilated. Some of these panels are roughly done and left unfinished, but the general effect is good.'

St. Leonard was founder and Abbot of the monastery at Noblac. He is regarded as the patron of captives because King Clovis gave him permission to release every prisoner whom he visited—hence his attributes of chain and manacles. A chapel known as St. Leonard de Glyn is mentioned in an Inquisition taken at Castle Leonis 1398—'*ecclie de Grefford cum capellis S'c'i Leonardi de Glyn*', but no trace of it remains.

St. Sitha is the patroness of domestic servants. St. James's dress as a pilgrim is a reminder of his great shrine, Sant Iago de Compostela in Spain, whither thousands of pilgrims travelled every year.

Most of the ancient glass left in the church is in the East window and in the chapels, but windows in the north

and south walls have some in their tracery lights. St. Peter with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, St. Barbara with a tower, St. John with a chalice from which poison emerges in the form of a small dragon, a winged bull and a winged lion—symbols of St. Luke and St. Mark, and angels with feathered wings are some of the religious subjects.

Several shields with coats of arms are in the top lights of the window above the tomb of 'Gronw F. Iorwerth.' Only yellow, black, and white colours are used so it is difficult to identify them with certainty. A chevron between three Englishmen's heads is almost certainly the coat of Ednyfed Fychan, and a chevron on ermine the coat of the Kynaston family. These shields require further study.

According to a manuscript account of a visit to Gresford in 1574 by Sampson Erdeswick, discovered and quoted at length by Mr. Fishbourne, these shields were contained in windows given to the church, circa 1500, and are the coats of arms of donors.

Over the south door is a tablet in memory of a kindly sea-captain, Anthony Lewis of Burton, who died in 1634. The inscription, in Welsh, records his goodness to the church and to the poor of Gresford. 'He was a benefactor to the church by restoring the windows, pews and pavements, and left a testimony of his love to the poor of the parish for ever, by providing bread for them every week.'

He gave £300 for the work in the church and bequeathed £7 per annum to pay for the bread.

In his will, extensively quoted by Mr. A. N. Palmer, 'drawne up by himself, praying it may be construed to common sense and not to be by law wrested to nice constructions', Captain Lewis gave 'to make a small monument for me in some convenient place in the Church wall, wherein it may not much bouldt out to be an eyesore but rather beautify where it stands, the somme of one hundred pounds.'

As the inscription tells, Sir Thomas Trevor, his cousin, carried out these instructions 'as well from his own piety, in memory of his relative, as from an earnest desire to fulfil the

wish of his dear and worthy father, Sir Thomas Trevor, Knight, one of the Barons of King Charles's Exchequer, throughout the reign of the said King, the 31st day of August, 1659.'

Anthony Lewis was particular about his funeral too, and left £3 to the Preacher that preached his funeral sermon, praying that 'he would not there in his pulpit prayse nor yet disprayse the gonne life of the dead corps before him as commonly most devines do most grossly, too much of the one or other, nor yet showe his witt in giving there a wipe concerning this my bequest, but follow his text to the profit of his bearers, soe end and interr me.'

Near Captain Lewis's 'small monument' is one with a Latin inscription recording the loyalty of Colonel John Robinson, of Gwersyllt Ucha, 'who strenuously sustained the fortunes of Charles the Martyr, the Church and the Monarchy, and who did not desert the exile of the younger Charles.'

Colonel Robinson served the Royalist cause most loyally. He fought in several engagements, including Holt, Hawarden, Beeston and Rowton Moor, and took part in the defence of Chester and of Beaumaris until surrender was inevitable. His property was taken from him and, 'marked for special vengeance', he had to leave Gwersyllt disguised as a labourer and make his way to his other home at Monachdy, on the coast of Anglesey. When Anglesey surrendered he escaped to the Isle of Man, and from there to France.

At the Restoration Colonel Robinson returned to his estates, and he found that Gwersyllt had been well repaired and maintained by the tenant of the Committee for Compounding. He was Member of Parliament for Beaumaris 1661-1679 and Vice Admiral of North Wales from 1666 until his death.

'His body though formed of superior clay, yet being worn out as well as ennobled by honourable wounds, was unable to retain beyond the 65th year of his age his soul, which aspired to heaven, and surrendered it on the 15th

March, 1680,' concludes the epitaph, as translated by the Rev. E. A. Fishbourne.

Close to the south-west window is a tablet in memory of Colonel Robinson's son William and his wife 'Anne, sole daughter and heir of Timothy Myddelton, of Pant Iocyn, Esq.' Timothy Myddelton owned Plas Cadwgan, too, his grandfather, Roger Myddelton, having married Anne, heiress of Edward Jones, of Plas Cadwgan, who was executed in 1586 for his share in the Babbington plot to place Mary, Queen of Scots on the throne. Edward Jones's estates were forfeited, but Queen Elizabeth I restored the house and some of the land to his daughter.

William Robinson's son, John, also married an heiress—Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Griffith Jeffreys of Acton and his wife, Dame Dorothy Jeffreys, whose benefactions are still appreciated in Gresford and Wrexham. Sir Griffith was a nephew of George Jeffreys, Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor of England. John Robinson's epitaph is over the north door.

The only son of John and Elizabeth Robinson, William of Gwersyllt Uchaf, Monachdy, Plas Cadwgan, Pant Iocyn and Acton, was drowned when the boat in which he was returning to the mainland from a sporting expedition sank off the Skerries. His property was sold.

'Near this place are interred several of the children of George Shakerley Esq, of Gwersyllt', is an inscription on the north wall and there follow seven names, Catherine, Elizabeth, John, Geoffrey, Mary, Jane and Anne, who died, at ages varying from two to eighty-two years, between 1714 and 1792. Their sister, Frances, married the first Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay.

George Shakerley was the son of Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, of Hulme, Cheshire, who bought Gwersyllt Isa in order to live near his old Royalist comrade in arms, Colonel John Robinson.

Colonel Geoffrey Shakerley, as he was then, was present at the Battle of Rowton Moor, and during the battle he 'was

ordered to get the next way he could to the king to know his Majesty's further pleasure. The colonel executed his orders with better speed than could be expected . . . got a wooden tub (used for slaughtering of swine) and a batting staff (used for batting of coarse linen) for an oar, put a servant into the tub with him, and in this desperate manner swam over the river, his horse swimming by him, and was with the king in little more than a quarter of an hour . . . and recounted to his Majesty the expeditious method he had taken, which saved him going nine or ten miles round by Holt Bridge, for the boats at Eaton were then made useless.' This incident is related in Pennant's *Tours in Wales,* vol. III, App. IV.

Under the tower of the church, used as a choir vestry, four painted funeral boards hang on the walls. They commemorate John Peck of Alington who died 1661/2, Thomas Ball of Burton, who died 1687, aged 87, Robert Cawley of Gwersyllt who died 1688, and Thomas Powell of Horsley who died in 1689.

John Peck lived at Cornish Hall, Holt, and acted as agent for the Trevor family at Trevalyn Hall. He and Thomas Ball, who was High Sheriff in 1651, were two of the very few local country gentlemen who were Parliamentarians. Thomas Ball married Margaret Santhey, whose name, an Anglicised form of the ancient Sandde, shows that she belonged to the old family of Llai.

Thomas Powell was the son of Sir Thomas Powell, the second baronet of that name, of Horsley and Birkenhead, and he died in 1689 in his father's lifetime. He married the widow of Timothy Myddelton.

The Powells were Royalists. Their Cheshire estates were sequestered, and the first Sir Thomas was one of those who resisted the landing in Cheshire of the Parliamentarians. The second Sir Thomas took part in the Royalist rising of 1659, organized by Sir George Booth and the Earl of Derby.

Two other memorials on the south wall of the church have associations with the Civil War.

'Sir Robert Townshend and Anne his wife, daughter of William, Lord Spencer, father of the first Earl of Sunderland', are remembered on one of these. Sir Robert, of Hem House, Alington, was formerly named Agborough. He assumed the name and arms of Townshend when he was knighted by King Charles II soon after the Restoration.

His wife's brother, the Earl of Sunderland, was killed at the Battle of Newbury in 1643. The Earl's grandson, Charles Spencer married Anne, daughter of the great Duke of Malborough and took the name of Spencer into the Churchill family. Their son became the third Duke and married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Lord Trevor.

Sir Robert's son Anthony and his wife Mary, daughter of Sir John Dugdale, are also named on this memorial. Sir John's father was the famous antiquary and genealogist, Sir William Dugdale, Garter King of Arms 1677-1680.

Close to the south door is a tablet in memory of Dr. Robert Wynne who was Vicar of Gresford and Chancellor of the Diocese of St. Asaph for fifty-three years—from 1690 to 1743.

His grandfather was Robert Wynne of Garthewin, a loyal Cavalier, brother of Colonel William Wynne, who was killed at the Battle of Wem.

Dr. Wynne, who also owned Garthewin as well as considerable other property, was a leader in the Church and in county affairs. He became Chancellor of the Cathedral in 1693 and Sinecure Rector of Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain in 1719. He was an author too, and among his writings was 'A Discourse on the Martyrdom of King Charles I.'

His brother, Richard, a distinguished London attorney, was buried in Gresford, as a smaller tablet close by indicates. Another brother was the Rev. William Wynne, M.A., Rector of Llanfachreth, Anglesey, who re-edited Dr. Powell's 'Translation of the History of Wales, by Caradoc of Llancarvan.'

The Wynne coat of arms, three bears' heads, said to have been given to an ancestor, Y Penwyn, by Edward I for

giving up Prince David, is on the memorial, impaling that of Dr. Wynne's second wife, Margaret Owen, of Penrhos, Anglesey—a chevron between three lions, the coat attributed to Hwfa ap Cynddelw.

The works consulted in compiling the notes include:
'Monumental Effigies in Wales', by Stephen Williams, F.S.A., *Arch.Camb.* 1892.
Architectural History of All Saints, Gresford, by the Rev. E. A. Fishbourne, M.A.
J. Y. W. Lloyd, *History of Powys Fadog.*
History of the Diocese of St. Asaph, Archdeacon Thomas, M.A., F.S.A.
Lives of the Saints, Baring Gould.
Emblems of the Saints in Art, Husenbeth.
History of the Old Parish of Gresford, A. N. Palmer, Arch.Camb. 1903.
'Colonel Robinson', by Norman Tucker, F.R.Hist.S., *Transactions* D.H.S. 1955.
'The Wynne Family of Melai and Garthewin', by R. O. F. Wynne, *Transactions* D.H.S. 1956.
Burke's Peerage and Landed Gentry.
Dictionary of National Biography, as well as those quoted in the text.

THE TREVOR CHAPEL

By LADY CLEMENT JONES

ABOUT the year 1490, Gresford Church was almost entirely rebuilt and enlarged and the chapels in the north and south aisles formed. The chapel known as the Trevor Chapel at the east end of the south aisle was dedicated to Saint Catherine, as we learn from the will of John Trevor of Trevalyn, whose curious alabaster effigy lies beneath the east window. He leans on his elbow, his head and bust appearing on one side of a Welsh inscription, his legs on the other side: the body is left to the imagination!

This John Trevor was not the first of his name to own Trevalyn, for his great grandfather, Richard Trevor, third son of John Trevor Hên of Brynkinalt, had migrated to Trevalyn (or Allington as the English called the place) and married an heiress there about the middle of the 15th century. Trevalyn was then in the old parish of Gresford and the Trevalyn Trevors worshipped there and were buried in a family vault below the chapel. When John Trevor died

in London in 1589 he 'requested at leaving this world' that he might 'rest with his ancestors' in Saint Catherine's Chapel to which he bequeathed 40s for repairs as occasion should require. So in about 1600 John Trevor's bones were brought to Gresford by his son, Sir Richard, who was also buried in the vault which continued to be used until after 1856 when the last burial took place there of the present writer's great-grandfather Thomas Griffith, husband of Elizabeth Boscawen, a descendant of John Trevor. Marble tablets commemorated both Thomas Griffith, his wife and son. Sir Richard Trevor put up two memorials in his lifetime, both very fine examples of alabaster work. The first is, perhaps, the loveliest memorial in the church and represents Dame Katherine Trevor kneeling at her prayer desk with her five daughters kneeling behind her. The second memorial is of Sir Richard and his wife high up on the north wall of the chapel—they kneel side by side in arched recesses with a long inscription describing Sir Richard's life and his daughters and their marriage. He died in 1638 'being past the age of 80 years' but the entry of his death was never added in the space left for the final sentences.

There is one other Trevor monument in the chapel—a stone slab on the floor under the south window. It is to Ruth, daughter of John Morley Trevor, born 1712 died 1764. Her portrait can be seen at Trevalyn and it was her sister, Anne, who married General George Boscawen and took the property into that family.

The fine brass inlaid altar tomb at the east end of the chapel is in memory of another co-heiress of Trevalyn, Mrs. Trevor Parkins (Arabella Boscawen) and her husband. The east window of the chapel is filled with fragments of old glass, and the colour, particularly the blue glass, is very beautiful when seen from the west end of the south aisle.

There is a fine piscina on the south wall. The whole appearance of the chapel is perfectly in harmony with the rest of the church and is a fine example of the Perpendicular style at its best.

THE GLASS AT GRESFORD

By Dr. MOSTYN LEWIS

THROUGH the researches of Canon E. A. Fishbourne, we are fortunate in knowing a good deal about the Gresford glass. In the British Museum, he found a manuscript by Sampson Eardeswicke, who visited the church in 1574 and made notes giving the dates and donors of some of the windows. Canon Fishbourne also obtained much information from Mr. Clement Bell, of the firm of Clayton and Bell which restored the East window in 1867. The Canon published his findings in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1907, and in his monograph on the church. It is from this that the dates and the names of the donors, mentioned in this article, are taken.

The glass belongs to a very distinct local school which flourished from the middle of the fifteenth century until the Reformation. This is characterised by strong drawing, a free use of rosettes and by a lack of beauty in the faces of the female figures. There is a relatively large number of examples of the work of this school in Flintshire and Denbighshire and a few in Cheshire. It is not known where this glass was made but the obvious place would have been Chester, as this was the only large town in the area. It was, moreover, a port—a significant fact as the raw material of the windows usually came from the Continent.

