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Love by Toponymy: Dafydd ap Gwilym and Place-Names

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Although many place-names, some of them problematic, occur in the work of the great fourteenth-century Welsh poet, Dafydd ap Gwilym, the largest concentration of them is to be found in one poem, numbered 83 in Thomas Parry's monumental edition of 1952, and entitled by him 'Taith i garu' ('a journey to [make] love').¹ As will be seen from the ensuing discussion, perhaps 'Teithiau i garu' ('journeys to [make] love') would have been an apter title. I give below a literal translation of the poem.² (The forms of the place-names have all been modernised, as in Parry's edition.)

A Lover's Journey

Has anyone walked for a mistress's sake
As far as I have walked, [subject to] love's tyranny,
[Through] frost and snow (such sinfulness!),
[Through] rain and wind for the sake of her of bright
countenance?
I received [in exchange] only a visitation of anguish: 5
No pair of feet had more trouble
Ever [in going] to *Celliau'r Meirch*
(A splendid and profitable act of force) across *Eleirch*,
Immediately [coming] to waste land,
Both night and day, and [her] gift [of herself to me] no nearer.
Oh God, there is a man 11
Crying out loud in *Celli Fleddyn*:
I gave voice for her sake,
I pledged [my] love towards her.
Bysaleg, of low and halting sound, 15

¹ *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, edited by T. Parry (Caerdydd, 1952), pp. 227-29.

² Other, more elegant, translations will be found in R. Bromwich, *Dafydd ap Gwilym: A Selection of Poems* (Harmondsworth, 1985), pp. 131-32, and R. Loomis, *Dafydd ap Gwilym: The Poems* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1982), pp. 176-78.

Of seething and enclosed course, a short and narrow river,
 Very often, for her sake,
 Would I go every day across it.
 I would go, proud and free
 (Intense was my pain) to *Bwlch Meibion Dafydd* 20
 And away thence to *Y Gamallt*
 And to *Y Rhiw* for the sake of her of lovely hair.
 Formerly I would swiftly make for
Gafaelfwlch y Gyfylfaen
 To cast, in search of the fur-clad maiden, 25
 A glance at the fair valley [below].
 Neither here nor there shall she slip
 By me furtively past.
 I was assiduous and restless
 Along *Pant Cwecwll* in summer time 30
 And around *Castell Gwgawn*
 In the aspect of a gosling where he might find rushes.
 I ran past *Adail Heilyn*
 With the gait of a hoarse and weary hunting-dog.
 I stood below *Llys Ifor* 35
 Like a monk in a choir-niche
 Seeking, with no assurance of reward,
 To meet with lovely Morfudd.
 There is no hillock or deep declivity
 On either side of the valley of *Nant-y-glo* 40
 That I would not know, as the result of my passion and my
 excitement,
 Without the book, [I of] Ovid's playful intent.
 It is easy for me, even while sounding into my [closed] fist,
 To come upon the true objective of gain, *Gwernytalwrn*,
 Where I was permitted to see, beloved boon, 45
 A slender girl under a jet-black mantle,
 Where shall be seen for evermore,
 Without growth of grass, without any trees growing,
 The shape of our bed under lovely saplings,
 A place of trampled leaves like Adam's path. 50
 Woe to the soul if, without benefit,
 Because of affliction and with no reward at all,

It goes in precisely the same way
 As the wretched body went.

In the poem, Dafydd ap Gwilym appears to name fourteen places, italicized in the translation, where he and his first love, Morfudd, used to meet (see map, p. 42). Some of these fourteen names can still be identified; others remain tantalisingly obscure. I attempt below to summarize existing knowledge about the names, drawing most freely upon the researches of Dr David Jenkins and the late R. J. Thomas.³

Dafydd ap Gwilym (flourished c.1330–1350) was probably born at Brogynin (SN 663847), a farm or farms straddling the river Stewi, then known as Bysaleg or Mysaleg.⁴ The river at that point separated the townships of Trefeurig and Tirymynaich, the parishes of Llanbadarn Fawr and Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, and the commotes of Perfedd and Genau'r Glyn within the cantref of Penweddig in northern Cardiganshire. Most of the names which can securely be identified in the poem are within striking distance of Brogynin.

1. (line 7) **Celliau'r Meirch** ('the groves of the stallions'): possibly to be equated with Ty'nygelli (SN 670837), a farm rather less than a mile south-east of Brogynin; it was apparently known in 1583 as *Tyddyn Celliau'r Meirch* or *Tyddyn Celli'r Meirch*.⁵ On the other hand, Dr

³ D. Jenkins, 'Enwau personau a lleoedd yng nghywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies (BBCS)*, 8 (1935–37), 140–45; *idem*, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym yn ei fro', *Y Traethodydd*, 133 (1978), 83–88; *idem*, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym* (Aberystwyth, 1992), especially pp. 37–43; R. J. Thomas, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym a Cheredigion', *Y Llenor*, 21 (1942), 34–36; *idem*, 'Bwlch y Gyfylfaen', *BBCS*, 20 (1962–64), 255.