Two restorations to the glass are known to have been made, though there may have been others—in 1634, under the will of Antony Lewis and by Clayton and Bell in 1867. The original work and that of Clayton and Bell are fairly obvious but it is exceedingly difficult to date the other restorations, as they are copying work of a different period and some of this copying is very expert.

The most striking window is the East, though the proportion of old glass—about a third of the total—is far less in it than in the others. It was most fortunate that the restoration was by Clayton and Bell, of which firm Christopher

Woodforde says 'It is impossible to find one of their windows that is shoddy or ugly . . . . at times . . . . they achieved real richness and beauty'. Although the Clayton and Bell faces in this window are rather weak and monotonous and although the original design was radically altered, it is a magnificent blend of the nineteenth century and the late middle ages—with a touch of the seventeenth century added. Before restoration, this window was in bad condition and was little more than a jumble of coloured glass. According to the Eardeswicke manuscript, the window was given by Thomas Stanley, Earl of Derby in 1500. He was the second husband of Henry VII's mother.

The top part of the window is a beautiful tree of Jesse. The figure of Jesse is by Clayton and Bell and is the best work of that firm in the window. The small mediæval figures of the Virgin and Child and of the kings, which have been used in the composition, suggest that there was a Jesse tree there before, though Mr. Bell thought that it was a new idea of his firm. Below this, there is a row of majestic figures; from left to right these are: the Virgin, St. John, Christ displaying His Mother as Queen of the Universe, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, the Angel Gabriel and, once more, the Virgin. The whole group is very well restored. The head of the Virgin sitting on Christ's knee is undoubted Clayton and Bell. It is Victorian at its most sentimental and is even crowned with a daisy chain! The heads of the Trinity are said by Fishbourne to be new but the drawing is stronger than Clayton and Bell. The rather weak heads of the Annunciation group might well, however, be by this firm. St. John is also said by Fishbourne to be new. It is, however, much too strong for the nineteenth century restorers and I would tentatively suggest that it might belong to the seventeenth.

The lower part of the window probably depicted the idea of 'All Saints'—the dedication of the church. Clayton and Bell re-designed this as a 'Te Deum' window. The original work may be recognised by the strong drawing and

heavy lines, which contrasts with the weaker nineteenth century heads. A few of the panels do, however, seem to belong to another style—including one with two popes, which is said to have been there before the restoration. Perhaps these are of the seventeenth century, but it is hard to say. Among the old heads is one at the top of the second column from the right, which has no halo. Mr. Bell suggested that this was the donor, the Earl of Derby.

The window in the Lady chapel (also known as the Madock's chapel) was given in 1498 by John ap Madoc Vaghan and Margaret his wife, who are depicted in the lower corners. The old glass in the top lights is, however, probably of an earlier date, since the Evangelists strongly resemble the Apostles in the upper half of the window at Diserth, which is dated 1450. This glass seems to have been cut down to fit the window and perhaps comes from the old church or from elsewhere. St. Apollonia, to the left, is old but, of the Evangelists, only St. Luke appears to be original. His face has shading on the reverse side of the glass whereas in Matthew and Mark the back of the glass is drawn in line in great detail. The copies are, however, very good and it would be difficult to distinguish them were it not for this difference on the back of the glass. When they were made, it is impossible to say. The head of St. John has no shading on the back and may well be nineteenth century.

The rest of the window tells the story of the Virgin Mary and is taken in part from one of the apochryphal gospels. The scenes are as follows: (1) Joachim, the Virgin's father, had offered a sacrifice which was refused because he had no children. Dispirited, he retired to the wilderness and fasted forty days and forty nights until he had a vision of an angel who told him that his prayer for a child was answered and that he must go to the golden gate of Jerusalem, where he would meet his wife. (2) Anna, the Virgin's mother, is praying in her garden and has a similar vision. (3) Joachim kisses Anna at the golden gate. (4) They are blessed by the High Priest. (5) The birth of the Virgin. This is a delightful

scene with a girl heating water over a fire, in the foreground. (6) Anna takes the Virgin to the temple. (7) The Annunciation. (8) The Visitation. (9) The donor and his sons. (10) The birth of Christ. (11) The flight into Egypt. (12) The donor's wife and daughters. The window is a superb piece of illustration but is poor as decoration as there is no unifying design; each panel being a separate picture, bearing no relation to the others. The drawing is not by the same hand as that of the East window, as it is less strong and more sensitive. Apart from the head of Joseph in the Nativity, the two central panels of the lowest row are entirely replacement. They have a charmingly naive style which is certainly not Clayton and Bell; perhaps they belong to the beginning of the nineteenth century. This style is also found in the lower half of Elizabeth's face in the Visitation. The Virgin's face, in this panel, was thought by Fishbourne to be a replacement. It is, however, apparently early and has some resemblance to the panel with popes in the East window. The head of the donor's wife and that of the High Priest in the blessing scene appear to be Clayton and Bell, though I would not be certain of this.

In the North windows of the Lady chapel, there is some old glass with rather stronger colouring than the rest and with drawing which tends sometimes towards caricature. Some of these windows are a jumble of glass but three of them can be made out. These are (1) The funeral of the Virgin. A wicked Jew tried to get the body and lost his hands, which were restored when he repented. (2) The entombment of the Virgin, above which two Persons of the Trinity are watching, the Father being lost. (3) The assumption of the Virgin. Unfortunately, a head of Christ has been substituted for hers.

The window in the Trevor chapel contains four very fine panels and a good deal of glass from a box in the crypt. The first two panels show the beheading of St. John the Baptist and Herod's feast. They are, probably, the most colourful examples of the local school and contain an unusual

amount of red. The executioners show Renaissance individuality but the plain faces of Salome and the page are typical of the school. An interesting feature is the plate of sucking pigs which Herod is eating in order to annoy the Jews. The two scenes of the entry of St. Anthony into the religious life and of his burial were paid for under the will of William Roden, who left £10 for a St. Anthony window in 1510. These scenes are well drawn and the blue of the monks' habits is very beautiful. A charming touch is St. Anthony's pet pig peeping out from under his habit. In the burial scene, St. Anthony's soul is being carried to Heaven in the form of an infant.

The rest of the window was made up from glass found in a box in the crypt, this being done in memory of William Trevor-Parkins, Chancellor of St. Asaph, who died in 1908. The restoration has been particularly well done and has produced a harmonious result. Apparently no new glass has been added, except, perhaps, for a little blue and red in the backgrounds and borders. Apart from this, the work is all enamel and yellow stain. The angels at the outer tops of the long lights are charming; the right hand pair playing a stringed instrument and a kind of recorder. They resemble other angels in the upper lights of several of the windows and are probably of the same date as the windows. The glass in the row under the main panels bears a strong resemblance to that in Llandyrnog and perhaps comes from the old church before it was rebuilt. The subjects are: the symbols of Mark and Matthew, St. Appolonia, St. Christopher, St. Michael, St. Sytha and the symbols of Luke and John. In the lowest row is the arms of Edward VI, next to which are heads which are completely different in style from anything else in the church, the hair having been drawn by scratching away an enamel background. Next are angels holding the arms of Rafe and Christina Davenport. At first sight, these look like replacements but this is impossible as they have the most apalling squints, which no restorer would copy. The knight in the bottom right hand

corner is probably late sixteenth or seventeenth century and the head next to it is a rather bad early copy of an original head.

The study of stained glass is one of the most difficult branches of art history and the suggestions in this article are not meant to be taken as in any way final. The glass at Gresford presents many problems which are fascinating to try to solve but the greatest pleasure to be derived from it must always be the simple contemplation of its glorious beauty.

Eisteddfod Llangollen, 1858

Gan Yr Athro G. J. WILLIAMS

Y MAE gŵr Sir Ddinbych eleni yn dathlu canmlwyddiant yr Eisteddfod a gynhaliwyd yn Llangollen yn 1858, gŵyl hynod ar lawer ystyr, ac ar ryw olwg, yr Eisteddfod bwysicaf yn y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg. Ni allwn ddeall na'i hynodrwydd na'i phwysigrwydd, na'r rhywbeth hwnnw a oedd yn ysgogi'r sawl a'i trefnodd, heb wybod am yr hyn a fu'n cyflyru'r meddwl Cymreig o'r unfed ganrif ar bymtheg hyd ddechrau'r ganrif hon, sef y myth derwyddol. Y myth hwn a gynhyrchodd Eisteddfod Llangollen, ac felly, rhaid i mi yn gyntaf oll fwrw rhyw fras olwg ar y modd y datblygodd. Un o ddamcaniaethau'r Dadeni Dysg ydyw. Fe'i gwelir gyntaf—o'r hyn lleiaf, cyn belled ag y gwn i—mewn llyfr o waith yr hynafiaethydd Seisnig, John Leland, y *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis*, a ysgrifennwyd tua 1540 (er nas argraffwyd hyd 1709), ac wedi hynny, yn llyfr y Cymro, Syr John Prys, yr *Historiae Brytannicae Defensio*, a luniwyd tua 1544-53, ac a gyhoeddwyd yn 1573. Mynnai'r ddau mae disgynyddion y Derwyddon, dysgedigion y Brytaniaid a'r Galiaid, ydoedd y beirdd Cymraeg, ac iddynt etifeddu eu dysg a'u traddodiadau a'u hathrawiaethau. Y mae rhai o'r awduron clasurol yn moli'r hen urdd hon, urdd, meddent, a gynhwysai feirdd dysgedig, a doethion, ac athronwyr a fyddai'n astudio dirgelion natur. A chartref cysefin y Derwyddon, meddent, ydoedd Ynys Brydain. Gwelir y syniad hwn yn cael croeso mawr gan haneswyr Prydain yn ail hanner yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg. Gallai'r beirdd Cymraeg, felly, honni eu bod hwy wedi etifeddu traddodiad dysg a oedd gyn hyned â thraddodiadau Groeg a Rhufain, ac yn wir, tybiai rhai awduron clasurol fod y Derwyddon wedi hyfforddi doethion ac athronwyr yr hen fyd. Cyfeiria John Milton at hyn; credent, meddai, mai dysg Brydeinig a welid yn Ysgol Pythagoras ac yn llyfrau doethion Persia. Wele'r syniadau a ddechreuodd greu'r ymdeim-

lad a barhaodd yng Nghymru bron hyd ein dyddiau ni. Ac yna, yng ngwaith yr Esgob John Bale ar yr Awduron Brytanaidd, a gyhoeddwyd yn 1557, eir ymhellach, a manylir ar syniad a gawsai lawer o groeso ar y Cyfandir yn hanner cyntaf y ganrif honno, sef mai disgynyddion Iaffeth, mab Noa, y rhai a ymsefydlodd yn yr ynys hon ac yng Ngâl, ydoedd y Brytaniaid a'r Galiaid, ac mai hwy a sefydlodd ysgolion a phrifysgolion. A'r gŵr yr edrychid arno gan y Cymry (ac eraill) fel arweinydd y garfan hon o ddisgynyddion Noa ydoedd Gomer, mab Iaffeth. Ef oedd tad y genedl Frytanaidd, ac nid oedd *Cymro* ond ffurf ar *Gomero*, fel y gŵyr pawb a ddarllenodd lyfr Theophilus Evans, *Drych y Prif Oesoedd*. Dyma'r syniadau a oedd yn llywio meddwl y Cymry.

Yr ydym ni heddiw yn cael hwyl wrth draethu ar yr hen ddamcaniaethau hyn, ac yn galw Theophilus Evans yn hanesydd hygoelus, anfeirniadol ac anghyfrifol. Diffyg synnwyr hanesyddol a welir yma. Dyma syniadau a dderbynnid gan ysgolheigion. Hyn sy'n egluro eu hagwedd at y traddodiad llenyddol Cymraeg ac at yr Iaith Gymraeg. Yn gyntaf oll, gellid olrhain y traddodiad hwnnw yn ôl i ddyddiau dysgedigion y cynfyd; gellid ei osod ochr yn ochr â thraddodiadau Groeg a Rhufain. Gwelid ôl y ddysg dderwyddol yn yr hen lenyddiaeth, a hyn a rôi le mor arbennig i'r Cymry ymhlith cenhedloedd eraill Ewrob. Yr oedd yr Iaith Gymraeg, iaith y Gomeriaid, yn un o'r mamieithoedd dwyreiniol, ac yr oedd cysylltiad agos rhyngddi a'r Hebraeg. Ac yn nes ymlaen, dechreuwyd honni mai hi oedd yr hynaf a'r buraf yn Ewrob. Darllener rhagymadroddion y Dr. John Davies o Fallwyd i'w Ramadeg a'i Eiriadur er gweled sut yr oedd ysgolhaig Cymraeg mwyaf y canrifoedd hynny yn cael ei gyffroi gan y syniadau hyn. Bid sicr, gwelir llu o ddamcaniaethau eraill yn brigo o'r boncyff hwn, ond y mae'r awduron oll yn cytuno mai dysg dderwyddol ydoedd dysg Gymraeg, ac mai iaith â chysylltiad agos rhyngddi â'r Hebraeg ydoedd y Gymraeg. Ac yna, tua diwedd yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg, dyma'r Cymro hynod, John Aubrey, yn awgrymu mai

temlau'r Derwyddon a geid yn Avebury a Stonehenge ac yn yr holl gylchoedd cerrig, a'r cromlechau, etc., a derbyniwyd y syniad hwn gan y rhan fwyaf o'r ysgolheigion. Dyna a ysgydwai'r Cymry hwythau yn y ddeunawfed ganrif—gweld y mannau lle y buasai hynafiaid eu beirdd hwy yn addoli, yn doethinebu, yn hyfforddi eu disgyblion, ac yn traethu dysg y pell ganrifoedd. Ac nid hynny yn unig. Dechreuwyd honni fod y Derwyddon wedi etifeddu crefydd bur yr Oes Batriarchaidd a ddygwyd i'r ynys hon gan ddisgynyddion Iaffeth. Ysgrifennwyd llyfrau er mwyn dangos i'r byd, ac yn arbennig i Ddeistiaid a Rhesymolwyr y ddeunawfed ganrif, 'the knowledge and practice of ancient and true Religion; to revive in the minds of the learned the spirit of Christianity'. Yn wir, dechreuwyd honni fod y Derwyddon wedi glynu'n ffyddlonach wrth y grefydd batriarchaidd na hyd yn oed yr Iddewon, syniad a arweiniodd yn y ganrif ddiwethaf, fel y cawn weled yn y man, i rai o'r datblygiadau rhyfeddaf yn hanes y mudiad gorseddol.

Wedi dywedyd hynyna, gellir dechrau deall y mudiad gorseddol hwnnw. Oherwydd penllanw'r traddodiad derwyddol hwn, a fu'n cyflyru'r meddwl Cymreig er tua chanol yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg, ydoedd y freuddwyd a gyflwynwyd i'r genedl gan Iolo Morganwg, a dyna paham yr oedd y genedl, gan gynnwys y beirdd a'r llenorion a'r dysgedigion, yn dra pharod i anwesu'r cyfan. Ni byddai Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain wedi ennill ei lle oni bai am hyn. Oherwydd, fel y caf ddangos mewn man arall, ni chafodd y traddodiad derwyddol hwn fwy o ddylanwad ar neb nag ar Iolo Morganwg, gŵr yr oedd rhyw angerdd yn ei yrru beunydd, beunos, trwy gydol ei oes faith, i weddnewid gorffennol y genedl, i fynegi'r syniadau a oedd yn ei gyffroi ac yn ei ysgwyd, angerdd na wyddom ni, feidrolion, ddim oll amdano. Darllenodd weithiau'r hen haneswyr ar y Derwyddon; etifeddasai'r syniadau a fuasai'n llywio'r meddwl Cymreig; a gwelodd ei orffennol ef ei hun. Mynnai, ac y mae'n weddol sicr ei fod yn iawn, fod ei fam yn un o ddisgynyddion y teulu enwocaf o benceirddiaid a fu ym Morgannwg erioed, pen-

ceirddiaid Tir Iarll. Felly, ef oedd yr olaf yn y llinach urddasol hon. Trosglwyddwyd yr hen ddysg farddol, dysg dderwyddol doethion y cynfyd, gyda'r 'gyfrinach' farddol, o genhedlaeth i genhedlaeth ym Morgannwg hyd ddyddiau ei ieuenctid ef. Ac wedi marw Edward Evan o Aberdâr yn 1798, ef yn unig a oedd yn aros a wyddai'r 'gyfrinach' a'r ddysg dderwyddol, canys collasai'r taleithiau eraill bob cof amdanynt. Ef oedd y lladmerydd, a'i ddyletswydd ef ydoedd cyflwyno'r hen ogoniant i'w gyd-Gymry, a dangos hynodrwydd y genedl Gymraeg. Yr oedd yr hen sefydliad derwyddol wedi ei ddiogelu gan feirdd Morgannwg. Dyma Orsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain, y sefydliad a ofalai nid yn unig am y ddysg farddol, ond hefyd am holl ganghennau dysg, ac am fywyd moesol a chrefyddol y genedl. Parhawyd ym Morgannwg i gynnal gorseddau yn yr hen ddull, yn y cylchoedd cerrig, lle y rhoid graddau i feirdd a llenorion, lle yr adroddid yr hen gofion, yr hen reolau, yr hen osodedigaethau, 'Llafar Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain.' Felly, yr oedd gan y Cymry sefydliad cenedlaethol i ofalu am ddysg Gymraeg, Prifysgol dderwyddol. Darllenodd yr hen lenyddiaeth, a chanfod ar bob tu olion yr hen ddysg honno, a llên ddiarhebol doethion y cynfyd. Ac yr oedd ei gyd-Gymry yn dra pharod i gytuno â hyn oll, canys dyma'r syniad a goleddai ysgolheigion mwyaf y ddeunawfed ganrif. Tybiai Edward Lhuyd mai gwaith y Derwyddon ydoedd llawer o'r hen englynion a geid yn Llyfr Coch Hergest, a mynnai Lewis Morris mai'r byd derwyddol a gynhyrchodd y penillion telyn. Ac yn ôl Ieuan Fardd, dywediadau'r doethion ydoedd llawer o'r diarhebion. Ond yr oedd Iolo Morganwg yn ŵr gwahanol iawn i'r rhain. Yn herwydd y tro rhyfedd hwnnw a roddwyd i'w feddwl yn ei lencyndod—pwnc nad rhaid imi ei drafod yma—fe'i gwelai ei hun fel yr olaf o feirdd derwyddol ei dalaith, a dyma'r syniad hwn yn llywio ei holl weithgareddau ac yn ei yrru i lunio corff anhygoel o lenyddiaeth i bortreadu'r gorffennol hwn, pennaf gogoniant y genedl, ac ef ei hun yn unig yn gwybod y manylion, unig gynrychiolydd dysg y cynoesoedd.

Nid traethu ar y pwnc hwn yw fy amcan i yma, eithr cyfeirio at bethau y mae'n rhaid inni wybod amdanynt cyn deall arwyddocâd Eisteddfod Llangollen. Yn gyntaf oll, rhaid inni gofio mai tyfiant graddol a welir wrth astudio llawysgrifau Iolo, ac ni ellir dywedyd iddo lunio dim a rôi ddisgrifiad pendant a therfynol o'r sefydliad fel y syniai ef amdano—fe'i gwelir yn meddwl am seremonïau newydd ac yn ychwanegu manylion hyd yn oed yn ei hen ddyddiau. Ceir llu o fanylion am seremonïau'r Orsedd ac am ei hanes a'i hathrawiaethau na ŵyr hyd yn oed y selocaf o'r Gorseddogion ddim oll amdanynt. Ac mewn gwirionedd, ychydig a wyddai ei gyfoeswyr am ei syniadau. Cyhoeddodd William Owen [-Pughe] rai o'r athrawiaethau derwyddol yn y rhagymadrodd i'w lyfr, *The Heroic Elegies . . . of Llywarch Hen,* yn 1792, a cheir rhagor ganddo ef ei hun yn y *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral* yn 1794. Cyhoeddwyd rhai manylion am Goelbren y Beirdd gan William Owen [-Pughe] yn ei Ramadeg yn 1803, and ar wahân i'r rhain, a rhai manion yn y cylchgronau, ni cheid odid ddim i egluro hanes a seremonïau'r Orsedd. Felly, syniadau digon annelwig a oedd gan y Cymry yn nechrau'r ganrif ddiwethaf am y pynciau hyn. Ond yr oedd y lefain yn dechrau gweithio. Fel y dywedais eisoes, dyma'r union bethau a ddisgwylient—yr oedd y meddwl Cymraeg wedi ei baratoi er yr unfed ganrif ar bymtheg, ac ni wyddai neb ddigon am y llawysgrifau Cymraeg i fedru dweud nad oedd gyfeiriad at yr Orsedd yn unman arall. A phan ymledodd brwdfrydedd Cymreig Cymdeithasau Llundain i Gymru yn nechrau'r ganrif ddiwethaf, a pheri i offeiriaid a boneddigion deimlo y dylid cael sefydliad yng Nghymru i ofalu am ddysg Gymraeg ac am y gwaith o hyrwyddo llenyddiaeth, nid rhyfedd iddynt sefydlu Cymdeithas Daleithiol yn Nyfed yn 1818, a chynnal Eisteddfod fawr—y gyntaf o'r gwyliau mawr—yng Nghaerfyrddin yn 1819. Dylid sylwi yma ar ddau bwynt go bwysig. Yn gyntaf oll, yr oedd y syniad Ioloaidd am yr Orsedd (a'r Eisteddfod yn gyfarfod a gynhelid dan ei nawdd) fel hen sefydliad y cynfyd Cymreig, sefydliad a ofalai am fywyd diwylliannol

y genedl, yn dechrau meddiannu eu meddyliau—'the ancient Welsh Eisteddfods', fel y dywedai Thomas Burgess, Esgob Dewi, un o'r prif hyrwyddwyr. Ac yn ail, edrychid ar Gymdeithas Daleithiol Dyfed fel adran o sefydliad cenedlaethol, canys bwriedid cael cymdeithasau tebyg yn y taleithiau eraill. Eu hamcan, fel y dywedir yn *Seren Gomer* yn 1819, ydoedd cynnal yr eisteddfod 'bob yn ail flwyddyn yn y Deheudir a'r Gogledd', ac nid rhyfedd i Wallter Mechain eu galw, wrth annerch y gynulleidfa yn y Trallwng yn 1824, yn 'Eisteddfodau Cenedlaethol'. Oherwydd sefydliad cenedlaethol oedd yr Orsedd. A derbyniai'r hyrwyddwyr y syniad am gysylltiad hanfodol yr Eisteddfod â'r Orsedd, er mai syniad digon annelwig ydoedd hyd yn hyn am na wyddai neb mo'r manylion a fuasai'n graddol ddatblygu ym meddwl Iolo. Felly, nid rhyfedd fod yr hyrwyddwyr wedi ei wneuthur yn un o'r prif ffigurau yn yr ŵyl hon, ac wedi gofyn iddo aros am gyfnod bob blwyddyn yng Nghaerfyrddin i hyfforddi beirdd ifainc. Wrth gadeirio'r bardd, er na cheid mo'r seremoni o weinio'r cleddyf ac o weiddi 'A oes heddwch', caniatawyd iddo roi ysnoden las ar ei fraich ddeau, ac ysnoden wen urdd derwydd ar fraich yr Esgob, a hynny yng nghanol banllefau'r gynulleidfa. Dyma'r unig seremonïau gorseddol yn yr Eisteddfod ei hun, ond ar ddydd Sadwrn, y diwrnod olaf, cynhaliwyd Gorsedd yn yr awyr agored, yng ngardd Gwesty'r Llwyn Eiddew, mewn cylch o gerrig bychain, ac Iolo'n cael ei ddewis yn 'fardd gweinyddol'. Yno urddwyd beirdd ac ofyddion a derwyddon, a rhoi ysnodenni glas a gwyrdd a gwyn ar eu breichiau, a'r cleddyf yn gorffwys ar y 'Maen Llog'. Ac i ddiweddu'r Orsedd, gweiniwyd y cleddyf.

Fel y dywedais eisoes, syniadau annelwig a oedd gan yr hyrwyddwyr am le'r Orsedd yn y gwyliau hyn. Ei swyddogaeth hi ydoedd hyrwyddo bywyd llenyddol y cyfnod wrth roi i'r beirdd a'r llenorion a'r gwŷr llên yr hen raddau derwyddol. Fel y dywedir yn *Y Gwyliedydd* yn 1823, wrth roi hanes yr Orsedd a gynhaliwyd yng Nghaerfyrddin y flwyddyn honno: 'Deallir gan y Beirdd, nad oedd cynnaliad y Cyfarfod hwn yn hanfodol i'r Gymdeithas; ond gan ei fod

yn hen arferiad o roddi graddau mewn Eisteddfodau, hwy a gymmerasant y cyfle presennol i gynnal yr Orsedd i'r diben hwnnw.' Na, nid oedd i'r Orsedd le amlwg iawn yn yr Eisteddfodau Taleithiol.

Edwino a wnaeth y mudiad hwn. Aeth yn fwyfwy Seisnigaidd a snobyddol, a boneddigion di-Gymraeg a oedd, gan amlaf, wrth y llyw. Un o brif gynheiliaid yr Eisteddfodau ydoedd John Jenkins (Ifor Ceri), ac erbyn 1829, yr oedd yntau wedi torri ei galon am na welai ddim budd yn deillio ohonynt. Yr olaf o'r Eisteddfodau Taleithiol ydoedd yr un a gynhaliwyd gan Gymdeithas Gwent a Morgannwg yng Nghaerdydd yn 1834. Er bod llu o fân gymdeithasau yn parhau i eisteddfota—ac y mae rhai o'r Eisteddfodau hyn, megis y gwyliau mawr a gynhaliwyd gan Gymdeithas Cymreigyddion y Fenni rhwng 1835 ac 1853, yn dra phwysig wrth olrhain hanes bywyd llenyddol Cymru yn hanner cyntaf y ganrif ddiwethaf—yr oedd y syniad am ŵyl genedlaethol wedi marw. Yr oedd y beirdd yn dal i gystadlu ac yn cael eu hurddo yn y gorseddau, ac y mae'r ymdeimlad â hynafiaeth y traddodiadau barddol ac â'r modd y gellid olrhain y sefydliad cenedlaethol hwn yn ôl i'r cynfyd i'w glywed yn glir yn yr areithiau. Ond ni ellir dywedyd fod yr Orsedd, gyda'i hawdurdod a'i seremonïau wedi datblygu'n elfen hanfodol yn y gweithrediadau eisteddfodol hyd yn hyn, ac ni chredaf y byddai hynny wedi digwydd o gwbl onibai am un dyn ac am un Eisteddfod.