⁴ The evidence for Dafydd ap Gwilym's life is rehearsed by R. G. Gruffydd, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym: an outline biography', in *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples*, Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies, edited by C. J. Byrne and others (Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1992), pp. 425–42. Guidance to the place-names cited will be found in M. Richards, *Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units* (Cardiff, 1969). See now also G. Morgan, 'The landscape of Dafydd ap Gwilym', in *Welsh and Breton Studies in Memory of Th. M. TH. Chotzen*, edited by R. H. F. Hofman and others (Utrecht, 1995), pp. 27–35.

⁵ Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales [hereafter NLW], Department of Manuscripts and Records, Gogerddan Deeds (Old Schedule), part I, no 1602 (*Tythin-kellie-r-meirch*; but contrast *ibid.*, part II (Index), *Tythin kellie-r-march*); the deed referred to in the schedule is no longer in the collection. A farmstead

Jenkins has argued strongly that Celliau'r Meirch should be equated with Llety'r March Melyn (formerly at approximately SN 674858), which later became part of the farm of Troedrhiwseiri (SN 675851); as Dr Jenkins points out, Llety'r March Melyn would have been on Dafydd's route from Brogynin to Elerch (although it is not clear that the poet is naming these places in any particular order).⁶

2. (line 8) **Eleirch** (possibly a personal name in origin):⁷ an upland township in the parish of Llanbadarn Fawr, now represented by the village-name Elerch (SN 684863), which is rather less than two miles, as the crow flies, north-east of Brogynin. If Dafydd were to traverse this township, he would soon find himself on 'waste land' (line 9)—indeed, in the foothills of the Pumlumon range.

3. (line 13) **Celli Fleddyn** ('Bleddyn's grove'): the name no longer exists in the vicinity of Brogynin, but it is noteworthy that, in a Minister's Account for 1277–80, a *terra filii Blethin* is located in the commote of Genau'r Glyn,⁸ moreover, in the Tithe Map and Apportionment of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn parish (1845), *Bryn Bleddyn* occurs as a field-name in the farm of Melindwr, township of Ysgubor-y-coed.⁹ Melindwr is at SN 694962. This, however, would be a good six miles north-north-west of Brogynin. Mr Tomos Roberts,

named Gelliau'r Meirch in Breconshire is recorded by R. F. Peter Powell, *The Place-Names of Devynock Hundred* (Pen-Pont, 1993), item 9.37. I should explain that the spelling of most name-forms in the text of the article (including early forms) has been normalized.

⁶ Jenkins, 'Enwau personau a lleoedd', p. 142; *idem*, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym yn ei fro', p. 87; *idem*, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 38. Cf. F. Green, *National Library of Wales, Calendar of Deeds and Documents*, vol. II, *The Crosswood Deeds* (Aberystwyth and Cardiff, 1927), p. 161 (*Llettyrmarch-melin*, 1730) and *passim*; also NLW, Department of Pictures and Maps [hereafter NLW DPM], Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn (1845), township of Tirymynaich, holding of Troedrhiwseiri (fields called *Park nessa llety'r march* and *Cae lletty'r march*).

⁷ G. Pierce, *Dan y Bargod: Rhai o Enwau Ardal Cwm Rhymini* (Caerdydd, 1990), p. 4.

⁸ R. A. Roberts, 'Cymru Fu: some contemporary statements', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1895–96, 87–137, especially p. 130.

⁹ NLW DPM, Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, township of Ysgubor-y-coed, holding of Melindwr: *Bryn Bleddyn* was at approximately SN 689960.

Archivist of the University of Wales, Bangor, has kindly drawn my attention to the fact that the Melville Richards Archive, of which he is curator, has a record of a *Tyddyn Celli Fleddyn* in Burgedin township, within the parish of Guilsfield near Welshpool in Powys: this would be rather more than forty miles' distance, by the most direct (and totally impracticable) route, north-east of Brogynin. The possible relevance of this will appear later.

4. (line 13) **Bysaleg**: as already mentioned, this is the river which the holding of Brogynin almost certainly straddled at SN 663847. It is the most northerly of the two rivers which meet at SN 637839, to form (today) Nant Clarach. In Christopher Saxton's map of 1578, the northern river is designated *Massalak*, the southern river *Salek*; today they are known as Stewi and Seilo respectively. The parish-name Basaleg in south-western Gwent, where Dafydd's chief patron, Ifor ap Llywelyn, 'Ifor Hael' (Ifor the generous) lived in his mansion of Gwernyclepa, is derived from Latin *basilica*.¹⁰ The twin forms *Salek* and *Massalak*, however, suggest that what we have here is a basic element **saleg* (possibly from Latin *salic-* 'willow'; cf. *maneg* from *manica* 'glove'), compounded, in the longer form, with the element *ma-* 'open country'. The alternation of *b-* and *m-* is, of course, common. An objection to this derivation is that we already have a perfectly good native word for 'willow', *helyg*, from British **saliko-*.