Y gŵr hwnnw oedd John Williams ab Ithel, un o Gymry rhyfeddaf y ganrif ddiwethaf. Fe'i ganwyd yn 1811 yn Llangynhafal yn Sir Ddinbych, ac fe'i haddysgwyd yn Ysgol Ramadeg Rhuthun ac yng Ngholeg Iesu yn Rhydychen. Cafodd fywoliaeth Llanymawddwy yn 1849, ac yno y bu nes ei symud ychydig fisoedd cyn ei farw yn 1862 i Lanenddwyn yn Ardudwy. Yr oedd yntau'n un o 'offeiriaid llengar' y ganrif ddiwethaf, a'r myth derwyddol yn llywio ei feddwl a'i holl weithgarwch, ac yn ei yrru, megis y gyrasai William Owen [-Pughe] ac Iolo Morganwg, i weithio'n ddi-baid trwy gydol ei yrfa. Y mae'n enghraifft ragorol o'r modd y

byddai'r freuddwyd hon yn tra-arglwyddiaethu ar feddyliau'r Cymry. Ef, heb unrhyw amheuaeth, oedd y gweithiwr caletaf yn y byd Cymreig wedi dyddiau William Owen [-Pughe]. Ni pharhaodd cyfnod y gweithgarwch mawr hwn namyn rhyw ddeunaw mlynedd, o tua 1844 hyd 1862. Yn ystod y blynyddoedd hyn, cychwynnodd ddau gylchgrawn y rhoes ei ddelw ei hun arnynt, sef *The Cambrian Journal* (1854-62) a *Taliesin* (1859-61), ac am saith mlynedd yr oedd yn un o olygyddion yr *Archæologia Cambrensis*. Ef, hefyd, oedd golygydd *Baner y Groes*. Yn 1852, cyhoeddodd argraffiad o *Y Gododin*, gyda chyfieithiad a nodiadau. Penodwyd ef gan y Llywodraeth yn 1858 i gwpláu gwaith Aneurin Owen, sef dwyn allan argraffiadau o'r croniclau Cymreig, yr *Annales Cambriae* a *Brut y Tywysogion*. Cyhoeddwyd y ddwy gyfrol yn 1860. Yn yr un cyfnod ef oedd prif ddyn *The Welsh MSS. Society*, ac o'r flwyddyn 1856 ymlaen, ei lyfrau ef yn unig a gyhoeddwyd gan y Gymdeithas, sef *Dosparth Edeyrn Davod Aur* (1856), *Meddygon Myddfai* (1861), a *Barddas* (1862). Ysgrifennodd lawer o erthyglau meithion a ymddangosodd yn *The Cambrian Journal* (megis 'The Traditionary Annals of the Cymry', a gyhoeddwyd yn llyfr yn 1867), ac ef biau bron yr holl ddyfyniadau o 'hen' lawysgrifau gyda'r nodiadau amrywiol a geir yn y cylchgrawn hwnnw. Yn yr un cyfnod cyfieithodd lyfrau Saesneg i'r Gymraeg, gan gynnwys rhai mân nofelau. Bwriodd fisoedd yn llyfrgell Llanover yn copïo'r llawysgrifau. Ac ar ben hyn oll, byddai'n teithio'n gyson trwy Ogledd Cymru, yn ymweled ag Ysgolion Madam Bevan, ac yn gweithredu fel Arolygwr Ysgolion yr Eglwys yn Neoniaeth Llanelwy. Nid rhyfedd fod pawb (ar wahân i rai ysgolheigion, megis Thomas Stephens, a rhai Anghydffurfwyr blaenllaw) yn edrych arno fel yr awdurdod pennaf ar hanes Cymru, ac ar yr hen lenyddiaeth. Ei ddysg ef oedd yr union beth a ddisgwyliai cenedl yr oedd ei meddwl wedi ei gyflyru ers mwy na thair canrif gan y syniad am 'hynafiaeth aruthrol' (a defnyddio ymadrodd a welir yn y cylchgronau yn y dyddiau hynny) y traddodiadau barddol Cymreig.

Rhamantiaeth dderwyddol wedi ennyn tân gwladgarol —dyna sy'n gorwedd y tu ôl i holl weithgarwch ab Ithel. 'Cambria', meddai yn ei ragair i drydedd gyfrol *The Cambrian Journal* (1856),

> possesses as illustrious a past as any country in Europe; and, if we wish her to maintain her dignified position among the nations. we must take care not to despise the instruments of her greatness. The Harp, the Gorsedd, the Cymraeg, are as dear as ever to the Welshman,—they are his life; deprive him of these and he is paralyzed; he becomes a gloomy slave to the Saxon, regardless of his country's fate.

Yr oedd cenedl y Cymry yn gwbl ar ei phen ei hun ymhlith cenhedloedd Ewrob oherwydd iddi etifeddu'r gyfundrefn dderwyddol a chrefydd bur yr Oes Batriarchaidd. 'The Cymry,' meddai drachefn yn yr un gyfrol (t. 348),

> are a favoured people, for they alone, having to the latest times been able properly to read and understand the great Book of Nature, can now boast of ritual connection with the type and antitype. Other nations had more or less corrupted the primitive truth, so that, when they embraced Christianity, their former system, scarcely presenting any elements of a kindred and genial character, was necessarily abolished.

Cofier fod *The Cambrian Journal,* a gyhoeddid dan nawdd *The Cambrian Institute* (sefydliad nodedig o uchelgeisiol, a ffrwyth gweithgarwch anhygoel ab Ithel ei hun) yn llawn o bethau o'r nodwedd yma. Yn wir, dyma arbenigrwydd y cylchgrawn. Ac eto, ymhlith aelodau'r sefydliad hwn, gwelid enwau rhai o brif ffigurau'r dydd, megis Thomas Stephens, W. F. Skene, D. Silvan Evans, Robert Williams, yr Archddiacon John Williams, Robert Jones (Rotherhithe), Gweirydd ap Rhys, Jane Williams (Ysgafell), Villemarqué, etc. Ceid 'Sectional Committees' i gynrychioli gwahanol ganghennau dysg canys onid dyna un o brif nodweddion y sefydliad barddol? Y mae'n wiw inni gofio (er mwyn gwneuthur cyfiawnder ag ab Ithel) fod rhai o'r gŵyr hyn wedi cael yr un cyffro ag yntau. Er enghraifft, cymerwn John Williams, Archddiacon Ceredigion, ysgolfeistr enwog, gŵr a fu'n brifathro yr Edinburgh Academy. Fe'i penodwyd yn Athro

Lladin ym Mhrifysgol Llundain, ac wedi hynny yn brifathro ysgol newydd Llanymddyfri. Y mae haneswyr yn cytuno ei fod yn un o'r ysgolheigion clasurol disgleiriaf a welodd Cymru erioed. Eto, yr oedd yr ysgolhaig hwn yn un o brif gynheiliaid ab Ithel. Yr oedd yn aelod o gyngor *The Cambrian Institute*, a rhoes sylw mawr i'r dogfennau Ioloaidd ar hen athrawiaethau Barddas—yn wir, aeth yn unswydd i Ferthyr i weld y llawysgrifau. Gwrandawer arno'n traethu mewn llythyr at ab Ithel, a gyhoeddwyd yn *The Cambrian Journal* yn 1857 (tt. 224-7):

> The very isolation of these islands, and recorded freedom from foreign aggression until the arrival of Cæsar on our shores, greatly favoured the preservation among their recesses of the time-honoured traditions which were redolent of the old hoary wisdom of the patriarchs . . . . Let us, who represent the remnant which God in his mercy has spared, endeavour to save from the ruinous edifice of the Druids whatever may be regarded as more precious and spiritual, and show the world that there once prevailed a better philosophy and a holier teaching than was ever taught by spurious Christians, who smother all true development of the religion of Jesus by the grossest materialism of the epicurean school. Pray, therefore, supply me with all the information you possess respecting "the true *Cyfrinach y Beirdd*".

Yma y mae'n cyfeirio at y defnyddiau a welsai ab Ithel yn llawysgrifau Iolo yn Llanover. Gwelir, felly, fod yr ysgolhaig hwn wedi etifeddu'r hen syniadau, a'i fod yn cytuno â hyrwyddwyr Eisteddfod Llangollen wrth edrych ar y traddodiad derwyddol fel pennaf gogoniant y gorffennol Cymreig. Ac yr oedd rhai o ysgolheigion Ffrainc a Llydaw yn eu cefnogi. Yn y cyfnod pan draethid y syniadau hyn yn *The Cambrian Journal*, ymddangosodd llyfr Adolphe Pictet, ysgolhaig pur enwog yn ei ddydd, *Le Mystère des Bardes de l'Île de Bretagne*, gyda thestunau Ioloaidd wedi eu cyfieithu i'r Ffrangeg, ac fe'i hadolygwyd gan ab Ithel. Pan soniwn am 'hygoeledd' a 'ffolineb' ac 'eiddgarwch lloerig' y gŵr hwnnw a'i gyfeillion, byddwn yn dangos nad ydym yn ymdeimlo ag awyrgylch meddyliol yr oes. Ni allwn wneuthur unrhyw fath o gyfiawnder â'r gwŷr hyn heb gofio'n barhaus

am y myth a fu'n llywio meddwl y genedl, a heb wybod fod rhai ysgolheigion cyfrifol yn barod i gytuno â hwy.

Dywedais eisoes mai'r dderwyddiaeth a gyflwynwyd gan Iolo Morganwg, a honno wedi ennyn tân gwladgarol, a welir yn holl weithgarwch ab Ithel. Pwy bynnag a fynnai feirniadu'r dogfennau derwyddol hyn, a'u manwl astudio, pwy bynnag a fynnai aros yn ddigyffro heb ei bensyfrdanu wrth feddwl am olud y gorffennol, rhaid edrych arno fel bradwr ac fel gelyn y genedl Gymreig. Ac un o'r bradwyr hyn oedd Thomas Stephens. Yr oedd yn aelod o'r *Cambrian Institute* ac o'r 'Pwyllgor Hanes' o'r cychwyn cyntaf, a gorfu i ab Ithel gyhoeddi erthyglau o'i waith yn *The Cambrian Journal*, lle y mae'n ymosod ar ddogfennau Morgannwg, ac yn honni mai pethau cymharol ddiweddar ydynt, ffrwyth gweithgarwch ysgol o ffugwyr a geid yno yn y bymthegfed ganrif a'r ddwy ganrif ddilynol. Gweler Cyf. IV, t. 266. Wele fan cychwyn y ddamcaniaeth honno, a dderbyniwyd wedi hynny gan Syr John Morris-Jones a Syr John Edward Lloyd. Cyhoeddodd ymosodiad arall yn *Y Traethodydd* yn 1857 gan amau llawer pwnc gorseddol. Ni allai ab Ithel ymatal yn hwy. Yn rhifyn 'Alban Elfed' o *The Cambrian Journal* ceir ganddo lythyr—er mai 'A Myth' a welir ar y godre, ef yw'r awdur, y mae'n sicr ddigon, canys defnyddiai bob math o ffugenwau yn ei gylchgrawn ef ei hun—llythyr yn ymosod yn ffyrnig ar Stephens ac ar ei erthygl, ac ni allaf wneuthur yn well yma na dyfynnu'r diweddglo, fel y gallom weled sut y byddai ab Ithel a'i gymheiriaid yn edrych ar y sawl a geisiai gymhwyso safonau ysgolheictod at y pwnc:

> To me it is a phenomenon that Mr. S., and others of the same school, born and bred it may be in Wales, should yet have such an inveterate hatred to every thing Welsh—language—literature and land. Hatred it must be, for their arguments are designedly strained, and invariably ranged against the patriotic view of the question. This is not true criticism,—it is a mean advocacy of a tottering cause.

Ie, 'against the patriotic view of the question'—dyna gorff y gainc, yng ngolwg y gwŷr hyn.

Wrth astudio'r mudiad a gynhyrchodd Eisteddfod Llangollen, dylid rhoi sylw arbennig i'r *Iolo Manuscripts,* a ddaeth allan o'r wasg yn 1848. Dywedais eisoes mai ychydig o ddefnyddiau gorseddol a oedd gan y beirdd hyd yn hyn, ac ychydig iawn a wyddai'r rheini a urddid yn y gorseddau am y sefydliad yr oeddynt yn aelodau ohono—yn wir, ychydig iawn a wyddai'r rheini a weithredai fel 'beirdd gweinyddol', 'archdderwyddon' y cyfnod dilynol. Ond yn awr, wele gyhoeddi pob math o ddogfennau a dynnwyd gan ab Iolo o lawysgrifau ei dad. Nid gormodiaith dywedyd fod y naws ramantaidd a berthyn i'r defnyddiau amrywiol hyn wedi dechrau creu cyfnod newydd yn hanes yr Orsedd. A'r lladmerydd ydoedd ab Ithel. Ond ni fynnai ymfodloni ar yr hyn a geid yn y gyfrol hon. Wrth adolygu cofiant Waring yn rhifyn cyntaf *The Cambrian Journal*—canys y mae'n eglur mai ef biau'r adolygiad—cyfeiria at lawysgrifau Iolo. 'Are these in safe hands?' meddai; 'It is a question of national interest, and it is much to be hoped that it may be answered satisfactorily.' Erbyn hyn (neu ychydig wedi hyn) yr oedd casgliad anferth o'r llawysgrifau yn llyfrgell Syr Benjamin Hall yn Llanover, a diau i ab Ithel, ac yntau wedi cyfarfod â'r gŵr hwn a'i wraig yn Eisteddfod y Fenni yn 1853, gael caniatâd i'w darllen. Dywedir iddo yn y cyfnod hwn, yn herwydd caledwaith, ddechrau dihoeni, a chafodd bron ddwy flynedd o seibiant. Y mae'n weddol sicr mai dyma pryd y bu'n ymlafurio yn Llanover, yn copïo ddydd a nos, ac yn cael ei ysgwyd a'i gyffroi gan bopeth a ddarllenai. Daeth yn ôl i'r Gogledd yn feddw gorn, gyda chasgliad mawr o ddogfennau o bob math, dogfennau a gyhoeddodd wedi hynny yn *The Cambrian Journal,* ym *Meddygon Myddfai,* ac yn y ddwy gyfrol, *Barddas.* Yma y gwelodd yr holl fanylion am yr Orsedd a'i seremonïau a'i hathrawiaethau a'i hanes, a'r storïau rhamantus am yr hen Forgannwg, ac felly, nid anghywir dywedyd mai ab Ithel ydoedd awdurdod mwyaf y ganrif ar y freuddwyd dderwyddol fel y datblygasai yn Nhrefflemin, ac mai Iolo Morganwg a greodd Eisteddfod Llangollen a brwdfrydedd eisteddfodol y cyfnod dilynol.