5. (line 20) **Bwlch Meibion Dafydd** ('the pass of the sons of Dafydd'): in 1936, Dr Jenkins reported that 'the elderly people from the area around Brogynin to this day call that stretch of road which leads from Brogynin over the hill to Elerch "Pen Bwlch Meibion Dafydd"' ['the highest point of the pass of the sons of David', R.G.G.].¹¹ In 1992, he amplified this statement by identifying two of the 'elderly people' as Edward Hughes of Brogynin-fach, and his own grandmother, Mary James (1852–1928): he also located Pen Bwlch Meibion Dafydd more precisely as 'the summit of the steep hill which leads from Troed-rhiw-seiri to the crossroads Elerch/Llety Ifan Hen' (i.e. approximately SN 679856).¹²

¹⁰ I. Williams, 'Masaleg, Basaleg', *BBCS*, 7 (1933–35), 277.

¹¹ Jenkins, 'Enwau personau a lleoedd', p. 142.

¹² Jenkins, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 38.

6. (line 21) **Y Gamallt** ('the crooked slope'): this is a fairly common Welsh place-name, but there is no instance of it, as far as I know, within easy walking distance of Dafydd's home at Brogynin. Y Gamallt at SN 895929 is some seventeen miles east of Brogynin, and another Gamallt at SN 955709 is rather more than twenty miles east-south-east. Both seem rather far to be the place mentioned in the poem, although Dafydd claims in another poem once to have walked 'yn gynt . . . no mellten ddeunaw milltir' ('swifter than lightning for eighteen miles') in order to meet his love.¹³ Dafydd sometimes distorts the proper names he cites (see, for example, no. 8 below), and it is tempting to suggest that he is here referring to Y Geuallt ('the hollow slope') which, at SN 692825, is rather less than two and a half miles south-east of Brogynin. As it happens, Y Gamallt, rather than Y Geuallt, invests the line with proper *cynganedd draws*, providing a motive for Dafydd to have made such a change. See also the next name.

7. (line 22) **Y Rhiw** ('the road up the hill'): this is so common a place-name element that it is idle to speculate about it. Indeed, Thomas Parry does not capitalize the word *rhiw* in his edition. There is a Penrhiwnewydd ('the crest of the new road up the hill') at SN 670841, within a mile of Brogynin to the south-east, and this may suggest the existence of an earlier *Rhiw* or *Henrhiw* ('the old road up the hill').¹⁴

8. (line 24) **Gafaelfwlch y Gyfylfaen** ('the linking pass of the limit stone'): this was elegantly identified by R. J. Thomas as an embellished form of Bwlch-y-maen ('the pass of the stone'), a meeting-place of various mountain trackways at SN 701861, some two and a half miles east-north-east of Brogynin.¹⁵ By combining the first and last elements in the place-name with other elements, Dafydd creates a line of perfect *cynganedd groes*. There are traces of a ring-barrow at the site, and this was presumably marked by a standing stone, which, however, has now disappeared.¹⁶

¹³ *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 93.

¹⁴ There is an example of *Henrhiw* at SN 741801.

¹⁵ Thomas, 'Bwlch y Gyfylfaen', p. 255; there is another Bwlch-y-maen at SN 703947.

¹⁶ *Cardiganshire County History*, vol. I, *From the Earliest Times to the Coming of the Normans*, edited by J. L. Davies and D. P. Kirby (Cardiff, 1994), 185.

9. (line 30) **Pant Cwcell** ('cowl hollow'): the name, as such, has long disappeared, but, as R. J. Thomas first pointed out,¹⁷ a name similar to it occurs as *Tal Pont Cuculh* in an inspeximus dated 1337 of a charter dated 1202 by the Deheubarth prince, Rhys Ieuanc, granting lands to the Cistercian Abbey of Strata Florida, together with a confirmation of that charter made before 1227 by Rhys Ieuanc's cousin, Maelgwn Ieuanc, who was also known as Maelgwn Fychan.¹⁸ (There is, in fact, respectable manuscript evidence for the reading *Pont Cwcell* in the text of the poem as well.)¹⁹ Dr Jenkins has argued convincingly that *Tal Pont Cuculh* or 'Tâl Pont Cwcell' (literally 'the end of cowl bridge') is to be identified with the farm and village of Tal-y-bont at SN 655891: this is roughly five and a half miles north-north-west of Brogynin. At one time, I resisted the equation of Tal Pont Cuculh with Tal-y-bont, because I believed that most of the places named with it in the inspeximus should be located within the township of Tirymynaich, which Tal-y-Bont is not (it is, in fact, in the township of Ceulan a Maes-mawr);²⁰ it is now apparent, however, that this was an error on my part (see Appendix).