Nid ab Ithel yn unig a gynhyrfwyd gan y defnyddiau hyn. Rhaid inni gofio hefyd am Evan Davies, Myfyr Morganwg (1801-88), gŵr hynod a galluog, a heb fod yn llawn cymaint o ffŵl ag a dybir yn gyffredin. Yn ei waith ef y gwelir eithaf bennod y myth derwyddol. Yr oedd y Myfyr yn byw ym Mhontypridd, a gwyddom fod gan Iolo ddisgyblion yn y cylch hwn cyn ei ddyddiau ef. Dechreuodd Gwilym Morganwg gynnal Gorsedd o gwmpas y Maen Chwŷf yn 1814-15, a pharhawyd i wneuthur hynny am rai blynyddoedd. Ond y Myfyr a droes Bontypridd yn dref dderwyddol. Cawsai, meddai, wybod y manylion am 'gyfrinach y beirdd' gan ab Iolo, ac wedi marw'r gŵr hwnnw yn 1847, ef oedd 'archdderwydd Cymru'. Tua 1853 cychwynnodd y miri derwyddol a wnaeth Bontypridd yn ail hanner y ganrif ddiwethaf yn un o brif hynodion y Deau. Ceir hanes y seithfed wŷl, a gynhaliwyd yn 1856, yn *The Cambrian Journal*. A phwy a ddaeth yno i gael ei urddo'n aelod o un o sefydliadau hynaf dynolryw, a hynny gan 'archdderwydd' y genedl, ond 'John Williams, M.A. (*Ab Ithel*)'—ei urddo, cofier, gan y gŵr a gawsai ei hyfforddi gan ab Iolo, a hwnnw gan ei dad, ac yntau gan ddisgynyddion yr hen dderwyddon yn y ddeunawfed ganrif. Dyna'r olyniaeth, a dyna'r syniad a ysgydwai ab Ithel. Traddododd anerchiad huawdl ar y Maen Chwŷf, gan gyfeirio at y modd yr oedd yn dechrau meistroli cyfrinion barddas, 'and the more he studied it, the more he wondered.' Eto, byddai gwŷr fel yr Archddiacon John Williams yn dra pharod i gytuno â phopeth a ddywedodd ab Ithel ar y Maen Chwŷf ym Mhontypridd.

Yr oedd erbyn hyn yn dechrau sylweddoli mai Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain, yn ôl y traddodiad barddol hwn, ydoedd yr awdurdod terfynol yn y byd diwylliannol Cymreig, sefydliad cenedlaethol y Cymry, y sefydliad a ddylai reoli'r Eisteddfod, y cyfarfod cystadleuol a gynhelid o dan ei nawdd. Felly, wedi dychwelyd i'r Gogledd, llwyddodd i ysbrydoli tri offeiriad, a gydymdeimlai â'i holl ddyheadau, sef Joseph Hughes (Carn Ingli), gŵr o Sir Benfro, un o offeiriaid gwlatgar Sir Efrog, R. W. Morgan, Tregynon,

gwladgarwr tanbaid, llawn mor eithafol ag yntau, a T. R. Lloyd (Estyn), offeiriad Llanfynydd yn Sir y Fflint—eu hysbrydoli i ymgymryd â'r caledwaith o gynnal Eisteddfod fawr yn null yr hen Eisteddfodau Taleithiol, ond gyda rhai gwahaniaethau pwysig.[1] Eisteddfod cenedl fyddai hon, Eisteddfod Genedlaethol o dan nawdd yr uchel awdurdod, Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain. Felly, aeth Estyn a Glasynys (a oedd yntau yn llawn o'r syniadau hyn) i Orsedd a gynhaliwyd ar Alban Elfed 1857 ar Fryn Castell y Brenin, yn ymyl Saint-y-Brid ym Mro Morgannwg, gyda Myfyr Morganwg, Archdderwydd Ynys Prydain, yn llywio'r gweithrediadau, a'r symbolau gorseddol o'i gwmpas. Urddwyd Estyn yn dderwydd, a Glasynys yn fardd. Wedi hynny, cyhoeddwyd ar y Maen Llog (neu'r Maen Arch fel y gelwid ef ym Morgannwg) y byddai Eisteddfod Alban Elfed 1858 yn cael ei chynnal yn Llangollen. Felly, gŵyl wedi ei hawdurdodi gan uchel lys y genedl, ac wedi ei chyhoeddi gan 'Archdderwydd Ynys Prydain' fyddai'r Orsedd a'r Eisteddfod hon.

Heblaw brwdfrydedd eithafol, yr oedd gan ab Ithel ddawn gwbl eithriadol fel trefnydd. Ni fynnai gynhorthwy'r hen deuluoedd bonheddig—diau y gwyddai am y miri boneddigaidd a laddasai'r hen wyliau taleithiol. Hwy'r beirdd gorseddol a oedd i wneuthur yr holl drefniadau ac i ddewis y testunau. Cyhoeddwyd hysbysiadau yn y papurau, ac yr oedd cylchoedd llenyddol a cherddorol y Gogledd a'r Deau (yn enwedig ym Morgannwg a Gwent) yn llawn berw yn ystod y flwyddyn honno. Gwelir llythrennau'r hysbysiadau yn *Y Brython* yn prifio fel yr oedd Alban Elfed yn nesáu, a chyhoeddwr y papur hwnnw yn pwysleisio y dylai'r darllenwyr ofalu ymlaen llaw os oeddynt am sicrhau'r rhifynnau a fyddai'n rhoddi hanes yr Eisteddfod—yr Eisteddfod fwyaf a welodd Cymru erioed. Ac felly ymlaen. Gofalu fod digon o drenau rhad yn dyfod i Langollen o bob cyfeiriad; gohebu â beirdd a cherddorion y Gogledd a'r Deau; trefnu bod

[1]Gellir, efallai, edrych ar Eisteddfod Dinas Mawddwy yn 1855 fel math o arbrawf. Gweler *The Cambrian Journal* (1855), 248-52.

telynorion a seindyrf yn dyfod yno; cael pabell eang i gynnal pum mil, a gwlanenni Llangollen yn do iddi; a rhoi sylw manwl i'r gwisgo, a'r gorymdeithio, ac i'r seremonïau y gwelsai gyfeiriadau atynt yn Llanover. Ni welodd yr Eisteddfod erioed ryfeddach trefnydd, a'r hen syniadau am ogoniant y traddodiadau llenyddol Cymraeg yn ei yrru i weithio'n ddiorffwys trwy gydol y flwyddyn.

Nid fy amcan i yw rhoi hanes yr Eisteddfod, eithr yn hytrach, ceisio egluro ei phwysigrwydd yn nhwf y mudiad eisteddfodol yn y ganrif ddiwethaf. Daeth miloedd yno o bob cyfeiriad—yn wir, y mae'n debyg na welwyd cynulliad cenedlaethol o'r math hwn erioed o'r blaen. Gwelid telynorion a cherddorion Gwynedd a Phowys a Gwent a Morgannwg, seindorf Caerdydd, a'r prif ffigurau ym mywyd llenyddol y cyfnod. Yr oedd 'naws' yr ŵyl yn wahanol i ddim a brofwyd cyn hynny, y 'naws' eisteddfodol y sonnid amdani yn ail hanner y ganrif—y torfeydd yn llenwi'r strydoedd y cwmnïa ar y maes, llêngarwyr yn cyfarfod yma a thraw ar y strydoedd ac o gwmpas y babell i drafod y gweithrediadau a phynciau llenyddol a gorseddol o bob math, a phasiant yr Orsedd. Nid rhoi graddau ydoedd unig amcan yr Orsedd erbyn hyn—dyma basiantri'r traddodiad llenyddol Cymraeg, fel y disgrifid ef yn llawysgrifau Llanover. Ni welwyd dim tebyg i hyn o'r blaen, oherwydd mynnodd ab Ithel wisgo'r derwyddon a'r beirdd a'r ofyddion mewn gynau gwyn a glas a gwyrdd, a hynny am y tro cyntaf, oherwydd clymu ysnodenni gwyn a glas a gwyrdd ar freichiau'r sawl a urddid oedd y drefn cyn hynny. Ond yn awr, ymgasglai'r torfeydd i wylied y gorseddogion yn eu gwisgoedd lliwiog yn yr orymdaith foreol i'r Orsedd, o gwmpas y Maen Llog, ac ar y llwyfan yn y cyfarfod agoriadol, gyda'r beithynen, a'r cleddyf, a'r 'brysgyll', a'r urddarwyddion barddol eraill. Dyma'r pethau a greodd fwyaf o argraff, ac a ddug yr hen fyth yn fyw o flaen eu llygaid. Hefyd, mynnai ab Ithel (megis rhai o hyrwyddwyr Eisteddfodau'r Fenni) i'r Cymry wisgo yn yr hen ddull Cymreig yn eu gŵyl genedlaethol. Yn wir, cynigiwyd gwobrau o £10 i ymgeiswyr 'for the most elegant

and appropriate male and female dresses respectively, in the national Cymric costume, to be worn at the Eisteddfod'. Felly y mynnai'r rhamantydd hwn i'r ŵyl genedlaethol ddatblygu, y beirdd a'r llenorion oll yn eu gynau derwyddol, a'r torfeydd yn llathru yng ngwisgoedd traddodiadol y genedl.

Dywedais eisoes mai'r Orsedd fyddai'r uchel awdurdod o hyn ymlaen. O dan nawdd yr Orsedd y dylid trafod pob pwnc a fai'n ymwneuthur â phob agwedd ar fywyd y genedl. Yr oedd gan ab Ithel ŵr bonheddig y byddai newyddiadurwyr ein hoes ni yn ei alw yn 'spokesman'—canys bu'n dra gofalus wrth ddewis ei foneddigion. Y gŵr hwn oedd G. Hammond Whalley o Blas Madog. Dywedodd wrth annerch yr Eisteddfod y dylai'r Orsedd weithredu fel 'court of appeal' cenedlaethol, lle y gwelid 'the traditional right of the people of this country to assemble together to direct, and control, and advise in matters of importance. The Gorsedd would therefore be open every day until Saturday, inclusive, and any one might give notice to the committee if he had any subject to bring forward.' Ac ar ddydd Iau, dyma Whalley yn dweud wrth y dorf y byddai'n cyflwyno i'r Orsedd drannoeth y cynnig hwn:

> That it is expedient to erect a building which shall be devoted to the maintenance and promotion of the interests of Wales, such building to combine the several purposes following: — A museum and record office, for the preservation of MSS., books, and relics relating to Wales and the ancient British empire. An office for promoting the regular administration of the Gorsedd and Eisteddfod; for preserving the productions of the Eisteddfodau past and to come, as also of the names of those who have been distinguished therein, and of all patriotic Welshmen who may be deemed worthy of such honours, according to the rules and regulations hereafter to be laid down by the authority of the Gorsedd. That such building be erected in a conspicuous position, and that it be dedicated to the memory of Llywelyn, and the other princes, heroes, and bards of Wales most distinguished in ancient times, as having done honour to their country in establishing or maintaining its immemorial renown.

Dyma'r math o syniadau a fyddai'n berwi ym mhen ab Ithel wedi iddo ymgydnabod â breuddwydion Trefflemin.[2] Yr oedd darn o dir yn ymyl Llangollen, meddai Whalley, lle y gellid codi'r adeilad hwn fel math o 'ddinas ar fryn', a byddai ef yn barod i'w roi i'r genedl. Cyflwynwyd y cynnig yn yr Orsedd a gynhaliwyd ar fore Gwener, ac fe'i derbyniwyd 'amidst enthusiastic cheering'. Dywedodd Whalley ei bod yn bosibl y gallai'r Deheuwyr feddwl am well uchelfa a fai'n nes i'w gwlad hwy, a byddai ef yn dra pharod i brynu unrhyw ddarn o dir a gymeradwyid gan bwyllgor yr Orsedd. Nid oedd neb wedi meddwl am Ben-glais yn y dyddiau hynny.

Ond er cymaint y brwdfrydedd—'annisgrifiadwy', yn ôl y newyddiaduron—ac er bod llawer iawn o'r ffigurau amlycaf yn y byd Cymreig yn cymryd rhan yn y gweithrediadau, eto, dylif o feirniadu a ddilynodd yr ŵyl hon. Gwelir hyn yn y papurau a'r cylchgronau, megis yn llythyrau chwyrn Cynddelw yn *Seren Gomer* ac yn erthyglau'r Gohebydd yn *Y Faner*. Anghydffurfwyr oedd y beirniaid bron i gyd, ac eithrio ambell un fel Silvan Evans. Yn gyntaf oll, fe'u cynhyrfwyd gan yr offeiriaid unbenaethol a oedd wrth y llyw, gan y gynau gorseddol (a oedd yn eu hatgoffa am y gwisgoedd offeiriadol), gan Weddi'r Orsedd, a hefyd gan honiadau derwyddol ab Ithel a Myfyr Morganwg, fod barddas yn ddatguddiad dwyfol, 'a prototype of Christianity', ac yn cynrychioli'r datguddiad hwnnw yn well nag Iddewiaeth. Bu'r Myfyr yn annerch cyfarfod barddol, ac ymosodwyd arno'n llym gan Thomas Stephens, Gweirydd ap Rhys, Tegai, a Nefydd. Gorsedd baganaidd oedd hon, meddent. Ac yn ail, gŵyl Seisnigaidd ydoedd—Saesneg a glywid ar bob tu ymhlith yr arweinwyr a'r selogion, a chan y llywyddion. Ac yn drydydd, enillodd ab Ithel a'i blant wobrau sylweddol er mai ef a'i gyfeillion a ddewisodd y testunau. Ar ben hyn oll, mynnai weithredu fel beirniad, ac ef a'i gyfeillion a oedd i roi barn derfynol pan godai unrhyw

[2]Er hynny, dylid nodi fod pwnc y Llyfrgell Genedlaethol wedi cael sylw yn Eisteddfod yr Wyddgrug yn 1851, ond nid awgrymwyd dim tebyg i'r cynllun mawreddog a gorseddol uchod.

anhawster. Ac yn bedwerydd, yr helynt a fu pan ddywedwyd na ellid ystyried traethawd Thomas Stephens ar 'Ddarganfyddiad yr Amerig gan Fadog ab Owain Gwynedd', canys mynnai ab Ithel a'i griw mai *profi*'r pwnc oedd amcan y gystadleuaeth. Un o'r pethau a gafodd fwyaf o sylw ydoedd gwaith R. W. Morgan yn gorchymyn i'r seindorf bres foddi llais Stephens pan geisiodd annerch y dorf. Ac yn bumed, yr anhrefn a'r 'gwallgofrwydd' a ganfyddid ar bob tu, 'Pastai Fawr Llangollen', fel y dywedai Ceiriog, yr areithiau 'ffôl', y dynion od a welid ar y llwyfan, megis y Dr. Price o Lantrisaint â'r cap o groen cadno ar ei ben, a'r datgeiniaid pen pastwn; a'r ffrae a fu yng ngŵydd y dyrfa rhwng Whalley a 'Colonel Tottenham' ynglŷn â'r hawl orseddol i drafod pynciau gwleidyddol yn yr ŵyl genedlaethol. Diau fod yma beth gorliwio, ond rhaid cydnabod ei bod yn un o'r eisteddfodau rhyfeddaf a digrifaf a gynhaliwyd yng Nghymru erioed. Ond er gwaethaf hyn oll, y mae'n cychwyn cyfnod newydd yn hanes bywyd llenyddol y genedl.

Oherwydd, fel y dywedais eisoes, gwnaethpwyd yr Eisteddfod yn sefydliad cenedlaethol, ac yn ganolfan bywyd llenyddol Cymru yn ail hanner y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg, ffaith dra phwysig wrth olrhain twf yr ymwybod cenedlaethol. Cynhaliodd y beirdd a'r llenorion a'r cerddorion a ddaethai i Langollen gyfarfod, a buont yn ystyried 'a allesid dim trefnu y Sefydliad Cenedlaethol yn y fath fodd ag i'w wneud yn barhaol yn ei natur, ac yn fwy defnyddiol yn ei weithrediadau.' Gofynnwyd i Greuddynfab a Glan Alun—nid i ab Ithel a'i gyd-offeiriaid derwyddol—baratoi cynllun erbyn yr Eisteddfod nesaf. Cynhaliwyd honno yn Ninbych yn 1860, ac yno penderfynwyd mai dymunol ac angenrheidiol, er sicrhau 'llwyddiant y sefydliad', ydoedd uno Gogledd a Deau, a threfnu bod yr Eisteddfod i'w chynnal 'yn y rhanau hyny o'r wlad bob yn ail blwyddyn, ac yn achlysurol yn nhrefydd poblogaidd Lloegr; ac fod y llywodraeth yn nwylaw Pwyllgor Cenedlaethol neu gyffredinol' (*Yr Eisteddfod,* I, 3). Etholwyd y Pwyllgor yn ogystal â Phwyllgor

Gweithiol (a elwid 'Y Cyngor'), a lluniwyd cyfansoddiad. Gwaith y Cyngor fyddai cyfarwyddo'r pwyllgorau lleol, awgrymu testunau, a gofalu eu bod yn cael eu cyhoeddi flwyddyn neu fwy ymlaen llaw. Cyhoeddwyd cylchgrawn arbennig i hyrwyddo'r mudiad eisteddfodol, sef *Yr Eisteddfod* (1864-6), er y dylem gofio na wnaethant ddim yn hyn o beth namyn dilyn esiampl Isaac Clarke, Rhuthun, ac ab Ithel, a gyhoeddodd gylchgrawn chwarterol 'At wasanaeth y Cymdeithasau Llenyddol, yr Eisteddfodau, a'r Orsedd yng Nghymru' yn 1859-61, sef *Taliesin*. A derbyniwyd syniadau ab Ithel hefyd wrth edrych ar y cynulliad cenedlaethol hwn fel cyfrwng i ymdrin â phob math o bynciau a oedd yn ymwneuthur â bywyd y genedl. Trefnodd Syr Hugh Owen yr hyn a elwid yn 'Social Science Section', lle y darllenid papurau ar bynciau cymdeithasol ac addysgol, a lle y penodwyd pwyllgor i ystyried sut y gellid sicrhau Prifysgol Gymreig. Eto, bywyd digon twmpathog a gafodd y mudiad hwn nes sefydlu Cymdeithas yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yn 1880.

Ond ni chymerodd ab Ithel odid ddim rhan yn y mudiad a gychwynnodd yn ei Eisteddfod ef yn Llangollen yn 1858, er iddo lywyddu mewn 'cyfarfod gohiriedig' yn Ninbych yn 1860, a gweithredu fel beirniad yn Nghonwy yn 1861 Aethai'r awenau i ddwylo gŵr a oedd wedi syrffedu ar ei ddulliau unbenaethol. Eto, y mae'n ddyletswydd arnom ddywedyd heddiw a hynny ymhen canrif wedi iddo drefnu ei Eisteddfod fawr yn Llangollen, mae ei frwdfrydedd heintus ef, i raddau helaeth iawn, a roes gychwyn i'r mudiad hwn. Ef a gyflwynodd basiant yr Orsedd, ac er i'r Anghydffurfwyr syrffedu ar y gwisgoedd a'r symbolau derwyddol, ac er gwaethaf ei haeriadau am athrawiaethau a dysg yr Orsedd, yr oedd wedi llwyddo i ddod â'r hen fyth yn fyw o flaen llygaid y genedl ac i roi rhyw awyrgylch o ramant ac o hynafiaeth 'aruthrol' o gwmpas y sefydliad diwylliannol hwn. Ni ellir deall hynt yr Eisteddfod yn y cyfnod dilynol heb gofio am hynny.

Y mae'r un peth yn wir am yr Orsedd ei hun. Er mai syniad digon annelwig a oedd gan ei ddilynwyr am ei

chysylltiad â'r Eisteddfod, eto parhawyd i edrych arni fel yr hen sefydliad, a chytunai'r rhan fwyaf mai hi biau'r gwaith o gyhoeddi i'r byd fod Eisteddfod i'w chynnal ymhen y flwyddyn, nid Eisteddfod fel y cyfryw, eithr 'Gorsedd wrth Gerdd,' lle y rhoid 'Barn Cadair a Gorsedd ar Gerdd a Barddoniaeth, ac ar bawb, parth Awen, a Buchedd, a Gwybodau, a geisiont Fraint, ac Urddas, a Thrwyddedogaeth . . . wrth Fraint a Defawd Beirdd Ynys Prydain.' Ond bu peth adwaith wedi Eisteddfod Llangollen. Gwelsom fod y beirdd a'r llenorion Anghydffurfiol wedi eu tarfu gan y gwisgoedd a'r Weddi a'r Corn Gwlad a'r holl basiant lliwgar, a chan honiadau ab Ithel. Tybient fod hyn oll yn sawru o baganiaeth, ac nad oeddynt yn cydfyned â thraddodiadau Anghydffurfiol y genedl. Felly, ymwadwyd â hwy bron yn llwyr yn Eisteddfod Dinbych yn 1860, a diau fod Emrys yn mynegi teimlad llawer iawn o'i gymrodyr pan ddywedodd mai 'pethau anghytgerdd ag yspryd *progress* oeddynt.' Ond yr oedd y lefain abithelaidd yn gweithio, ac yn y pen draw, ef a enillodd y dydd. Diflannodd y rhagfarn yn erbyn yr honiadau derwyddol, a'r gwisgoedd, a'r holl seremoniau. Daethant yn ôl fel llu banerog, ac Anghydffurfwyr oedd rhai o'r pleidwyr selocaf a'r gorseddogion eiddgaraf, gwŷr megis Clwydfardd, Hwfa Môn, Dyfed, Cadvan, etc., etc. Nid rhaid namyn cymharu'r genhedlaeth hon â beirdd hanner cyntaf y ganrif er sylweddoli pa ddylanwad a gawsai ab Ithel ac Eisteddfod Llangollen. Dyma, yn ddiau, y cyfnod gorseddol *par excellence,* y cyfnod pan oedd yr hen fyth yn llywio dychymyg cenedl. Cynlluniwyd gwisgoedd derwyddol a oedd yn llawer mwy lliwgar na'r rheini a welsai'r tyrfaoedd yn Llangollen, gan Syr Hubert Herkomer, a'r gŵr hwnnw a Syr William Goscombe John a wnaeth y rhan fwyaf o'r Regalia gorseddol, gan gynnwys y ddwyfronneg a wisgir gan yr Archdderwydd, Regalia a gedwir yn ddefosiynol yn ein Hamgueddfa Genedlaethol. Gofynnwyd i Arlunydd Penygarn gynllunio Baner yr Orsedd gyda'r symbolau derwyddol. Yna, cafwyd y Corn Hirlas a'r holl ddatblygiadau eraill. Yr oedd yr hen fyth yn llywio eu medd-

yliau hyd yn oed wedi i Syr John Morris-Jones geisio profi mai creadigaeth ysgol o ffugwyr a geid ym Morgannwg yn y bymthegfed ganrif a'r ddwy ganrif ddilynol ydoedd Gorsedd y Beirdd, creadigaeth a gyflwynwyd i'r genedl, tua diwedd y ddeunawfed ganrif, gan y gŵr 'syml' a 'hygoelus' hwnnw, Iolo Morganwg. A pharhaodd hynny hyd yn gymharol ddiweddar—yn wir, yr wyf yn adnabod rhai gŵŷr rhadlon ym Morgannwg heddiw sy'n parhau i dderbyn ac i anwesu'r holl hen syniadau. Pan gynhaliwyd yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol ym Mhont-y-pŵl yn 1924, wele Gofiadur yr Orsedd, yr Anghydffurfiwr cadarn hwnnw, Beriah Gwynfe Evans, yn cyhoeddi llyfryn Saesneg er mwyn goleuo Cymry di-Gymraeg Gwent, *The Bardic Gorsedd. Its History and Symbolism.* 'It represents the Bardic System', meddai, 'which admittedly existed in this country before the Christian Era, and whose origin is hidden in the mists of antiquity.' Dyma uchel lys y genedl, un o brif ogoniannau'r byd Cymreig. Megis yr oedd Senedd Prydain wedi etifeddu holl awdurdod 'the ancient Witanagemot whose direct lineal descendant and successor it is', felly yr oedd yr Orsedd yn cynrychioli 'that authority in the Bardic State of the earliest times, which the Parliament of to-day represents in the Political State.' 'No production or circumstance,' meddai drachefn, 'whether it is a song, tradition, instruction, notice, or anything else, shall be deemed of legal importance, or constitute any authority, unless ratified by the protective adoption of a Gorsedd of Efficiency of the bards of Britain; but when so sanctioned, it acquires effectual force.' Dyna a ddywedwyd wrth Gymry diniwed Gwent yn 1924. Ie, ab Ithel a enillodd y dydd, nid Cynddelw ac Emrys a'r Anghydffurfwyr eraill a fu'n ei ddilorni wedi'r miri gorseddol yn Llangollen. Llwyddodd i swynhudo'r genedl, ac ef, yn sicr ddigon, biau'r cyfnod gorseddol hwn. Onibai amdano ef, nid yw'n debyg y byddai pasiant Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain, pasiant 'pell ganrifoedd dysg Gymraeg', yn cael ei gyflwyno i'r genedl yn Eisteddfod Glynebwy yn 1958.

Ni allaf, ar ddiwedd yr erthygl faith hon, drafod un mater arall. Fel y gŵyr y rheini sy'n gyfarwydd â hanes

bywyd llenyddol ein cenedl yn y ganrif ddiwethaf, tua 1860 cychwynnodd y cyfnod mwyaf rhyfeddol yn hanes y fasnach lyfrau yng Nghymru, cyfnod pan oedd cyhoeddwyr Seisnig ac Ysgotaidd yn ymroi i gipio'r farchnad Gymreig, pan gâi awduron o Gymry eu talu am baratoi llyfrau trymion, drudfawr, llyfrau'n ymwneuthur â hanes Cymru ac â hanes llenyddiaeth Gymraeg. Penodid golygyddion, gŵyr fel Gweirydd ap Rhys ac Owen Jones ac Ioan Pedr, a byddai'r rheini'n casglu nifer o lenorion amlwg i'w cynorthwyo ac i ysgrifennu ar wahanol agweddau ar y pwnc. A byddai'r Cymry, nid yn unig yn yr ardaloedd gweithfaol yn y Deau ond hefyd yn y parthau gwledig, yn dra pharod i brynu'r llyfrau. Dywaid adolygydd yn *Y Traethodydd* yn 1868 fod y cyhoeddwyr estron 'yn ddigon call yn eu cenhedlaeth i weled fod yma gynhauaf euraidd i'w fedi trwy ledanu [*sic*] llyfrau Cymreig.' Pan ddaeth un o wŷr y cyhoeddwr Mackenzie i ardal wledig, ychydig cyn hynny, i werthu *Holl Weithiau, Prydyddawl a Rhyddieithol, y diweddar Barch. William Williams, Pant-y-celyn* (dan olygyddiaeth J. R. Kilsby Jones), 'llwyddodd,' meddai'r adolygydd, 'i gael gan ymron bob teulu yn yr ardal i gymeryd y llyfr.' Bydd rhai'n maentumio mai bywyd crefyddol y ganrif ddiwethaf sy'n egluro hyn. Heblaw *Gweithiau* Pant-y-celyn, gellir nodi llyfrau trymion eraill, megis *Credoau y Byd,* a phob math o esboniadau, o gofiannau, hanes y gwahanol enwadau, etc. Ond eto, fel y dywedais eisoes, llyfrau'n ymwneuthur â Chymru, ei hanes a'i llenyddiaeth, yw llawer ohonynt, megis *Hanes y Brytaniaid a'r Cymry* (1872-4); *Cymru: yn hanesyddol, parthedegol, a bywgraphyddol* (1875); *Ceinion Llenyddiaeth Gymreig* (1876); *Enwogion y Ffydd* (1880), etc. Nid oedd Cymry'r oes honno'n synnu wrth weled cyhoeddi dau eiriadur bywgraffyddol mawr yn yr un cyfnod, a'r ddau yn llyfrau mor drwchus â *Bywgraffiadur Cymreig* y Cymmrodorion, sef *Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol* (1867, 1870) gan Josiah Thomas Jones, ac *Enwogion Cymru* (1870), a olygwyd gan Isaac Foulkes. Daeth ail argraffiad o'r *Myvyrian Archaiology* o wasg Thomas Gee yn 1870, ac fel anturiaeth fasnachol, dyma,

efallai, yr hynotaf yn hanes y wasg Gymraeg, canys byddai'n gwbl amhosibl mewn unrhyw gyfnod arall, hyd yn oed yn ein dyddiau ni, wedi i genedlaethau o fyfyrwyr fod wrthi'n astudio ein hen lenyddiaeth yng Ngholegau'r Brifysgol. Ac ni ddylem anghofio am Y *Gwyddoniadur Cymreig* y cyhoeddwyd dau argraffiad ohono yn y cyfnod hwn (1856-79 a 1889-96), a *Llyfryddiaeth y Cymry* (1869), llyfr y mae'n rhaid inni wrtho heddiw, a *Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymreig* (1885) gan Weirydd ap Rhys. Sylwn hefyd ar y galw a fu trwy'r ganrif am argraffiadau o eiriaduron mawr John Walters, William Owen [-Pughe], Silvan Evans, a Chaerfallwch (heb sôn am yr holl fân eiriaduron), ac am ramadegau o bob math a llyfrau ar gerdd dafod. A hyn, cofier, cyn sefydlu cyfundrefn addysg. Pa fodd y gellir egluro'r bywyd hwn? Yr oedd yr Ysgol Sul wedi cynhyrchu cenedl o ddarllenwyr, ond ofer yw honni fod y ffaith honno ynddi ei hun yn ddigon i egluro'r diddordeb mawr yn hanes Cymru, yn ei llenyddiaeth, ac yng nghelfyddyd cerdd dafod, diddordeb a barodd i gyhoeddwyr estron, megis William Mackenzie a Blackie a'i Fab, yn ogystal â'r cyhoeddwyr Cymreig, baratoi'r cyfrolau mawr a drudfawr hyn. Credaf na ellir mo'i egluro heb gofio am y berw eisteddfodol a llenyddol, ac am yr hen fyth a fu'n llywio meddwl y Cymry, a'r gorffennol hudolus a gyflwynwyd mewn modd mor ddeniadol gan Iolo Morganwg ac ab Ithel. Rhaid inni, bid sicr, ystyried agweddau eraill ar fywyd yr oes honno, ond credaf ei bod yn weddol eglur mai hwn yw un o'r prif bethau a ddylai gael sylw'r hanesydd wrth draethu ar y byd llenyddol Cymraeg yn y ganrif ddiwethaf, ac yn arbennig yn y cyfnod a ddilynodd Eisteddfod Llangollen.