10. (line 31) **Castell Gwgawn** ('Gwgawn's castle'):²¹ this is another name which has long disappeared, but which occurs as *Castell Gugawn* in the inspeximus mentioned under the preceding place-name. Dr

¹⁷ Thomas, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym', pp. 34–5.

¹⁸ *Calendar of the Charter Rolls*, vol. IV, *A.D. 1327–1341* (London, 1912), pp. 382–86, especially p. 385; cf. G. Roberts, 'Documents and charters connected with the History of Strata Florida Abbey', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 3 (1848), 191–213, especially pp. 204 and 207; and K. L. Maund, *Handlist of the Acts of Native Welsh Rulers* (Cardiff, 1996), pp. 9–10 (nos 24 and 27).

¹⁹ *Peniarth 49*, edited by T. Parry (Caerdydd, 1929), p. 130; cf. *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, pp. cxii–cxviii and 229.

²⁰ Gruffydd, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym: an outline biography', p. 429.

²¹ A likely identification of this Gwgawn or Gwgon is proposed in *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, edited by R. Bromwich, 2nd edn (Cardiff, 1978), pp. 389–90 and 553–54; J. Lloyd-Jones, *Geirfa Barddoniaeth Gynnar Gymraeg* (Caerdydd, 1950–63), p. 676, tentatively equates the *Castell Gwgawn* of the poem with a place bearing the same name near Aberaeron; in the first edition of the O.S. One-Inch map (1834), this occurs at approximately SN 460634 as *Castell Cadwgan* (it has since disappeared into the sea): cf. D. L. Jones, 'Aberaeron before the Harbour Act of 1807', *Ceredigion*, 9 (1980–83), 363–87, especially pp. 367–68.

Jenkins believes this is to be equated with the farm-name Carregcadwgan ('Cadwgan's rock') at SN 694903, which is about four miles directly to the north-north-east of Brogynin. Dr Jenkins's case is strengthened by the fact that we have evidence elsewhere for the alternation of the name-forms *Gwgon* and *Cadwgan*.²² It would be still further strengthened if an earthwork of some kind were to be found in the vicinity of Carregcadwgan (to justify the element *Castell* rather than *Carreg*).²³ On balance, then, I think Dr Jenkins is right, and that my objection to his argument (namely, that Carregcadwgan is in Ceulan a Maes-mawr township rather than in Tirymynaich: see no. 9, above) can no longer be sustained.

11. (line 33) **Adail Heilyn** ('Heilyn's building'): the name, as such, no longer exists, but in the Minister's Account for 1277–80 mentioned under no. 3 above, reference is made to *terra Heylin filii Howeli* in Genau'r Glyn commote.²⁴ There is ample evidence that there was once a holding named *Tyddyn Bronheilyn* in the township of Henllys within the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, a holding which may later have been amalgamated with the farm of Brynlllys.²⁵ Brynlllys is at SN 620888, which is rather less than four miles north-west of Brogynin.

12. (line 35) **Llys Ifor** ('Ifor's court'): no such name exists today in the vicinity of Brogynin. It inevitably brings to mind the home of Ifor ap Llywelyn, Dafydd's chief patron, which, as already mentioned, was at Gwernyclepa in the parish of Basaleg, near Newport in Gwent. Thomas Parry thought that the occurrence of the name in the cywydd was no more than a coincidence, and that it refers to a North

²² C. A. Raleigh Radford and W. J. Kemp, 'The Cross-Slab at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 106 (1957), 109–16; cf. *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, edited by P. C. Bartrum (Cardiff, 1966), p. 48.

²³ No such earthwork is listed in *Cardiganshire County History*, I, 239–71 ('Gazetteer of hillforts and enclosures').

²⁴ R. A. Roberts, 'Cymru Fu', pp. 129–30.

²⁵ NLW, Department of Manuscripts and Records [hereafter NLW DMR], Gogerddan Deeds (Old Schedule), no. 164 (*Tythin bron Heylyn . . . situate in Henllys*, 1655), also nos 170, 255, 348, 1115 and 1619. Compare NLW DPM, Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, township of Henllys, holding of Brynlllys (fields called *Rhos bronheilyn* and *Cae bronheilyn*): the fields were at approximately SN 621895. I have not yet been able precisely to locate *Tyddyn Bronheilyn*.