Notes and Documents

THE POPULATION OF LLANGOLLEN FROM 1800—1851

The Clergymen's Returns

There are several documents in the Public Record Office which throw light upon the population of the Parish of Llangollen during the first half of the 19th Century. They include the following documents:

(a) The Clergymen's Returns,
(b) The 1841 Census Forms and Returns,
(c) The 1851 Census Forms and Returns,
*(d) Report to the General Board of Health, 1854.

*Not seen in the Record Office.

(a) The Clergymen's Returns were the direction of an Act passed in the eleventh year of the reign of King George IV, described as—'An Act taking account of the Population of Great Britain, and of the increase or diminuation thereof.' Written answers were to be returned by the Rector, Vicar, or Curate, or other officiating minister of the Parish including Free Chapels. They were expected to record:

1. Number of Baptisms and Burials in the Parish or Chapelry in the years 1821-1830, distinguishing Males from Females. In the case of burials ages were to be stated.
2. Number of Marriages in the above years.
3. Number of illegitimate children born in the parish, distinguishing male from female, 'according to the best information you possess or can obtain'.
4. The annual average number of births, deaths, marriages in the opinion of enumerators that had taken place in the parish, without being noticed in the parish registers.

The information in Document HO 71-119 replying to the above questionaire regarding the Parish of Llangollen can be tabulated as follows:

Year	Baptisms			Mar-riages	Burials		
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
1813					33	22	55
1814					15	23	38
1815					27	11	38
1816					18	17	35
1817					28	21	49
1818					27	32	59
1819					32	21	53
1820					26	31	57
1821	37	40	77	27	28	22	50
1822	37	33	70	23	23	21	44
1823	54	29	83	26	40	32	72
1824	36	30	66	27	19	18	37
1825	39	41	80	17	25	27	52
1826	40	25	65	30	33	27	60
1827	41	34	75	28	33	34	67
1828	45	34	79	28	40	26	66
1829	36	27	63	24	38	39	77
1830	28	31	59	22	28	21	49
Totals	393	324	717	252	513	445	958

The above figures for Burials recorded from 1813 to 1830 are a correct summary—the actual figures in the Report are however recorded in their various age groups. It is striking that out of the figure of 958 recorded burials, 164 were children under a year old. The worst years were in 1827 and 1828 when burials of children under twelve months made a total of 36 out of 133 burials. It is also interesting however to note that in the above period of 18 years, 14 people live to a ripe old age of ninety years or more.

In addition to the burials recorded in the Returns there were 152 burials in Dissenters' Burial Grounds. All these were Baptists—including 31 burials in the new Baptist Burial ground at Llangollen.

The morals of the Parish appear to have been commendable, as the enumerators declare that as far as they were aware only one illegitimate child was registered in 1830.

They also declare that as far as their knowledge went, no other births, marriages or deaths occurred in the Parish other than those recorded in their Returns.

In accordance with Section 19 of the Parish Register Act of 1812 the enumerators were asked to record the list of the various registers available in the Llangollen Vicarage, giving details of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in the parish prior to 1813. The following list is included as an appendix to the Clergy's Returns:

(a)	Without Cover and in a very imperfect condition	1597—1680
(b)	Without Cover—not perfect	
	Baptisms	1672—1696
	Marriages	1674—1686
	Burials	1678—1708
(c)	Baptisms	1707—1738
	Marriages & Burials	1707—1738
(d)	Baptisms	1739—1759
	Marriages	1738—1754
	Burials	1754—1769
(e)	Baptisms	1769—1812
	Marriages	1755—1812
	Burials	1770—1812

The above Return was signed by Richard Briscoe (Curate of Llangollen) and Edward Jones (substantial householder) and was dated June 24, 1831. It was forwarded to the Bishop of St. Asaph who passed it on to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He in his turn forwarded it to the Privy Councillor who presented it to Parliament.

It would be interesting to know whether the above Richard Briscoe was in any way related to Richard Briscoe, a chemist of Wrexham, and his son Thomas Briscoe (1813-95) who became Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, and later Chancellor of Bangor Cathedral. Edward Jones, the substantial householder, was a well known and influential inhabitant of Llangollen. He kept a school near the Hand Hotel, was the Parish Clerk, and was frequently known as 'Yr Hen Glochydd'. At the date of the above returns he was 55 years of age. An excellent tribute is paid to him by George Borrow in *Wild Wales*, and his portrait is seen in the Llangollen Public Library.

J. IORWERTH ROBERTS.

ROBERT DAVIES OF CROES FOEL

Mr. Ifor Edwards, the author of the article on Robert Davies of Croes Foel in vol. 6 of these *Transactions* (pp. 17-43) sends the following corrections and additions to his article:

On p. 19, 'will (dated 13 June 1720)' should read 'will (dated 13 June 1702)'.

On p. 27, Note 21: the identity of George Warrington is still doubtful. He was probably a draper of Chester, as the Drapers acted as Bankers at this time. But his name cannot be found among the names of Drapers in the accounts of this period.

P. 37: 'In September 1702' should read 'In May 1702'.

On p. 42 the numbering of the footnotes has been slightly confused, but readers may easily discover the fault.

Mr. Edwards has also contributed a further article on this subject to *Country Life* 3 April, 1958.

A POOR MAN'S FURNITURE IN 1817

AN EXTRACT FROM A DENBIGH COURT RECORD OF 1817

'Borough of Denbigh.

At His Majesty's Court held and kept in and for the said Borough of Denbigh this 20th day of May 1817 before John Parry of Denbigh and John Parry of Ty newydd, Gentlemen, Bailiffs of the said Borough, according to the Charter of the Corporation and Custom immemorial.'

A.B. a Labourer complains against C.D., a glover 'of a plea wherefore he took the Goods and Chattels of the said A.B. that is to say, two square tables, one cupboard, two chairs, two shelves, two saucepans, three stools, one chaff bed and bedstraw, one corner cupboard, one bellows, one tongs, one tin tea kettle, one lanthorne, one shovel, one box, one bonnet, one small table, earthenware, one seive, one clothesmaid, one tub, two baskets, one handboard, one brafs candlestick, one iron do., one flour box, one pepper box, one looking glafs, three pictures, quantity of tins, one wooden scales, two teapots, three cups and saucers, one bed cover, one sheet, fifteen pounds weight of woollen thread, and them unjustly detained against gages and pledges and so forth'

There is no record of the result of the plaint, but a note at the end reads:

'3rd July 1817
Judgement for want of Avoidery'

W. A. EVANS.

The Excavations at Dinorben Hill-Fort, Abergele, 1958

[This is the second interim report kindly supplied by Dr. Savory. We hope to publish an extended, and illustrated account by him of the important excavations in our next volume.—EDITOR.]

FURTHER excavations were carried out in the early spring of 1958 at the northern tip of Dinorben hill-fort, to anticipate destruction by quarrying. As before, the excavations were directed by the writer on behalf of the Dinorben Hill-fort Excavation Committee, with the aid of funds contributed by the Ministry of Works, the Board of Celtic Studies and the Cambrian Archaeological Association.

The first aim of this season's excavation had been to complete the plan of a complex system of post-holes in the centre of the area threatened by quarrying. It soon became clear that the limits of the system had already been reached on most sides, while on one side further exploration could only be carried out after extensive tree-felling and dump clearance which would have consumed too much of the time and money available. It is now reasonably clear, however, that the post-holes are of dates ranging from the Early Iron Age to the sub-Roman period, that the earliest are connected with comparatively small hut-floors of pre-Roman date recessed into the hill-slope, that many of the larger post-holes are connected with two rings of roof-supports of a large circular house, about 65 ft. in diameter, occupied in the late 3rd and early 4th century A.D., and that others belong to an oblong, aisled building which replaced the large circular house, probably in sub-Roman times.

The greater part of the work in 1958, however, was devoted to trial trenching behind the rampart on the north-east side of the fort and further up the slope to the south of the area previously explored, in search of pre-Roman hut floors. As a result it has become clear that numerous slight hollows scattered over the interior of the hill-fort, especially on sloping ground, are the sites of pre-Roman hut-floors.

These have escaped much attention hitherto because they are hidden by vegetation during the greater part of the year on this overgrown site. They range from about 15 to 30 ft. in diameter and seem generally to have stood on platforms formed by cutting into the hill-side and throwing the material obtained down-slope; the made up part of the floors has been weathered away, so that only half-plans of the huts can be obtained. Some of the huts seem to have had their wooden walls bedded in a curving gully cut into the rock up-slope, but one had a ring of holes for roof-supports cut into the top of the step formed by recessing the circular hut-floor into the sloping rock surface and a row of roof-supports going across the diameter. Two more hut-floors, with gullies of the kind described, were found under the ramparts, south-east of the one explored in 1957, each with a rubbing stone from a saddle-quern lying on it, while the greater part of the netherstone of a saddle-quern was found on the early hut-floor with multiple post-holes, just referred to. The early date suggested by the stratification of some of these huts, and the associated quern type, is confirmed by the discovery of a number of pot-sherds of Early Iron Age character, including rim fragments. Some of these have a ware and form which would suggest a local equivalent of the Iron Age 'A' of the Lowlands, while others are more suggestive of Iron Age 'B' and an immediately pre-Roman date. Two more ring-headed pins, one of bronze and the other of iron, strengthen the suggestion of an Iron Age 'A' phase on the site. It is becoming increasingly likely that the earliest hut floors at Dinorben are as early as the 3rd or 2nd century B.C., but it must, of course, be emphasised that no evidence has yet been found for occupation contemporary with the Late Bronze Age horse harness found long ago at the north-western foot of Dinorben.

The immediate emergency at Dinorben may be said to be over, but it is hoped to continue work there on a reduced scale in future years so as to complete the record of the hut-floors in the northern part of the site.

H. N. SAVORY.

Llyfrau :: Books

A History of Wrexham. Edited by A. H. Dodd. Pp. x & 364 with maps and illustrations. Price 25/-. Published by Hughes & Son, Wrexham, for the Borough Council. 1957.

Wrexham Borough Council deserves the thanks of all interested in our County's history for launching and supporting the movement which has resulted in the production of this work. With an Editor who combines a warm regard for his native town with stern academic standards, the Council made certain that its object in seeking 'what will remain for many years a standard history of the town', would be achieved.

The phrase 'a standard history' raises a problem: should such a work be exhaustive or selective? The trouble with exhaustive books is that they are also often exhausting! And apart from that, editors have to keep an eye on the economics of book production. On the whole, most people will agree that this book succeeds in giving a very full picture of the growth of Wrexham without overloading the story with detail. This does not mean that every reader will be completely satisfied: indeed, I see in the notes that I made as I read it that my first impression of the Editor's chapter on the Reformation and Civil Wars was that it was not overburdened with details, but rather enlivened by the judicious selection of detail. Yet, when I read his chapter on Trade and Industry, I was rather aggrieved not to find details of Wrexham watch-and-clock-makers. Such an inconsistent reaction on the part of one reader probably indicates a careful consistency in editorial policy. And in any case, there is a list of sources at the end which may be followed up, for 'good history' inevitably leads the reader to the sources from which it has been quarried.

It was inevitable that fourteen contributors could not maintain an equally good standard of writing, but it is remarkable that the standard throughout the book is as consistent as it indeed is. The plan of the whole work is admirable: the first Part deals with the development of the town to the present day while Part II discusses communal life and institutions, including religious institutions, social and economic activities educational institutions and finally military institutions.

Mr. W. E. Griffith had the misfortune, in writing the first section on Prehistoric and Roman Times, of hitting on a very 'purple' opening paragraph which, largely for lack of material, he was unable to match in the remainder of his contribution. But Mr. Gwilym Usher maintains his lively style (which may be seen also in his article in this number of the *Transactions*) throughout his section on Medieval Wrexham.

The second chapter, by Professor Dodd is a most valuable contribution to the study of Tudor and Stuart Wales: his discussion of the effects of the Acts of Union on welshness, generally, and on the welshness of Wrexham in particular, is penetrating. The squabbles and fights of early elections are most enjoyable, but as an outsider, I felt that I was 'missing something' in his description of Jacobean Wrexham because I do not know the town sufficiently well.

The chapter on Tory Wrexham too is most valuable, and there is something reminiscent of Trevelyan's summing up of the Eighteenth Century in Professor Dodd's description of the same period:

> With a few exceptions it was a period of calm—an intermittent breathing-space between the storms of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the new period of stress and strain which culminated in the agitation for a charter.

The decline of the smaller gentry and the rise of all-powerful Wynnstay, together with the gradual weakening of the influence of 'Morgan Llwyd's people', is clearly shown. Even more important is the evidence that the 'largest town in Wales' was outgrowing the administrative machinery of the medieval courts leet.