Cardiganshire patron of Dafydd's: the personal name Ifor was, after all, extremely common in this period.²⁶ Professor Emeritus D. J. Bowen, on the other hand, thinks that lines 35–38 belonged originally to another poem, and that they referred to Ifor ap Llywelyn, but that they found their way into this poem by a process of textual corruption.²⁷ There is also a third possibility, to which I shall return shortly.

13. (line 40) **Nant-y-glo** ('coal stream' or 'coal valley'): there is a farmstead known as Cwm-y-glo, almost certainly originally *Cwm-y-gro*, at SN 682853, less than half a mile east-north-east of Troedrhwiwseiri (see no. 1).²⁸ Dr Jenkins believes that Nant-y-glo was the original name of 'the small valley which runs from Cwm-y-glo past Troedrhwiwseiri within a mile of Dafydd's home at Brogynin';²⁹ another possibility is that Nant-y-glo was simply a calque on Cwm-y-glo or *Cwm-y-gro*, since the elements *nant* and *cwm* can be virtually synonymous. Alternatively, of course, one might think, as Ifor Williams did, of the well-known industrial valley of Nant-y-glo in Gwent, some fifteen miles north-west of Ifor ap Llewelyn's home at Gwernyclepa.³⁰

14. (line 44) **Gwernytalwrn** ('the alder-grove by the piece of open ground' [?]): again, the name is no longer attested in our extant sources, although Dr Jenkins points out that there is a Penytalwrn near Ponterwyd—it is, in fact, still the current local name of the George Borrow Hotel (SN 746805)—and it may be apposite to add that the stream which flows past the hotel to join the river Rheidol nearby is named Gwernog; the George Borrow Hotel is some five miles

²⁶ *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, pp. xxxvi–xxxix.

²⁷ D. J. Bowen, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym a Cheredigion', *Llên Cymru*, 14 (1981–84), 163–209, especially p. 164.

²⁸ Jenkins, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 39, referring to an important deed of 24 January 1541/2 discovered by him in the Gogerddan Collection (as yet uncatalogued) at NLW DMR: *tyddyn [c]wm y gro*. All later examples seem to have Cwm-y-glo: cf., for instance, Green, *NLW Calendar of Deeds*, II, 188 (*Cwm-y-glo*, 1745) and *passim*. See also the editor's remarks in *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. xxxvi.

²⁹ Jenkins, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 39.

³⁰ *Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i Gyfoeswyr*, edited by I. Williams and T. Roberts, 2nd edn (Cardiff, 1935), p. xxx.

south-east from Brogynin.³¹ Because of the distance involved, Dr Jenkins is unhappy about this identification, and it may be worth pointing out that there is a cluster of *talwrn* names near Goginan, focusing on SN 697816, which is no further than some three miles south-south-east of Brogynin.³² Mr Tomos Roberts has discovered in the Melville Richards Archive a place bearing the exact name *Gwernytalwrn* in the township of Llystynwallon, in the parish of Llansilin near Oswestry; but as this would be well over forty miles north-east of Brogynin, very much as the crow flies, it does not at first sight seem likely that this is the place mentioned by Dafydd.

If the more conservative interpretations suggested above are accepted, it is open to us to conclude that very few of the places mentioned in the poem are more than six miles' distance from Brogynin, and that the poem can, therefore, be read as a celebration, by Dafydd, of the places on his home ground where he and Morfudd used to meet. Even the last eight lines, with their rueful references to the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden (as described in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha), and to the ubiquitous medieval 'Debate Between Body and Soul', do no more, according to this interpretation, than introduce a note of pensiveness regarding the eventual outcome of their infatuation.³³ Recently, however, a totally new interpretation has been put forward by Professor Emeritus R. M. Jones, in which he

³¹ Jenkins, 'Enwau personau a lleoedd', p. 142; Jenkins, *Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym*, p. 39. Mr Erwyd Howells, whose knowledge of the locality is unrivalled, was good enough to confirm for me the equation of Penytalwrn with the George Borrow Hotel.

³² NLW DPM, Map Volume 37, 'Maps of the Gogerthan Estate in the several Counties of Cardigan and Montgomery the Property of Mrs Margt Pryse 1790', fol. 58 (fields called *Cae dan y talwrn* and *Cae rhwng y talwrn*); cf. NLW DMR, Gogerddan MS. AA 1, 'A Particular and Valuation of the Estates of Pryse Pryse Esqr: in the parishes of Llanbadarnfawr, Llanfihangel Gene'r Glyn, Llanganfelin and Machynlleth, in the Counties of Cardigan and Montgomery, 1805', pp. 34-35; and NLW DPM, Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanbadarn Fawr (1847), township of Melindwr, holding of Blaendyffryn Isaf.

³³ J. Jenkins, 'Medieval Welsh scripture, religious legends and midrash', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1919-20, 95-140, especially p. 122; M. Haycock, *Blodeugerdd Barddas o Ganu Crefyddol Cynnar* (Abertawe, 1994), pp. 203-33.

attaches much more weight than has been hitherto customary to the last eight lines, and proposes that the poem should now be read primarily as an elegy by Dafydd for Morfudd.³⁴ That it is like no other elegy from the Welsh Middle Ages cannot be regarded as a decisive objection to this interpretation, since Dafydd is like no other poet from the Welsh Middle Ages, particularly as regards the quality and exuberance of his imagination. If Professor Jones's interpretation were to be accepted, it would at once permit the identification of *Llys Ifor* (no. 12) as Ifor ap Llywelyn's home at Gwernyclepa, of *Nant-y-glo* (no. 13) as the familiar valley in Gwent, and even of *Y Gamallt* (no. 6) as that at SN 955709, north of Rhaeadr in Powys, since this might well have been on Dafydd's route south to Gwernyclepa. Not even Mr Tomos Roberts's *Tyddyn Celli Fleddyn* in Guilsfield parish (see no. 3), nor his *Gwernytalwrn* in Llansilin (see no. 14), need be entirely ruled out under this interpretation, since Dafydd and Morfudd could conceivably have met in those places also: it appears that he was familiar with the Wrexham area, and she, of course, was a native of Penllyn in Merionethshire.³⁵ The image evoked is that of Dafydd searching restlessly throughout Wales (although most desperately on his own home ground) for some remembrance of Morfudd, haunted all the while by recollections of expulsion from Eden, and by intimation of possible final condemnation: if the soul has followed the same course as the body, what will be its fate? So attractive is Professor Jones's theory that I am inclined to accept it, at least until a *Llys Ifor* is discovered in the vicinity of Brogynin.

Appendix

The charters of Strata Florida Abbey deserve the same kind of detailed attention as has already been given to those of Aberconwy and Cymer,³⁶ and what follows is a preliminary comment on a minor

³⁴ Bobi Jones, 'Wrth Angor (21) . . . Marwnad Morfudd', *Barddas*, no 173 (Medi 1991), 6-8.

³⁵ *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym*, pp. 73-4, 119 (?) and 153-4; see further Gruffydd, 'Dafydd ap Gwilym: an outline biography', pp. 432 and 435-36.

³⁶ C. Gresham, 'The Aberconwy Charter', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 94 (1939), 123-62; *idem*, 'The Aberconwy Charter; further consideration', *BBCS*, 30 (1982-83), 311-47; K. Williams-Jones, 'Llywelyn's charter to Cymer Abbey', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, 3 (1957-60), 45-78.

problem arising from those charters, a problem that has already been touched on briefly above. According to the printed calendar, the *inspeximus* mentioned in the remarks on names 10 and 11 contains, *inter alia*, the following list of places:³⁷

Y Morva bychan, Tref Mays, Savyn y ky, Tywarthen, Penwedic bau carn, Llanvessilh, Argoit y Guinweyn, Tal pont Cuculh, Castellh Gugaun, Castelham.

If obvious errors of transcription are corrected, and the spelling, punctuation and capitalization normalized, the sequence of names reads as follows:

Y Morfa Bychan, Tref-faes, Safn-y-ci, Tywarchen Penweddig, Bancarw, Llanfesyll, Argoed y Gwenyn, Tâl Pont Cwswll, Castell Gwgawn, Castellan.

Of these names, *Y Morfa Bychan* and *Tref-faes* are readily identified as granges belonging to Strata Florida by reference to the invaluable *Atlas of Cistercian Lands in Wales*; moreover, Safn-y-ci is probably to be equated with the grange designated 'Allt Wen and Morfa Ankar' there (although the second of these names poses an obvious problem).³⁸ *Tywarchen Penweddig* is the original name of the large tract of land which became known as 'Doverchen Grange' and suchlike, and which was coterminous with the township of Tirymynaich in the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn.³⁹ I once held the view that all the names following *Tywarchen Penweddig* in the document were of places within Tirymynaich township, but this is clearly not the case. The excessively rare place-name *Bancarw* may indeed have denoted a place within the township,⁴⁰ but *Argoed y Gwenyn* is probably represented by the two

³⁷ *Calendar of the Charter Rolls*, vol. IV, A.D. 1327-1341, p. 385.

³⁸ D. H. Williams, *Atlas of Cistercian Lands in Wales* (Cardiff, 1990), pp. 57 and 96. It is clear from H. Owen, 'Peniarth MS. 118, fos. 829-37. Introduction, transcription and translation', *Y Cymmrodor*, 27 (1917), 115-52 (p. 138), that 'Bwlch Sabhn y ci' lay south of the river Ystwyth, probably near its mouth, and it may tentatively be suggested that the present Tan-y-bwlch (SN 582794) and Pen-y-bwlch (SN 581789) indicate its location.