After reading the chapter on 'The Struggle for the Charter', I found myself wondering why it was that the opponents of the 'Local Board' proposal of 1849-50 and the Improvement Bill of 1851 did not oppose the incorporation proposals of 1856: there is no explanation of the mystery here.

Mr. Cris Davies' chapter on 'The Chartered Borough' is a good 'sampling' of the progress made in many fields over the century: particularly interesting to a harassed car-driver in the Twentieth Century was the information that there was a 'No Waiting' order in force in Wrexham in 1858, and that it, like its successors, was opposed by publicans and tradesmen.

The second part of the volume opens with a delightful chapter by Mr. Lerry on the Parish Church: the author obviously is in love with his subject, but how on earth could a hard-headed newspaperman calculate that 1,803 is two thirds of 33,000? On p. 167 he claims that 'Wrexham parish church serves approximately two thirds of the municipal population of 33,000 . . . . In 1956 the number of Easter communicants in the parish was 1,803.'

The Editor and Mr. G. V. Price between them discuss Roman Catholicism and English Nonconformity, and Dr. Emyr Williams contributes a short but valuable chapter on Welsh Nonconformity. His lawyer's training ensures that he gives all relevant facts and dates, but it is something innate in the man himself that accounts for his hopeful conclusion that Ebeneser Congregational Church is more Welsh today than ever it was, and that it has a larger number of devoted young members than ever before. Dr. Williams also brings

out the important fact that the religious and cultural well-being of towns like Wrexham is largely dependent upon immigrants from the surrounding countryside.

Social and Economic Life in Wrexham is discussed by Professor Dodd and Mr. T. Hughes Jones, the latter in a more expansive style than the other contributors; but throughout this chapter again, there is a felicitous selection of illustrative detail.

Alderman Cyril O. Jones writes on Hospitals and Charities: it really is remarkable what monies have been left from time to time! Freemasonry and Rotary are discussed, and there is an informative list of Educational Institutions by Miss M. Eluned Williams.

One section which should have been included could have been entitled 'Progressive Wrexham': a discussion of politics in Wrexham after about 1848 would have been most interesting, for in 1859, officials of the Reform Society noted that the audiences at Parliamentary Reform Meetings at Wrexham were comparatively larger than audiences at similar meetings at Manchester (after which a 'school' was named) and Birmingham, the base from which the Radical Joe Chamberlain operated. The borough played an important part in Welsh history when Osborne Morgan defeated Sir Watkin in the contest for the newly-formed East Denbighshire constituency as well as in later years.

It is unfortunate that the *frontispiece* and the end map have been 'tipped in' the wrong way; there are also a few misprints which have eluded even the list of *corrigenda.* But these are small blemishes, and on behalf of the Society, I would like to congratulate Wrexham on producing such a valuable and interesting book.

Norman Tucker: *North Wales in the Civil War.* Pp. 197. Price 18/-. Gee, Denbigh. 1958.

Good wine needs no bush, and assuredly Mr. Norman Tucker requires no recommendation to readers of the volume. As a Society, we are already indebted to him for many contributions of great interest in our *Transactons* and for his enthusiasm and activity as Excursion Secretary, while most of us have derived much pleasure from his novels.

The emphasis in this book is on Norman Tucker the historian, and the work is the result of devoted and painstaking research. But fortunately, the historian has not succeeded in obscuring the novelist. Whereas the mere historian would be satisfied with statistics and outlines of developments and so on, the novelist sympathises with his characters, and fills out the picture with such things as details of uniform, armour, weapons and equipment, a list of the loot taken and full contemporary accounts of the 'great battle' on Y Dalar Hir.

Mr. Tucker handles Welsh placenames with respectful care in the text (the maps are not quite so careful), and he could have

rounded off his account of the defeat of Sir John Owen with the misleading *pennill telyn* about Cromwell:

> Fe ddrylliodd gastell Aberhonddu—
> Och! mae cŵyn—a chastell Conwy
> A'i wŷr a fu'n rhyfela'n greulon
> Ar y Dalar Hir yn Arfon.

The question of sympathy with the characters is a tricky one of course, and it has long been a sore point with me that the most readable authors on this period show a very marked bias towards those frivolous Cavaliers! Mr. Tucker is a very readable author.

There is one point which I suggest the author might reconsider and that is the purpose of the crescent-shaped mound close to the Goblin Tower at Denbigh. He suggests that it 'was doubtless thrown up by the Cavaliers to protect the foundation of the tower'. Before the new sanatorium block of Howell's School was built, however, there was a second tump or round mound nearby, which appeared to be part of the same bit of engineering, and this could hardly have been intended to protect the tower from bombardment. Might these earthworks not have been the result of the labours of the attackers, rather than the defenders?

More localised studies of the Civil War, by Mr. Tucker, Professor Dodd and others, have appeared during recent years in various learned journals, but this is the first time that we have been offered *one* book on these stirring times in North Wales. And yet, not in North Wales only, for the events which took place here are placed against the larger background of the main history of the period.

The book is very finely produced by the printers of these *Transactions*, and the whole production increases our debt to both author and craftsmen.

Melville Richards (gol.): *Cyfreithiau Hywel Dda* o lawysgrif Coleg yr Iesu, Rhydychen LVII. Tt. 151. Pris 8/6. Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, Caerdydd. 1957.

Ni ellir adolygu'r llyfr hwn heb fynd i'w gymharu â'r llawysgrif wreiddiol sydd yn Llyfrgell Bodley, a phrin bod eisiau gwneud hynny, oherwydd gellir bod yn sicr bod Mr. Richards wedi gwneud ei waith yn drylwyr.

Un o 'destunau cyfansawdd' y Cyfreithiau yw'r llawysgrif hon, ac ysgrifennwyd hi tua 1400. Daw gwerth gwaith Mr. Richards i'r amlwg ymhen blynyddoedd eto, wedi iddo ef ac eraill argraffu rhagor o'r llawysgrifau. Bryd hynny, bydd yn hawdd i efrydwyr ein hen gyfundrefn gyfreithiol gymharu'r gwahanol 'argraffiadau' o'r Cyfreithiau a oedd mewn gwirionedd yn llaw-lyfrau i dwrneiod ac ynadon ac athrawon cyfreithiol y Canol Oesoedd.

O dan yr amgylchiadau, rhaid bodloni ar fynegi ein diolch i Mr. Richards am ei lafur yn hwyluso llwybrau myfyrwyr y dyfodol.

Trafodion :: Transactions

This year again we have exchanged copies of our publications with our sister societies in North Wales. Lack of space prevents our doing more than acknowledging this friendly gesture and listing some of the articles published, but no doubt many of our members from districts bordering on the next counties, or who have connections with the other shires, will be interested in the contents, and may even decide to join two societies, as many have already done.

Since we published our 1957 volume, the Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club have brought out two volumes of *Transactions* (1956 and 1957). In addition to society news, they contain articles of archaeological interest, a study of the marram grass industry at Newborough, a note on the first wife of John Elias o Fôn and an analysis of the parish registers of Penrhoslligwy, among other things. As a layman, I must say that I found the report on the effect of myxomatosis on the vegetation of Ynys Seiriol very interesting.

The seventeenth volume of Caernarvonshire *Transactions* (1956) also has archaeological articles by the experts H. N. Savory and D. B. Hague. There are also important contributions on the Township of Dolbenmaen and on Caernarvon links with the Middle Temple. P. W. Carter continues his account of Botanical exploration and R. T. Pritchard has an interesting article on the Caernarvonshire Turnpike Trust. E. Gwynne Jones, Librarian at Bangor, publishes a most valuable study of Borough Politics and Electioneering in the first half of the last century, based on information contained in the Plas Newydd papers which are in his custody.

Archaeology is given great prominence in the 1954-5 volume from Flintshire, but there are also articles on wider subjects such as 'Settlement Patterns in Rural Flintshire' the 'might-have-been-Rhuddlan Cathedral', a history of schools in Buckley and the second part of the late Emlyn Rogers' article 'Labour Struggles in Flintshire 1830-50'. Many of our own members will wish to read Miss Enid Roberts' lecture on 'The Renaissance in the Vale of Clwyd', printed in this volume.

The well-illustrated Part I of Vol. III (1957) of the *Journal* of the Merioneth Society has a substantial article on 'The Common Gaols of Merioneth in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', while Mr. E. D. Evans painstakingly gathers in all references to the mysterious 'Castell y Bere'. The County Archivist contributes a study of 'Llywelyn's Charter to Cymer Abbey in 1209' and gives a copy, with translation, of the Charter. The only Welsh article in the volume, 'Hen Lyfr Poced' rightly belongs to us since the pocket book was

kept by Roderick Davies of Rhyd y Geifr, Llangwm! The report of the Archivist on the year's activities and acquisitions of the County Record Office serves to remind us of our own backwardness in establishing a similar service.

The *Montgomeryshire Collections* (1956) in addition to a discussion of 'The Study of Placenames' by Mr. Melville Richards, and a long article by the editor on the 'Old Summer Pastures' contains many notes of interest on the old families of Montgomeryshire and two illustrated articles of architectural interest by Mr. Hemp and Mr. Hague.

There is no doubt about the value of these publications, and the various County Councils do well to support them as they do, with grants from the Welsh Church Acts funds. May we, in conclusion, wish all the Historical Societies of Wales a successful session of work this coming year.

Denbighshire Historical Society

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The past year has been a successful one for the Society, with an increase in the number of members, and with meetings of a high standard.

At the Annual Meeting held at Brynhyfryd School, Ruthin, on the 6th April, 1957, Professor A. H. Dodd, M.A., President of the Society lectured on 'Leaves from the diary of a Denbighshire Schoolmaster', and the lecture was enjoyed thoroughly by a large gathering of members.

On Saturday, the 13th April, 1957, a visit was organised by Mr. Norman Tucker, in co-operation with the Llandudno Field Club to Dinorben Camp, Abergele, where Dr. Savory met members and conducted them over the 'dig'. This visit proved of outstanding interest, and an eye opener to all those who were fortunate enough to be able to attend, in the modern methods of Archaeological Research.

On Saturday, the 15th June, 1957, at the Grammar School, Llanrwst, Professor Melville Richards, M.A., Head of the Department of Celtic, University of Liverpool, lectured in Welsh on 'The Study of Place Names'. Again there was a very good muster of members to hear a lecture of high academic quality and of the greatest possible interest to the local historian.

An exceptionally well attended meeting was held at Gresford on Saturday, the 14th September, 1957. Members visited Gresford Church, where they were received by the Vicar. Mr. Leslie Davies, B.A., lectured on the history of the church; Dr. Mostyn Lewis on the Stained Glass Windows; Lady Clement Jones on the 'Trevor Chapel', and Miss E. M. Preen on 'The Armorial Bearings'. After tea in the Alington Hall, Lady Clement Jones was kind enough to take members on a visit to Trevor Hall, Rossett. A full account of this excursion is printed in this volume.

In 1957, the Borough of Wrexham celebrated its Centenary and the Society was fortunate enough to have the co-operation and the financial support of the Mayor and Corporation of Wrexham, at a meeting which was held at Grove Park Girls' School, Wrexham, on Saturday, November 23rd, when Professor A. H. Dodd lectured on 'Wrexham's decade of Greatness, 1649/59'. The attendance of over 200 members proved that the Lecture and occasion was of great interest. We are extremely grateful to the Mayor and Corporation of Wrexham for their co-operation and support.

The Society is indebted to a great many members who have helped with the organisation of meetings and teas, and to the governors of Brynhyfryd School, Ruthin, the Grammar School, Llanrwst, and Grove Park Girls' School, Wrexham, for allowing meetings to be held at the schools.

I am personally very grateful once again to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. D. B. Jones, for his unlimited patience and staunch support; to the Editor, Mr. Frank Price Jones, for valuable suggestions and co-operation; to Mr. H. Parry Jones, M.A., the Chairman of the Society for the last two years, who took the chair at all the meetings and was a tower of strength to me. I am also indebted to Mr. Howel Williams, Mr. Norman Tucker and Mr. R. McGowan for a great deal of hard work in organising meetings and excursions.

I shall be very pleased to receive suggestions from members for lectures and excursions.

BLEDDYN LL. GRIFFITH.

Summary of Receipts and Payments for the Year 1957

RECEIPTS

	£	s.	d.
Balance in hand (31/12/56) ...	35	15	11
Subscriptions received:			
2 Life Members at £5 .....£10 0 0			
2 at 42/- ... 4 4 0			
1 „ 21/5 ... 1 1 5			
3 „ 21/- ... 3 3 0			
4 „ 20/- ... 4 0 0			
2 „ 12/6 ... 1 5 0			
5 „ 10/6 ... 2 12 6			
89 „ 10/- ... 44 10 0			
15 „ 7/6 ... 5 12 6			
1 „ 6/6 ... 0 6 6			
3 „ 6/- ... 0 18 0			
2 „ 5/3 ... 0 10 6			
542 „ 5/- ...135 10 0			
671	£213	13	5
Grant from Denbighshire C.C. (Welsh Church Fund)	150	0	0
Proceeds of (a) Sales £2 17 6 (b) Teas £1 6 1	4	3	7
Contribution from Wrexham Borough Council	9	1	0
	£412	13	11

PAYMENTS

	£	s.	d.
Messrs. Gee and Sons Printing 700 Transactions	224	0	0
Postage, Leaflets etc. ...	23	16	2
Balance due in respect of Transactions 1956	58	0	8
Stationery and Accessories	11	3	11
Officers' Expenses			
Hon. Secretary (2 years) £29 19 4			
Hon. Treas. 9 3 10			
Hon. Editor 7 12 10			
	46	16	0
Lecture Fees and Incidental (Expenses re Meetings)	14	16	0
Balance in hand 31/12/57	34	1	2
	£412	13	11

Audited and found correct
WILLIAM BURD
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February 24th, 1958

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Hon. Treasurer.

Membership 31:12:57

As per list shown	671	
Life Members	11	
Unpaid for 1957	30	
		—712
Deceased	4	
Paid in advance for 1958 ...	47	
		— 51
		661

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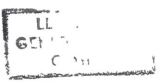
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