³⁹ J. E. Lloyd, 'Tir-y-Mynech', in *Y Llinyn Arian: I Gyfarch Urdd Gobaith Cymru*, edited by E. D. Jones and others (Aberystwyth, 1947), pp. 15-16.

⁴⁰ *Canu Aneirin*, edited by I. Williams (Caerdydd, 1938), pp. 221-22; C. Gresham, 'The Aberconway Charter', pp. 151 and 153. There is a Bancar

farm-names *Argoed-fawr* and *Argoed-fach* in Cynnull-mawr township, also in Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn parish,⁴¹ and *Castellan* is represented by the farm- and township-name *Bron Castellan* in Llanbadarn Fawr parish.⁴² There is no reason, therefore, why *Tâl Pont Cwswll* and *Castell Gwgawn* should not lie outside the limits of Tirymynaich township, as noted in the comments on names 9 and 10 above. *Llanfesyll* remains wholly baffling; there is no Welsh personal name *Mesyll* (or *Besyll*) and it is tempting to suggest an emendation to *Llan + Mechyll* or *Mechell*:⁴³ it is true that he was a Gwynedd saint, but so was St Cynfelyn, the patron saint of Llangynfelyn, which is the parish adjoining Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn to the north.⁴⁴

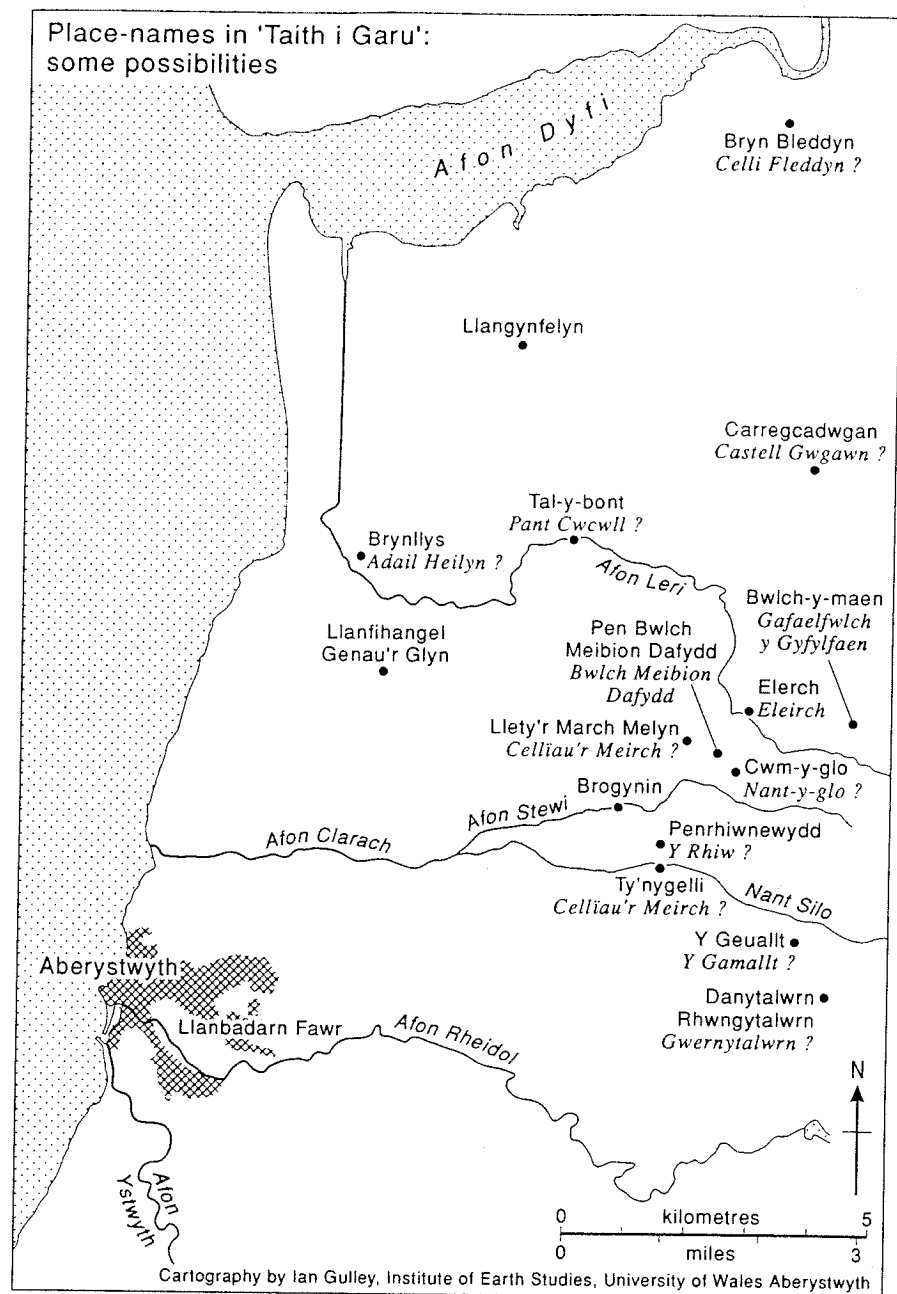
in Denbighshire, SJ 110666, originally a township in Llandyrnog parish: Richards, *Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units*, p. 9. For evidence that the present Pen-cwm (SN 648856), a mile north of the village of Penrhyn-coch, was once **Pencwmbancarw*, see T. I. Jeffreys Jones, *Exchequer Proceedings Concerning Wales in tempore James I* (Cardiff, 1955), p. 96 (*Tythin y maen llwyd a'r warr Kwm Bankar*, 1605-06); Green, *NLW Calendar of Deeds*, II, 246 (*Ty-yn-y-cwm-bankir*, 1772); NLW DPM, Map Volume 38, 'Court Grange Estate' (*Pen cwm bankir House*, 1778); NLW DPM, Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn (1845), township of Tirymynaich (*Pen y cwm*).

⁴¹ At SN 657882 and 656879 respectively; both farms are included in the same Tithe Apportionment, township of Cynnull-mawr.

⁴² NLW DPM, Tithe Map and Apportionment of the parish of Llanbadarn Fawr (1847), township of Broncastellan: the farm (at SN 633840) is no longer named in the O.S. 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 maps, although it appears in the first edition (1837) of the O.S. One-Inch map. It may be noted that Rhosgellan (SN 597855) was apparently once *Rhoscastellan* (see NLW DPM, Cardiganshire, Solander C, Clarach, *Rhoscastellan*) and it seems likely, therefore, that Nantcellan (SN 599843) was once **Nantcastellan*.

⁴³ M. Miller, *The Saints of Gwynedd* (Woodbridge, 1979), p. 59; E. R. Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 29 and 355-56; also E. R. Henken, *The Welsh Saints: A Study in Patterned Lives* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 18 and 204. On the form of the name, see M. Richards, 'Mechyll, Mechell, Llanfechell', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 115 (1966), 168-70.

⁴⁴ Miller, *Saints of Gwynedd*, p. 105; R. G. Gruffydd, 'Why Cors Fochno?', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1995, 5-19 (at pp. 9 and 15-16). I wish to thank the chief editor of *Nomina* for his very helpful comments and suggestions, and Mr Ian Gulley for drawing the map.



English Place-Names in *Lap-*

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As the editors of the Surrey volume of the English Place-Name Survey observed, '*Lap-* names in English present a difficult problem.'¹ Early volumes of the English Place-Name Survey postulated an unattested personal name, Old English (OE) **Hlappa* or **Hlæppa*, as the first element of place-names like Lapal (Worcs), Lapworth (Warks), and Lapley (Staffs).² The origin of such a personal name, however, is unknown, and an alternative suggestion preferred by many scholars is OE *læppa* 'a lap, the skirt of a garment', apparently used in a topographical sense to refer to a detached portion of land, or to land on a boundary. This interpretation was cautiously advanced by the Surrey editors to account for Lapscombe (Surrey) and 'one or two other of the *Lap-* names.'³ It has been adopted with rather less caution by later scholars. Oakden, for instance, confidently derives Lapley (Staffs) from OE *læppa*, commenting that 'the same el[ement] is found in Lapworth Wa . . . and in many other names,' and dismisses the possibility of a personal name as 'much less likely'.⁴ Ekwall's *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* suggested an unattested personal name **Læppa*, a possible side-form of *Leppa*, as an alternative to *læppa* in Lapley (Staffs), and gave **Hlappa* for Lapal (Worcs), Lapford (Devon) and Lapworth (Warks).⁵ More recently, Mills's *Dictionary of English Place-Names* offers **Hlappa* as a probability for Lapford (Devon), but presents *læppa* without discussion for Lapley

¹ J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer, and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Surrey*, English Place-Name Society (EPNS) 11 (Cambridge, 1934), p. 220.

² A. Mawer and F.M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Worcestershire*, EPNS 4 (Cambridge, 1927), p. 298. County abbreviations throughout this paper refer to the pre-1974 English counties.

³ *PN Surrey*, p. 220.

⁴ J. P. Oakden, *The Place-Names of Staffordshire*, part I, EPNS 55 (Nottingham, 1984), pp. 167-68.

⁵ E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn (Oxford, 1960), p. 288, s.nn. *Lapley*, *Lapal*, *Lapworth*.