

Seintiau Cymru, Sancti Cambrenses

ASTUDIAETHAU AR SEINTIAU CYMRU
STUDIES IN THE SAINTS OF WALES

36

O Du natur o'c om byddant o bu natur
 nichys gorsiant heu dal y wae y ger
 goras or ghyddas yna y wa yrbu
Oed yr araldwyd pam waethbwyd y llyfr
 ydym oedd hymnenghymlynedd a deugam
 a ffedwar tant a wyl phylit ap wadoc
 ap jenaf ap jerdweth hias y llyfr ydym
Witthun ydym a ysgrifbenwedd hddymna
Oeddi ap sant ap tesic ap tyredic
 ap t'wessa wledic *haec habes in
 v. hyst. f. g. m. s.*
 D nom Vch sy
 Gyr o gaer gawc y mynws oedd i Sam
 Gobacl ap jhael hacl ap tyredic ap
 t'wessa wledic **T**ynnac ap forbu ap ty
 edic ap t'wessa wledic **T**elard ap aniel
 ap hyswun d'wim ap tyredic ap t'wessa
 wledic **D**uard boellt ap tesic ap tyred
 ic ap t'wessa wledic **D** thegbesse Vch
 Segis woel o beulhym. Sam **P**remullas
 ap t'megar ap gartfawc ap teresic ap
 t'wessa wledic **F**ynubelyu ap blesous ap
 weiran ap tybiad Vch t'wessa wledic
Finniasou d'renu yn llyu **D** ferwael ym
 heu wond **W**erion y wewromyds ac

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ASTUDIAETHAU AR SEINTIAU CYMRU
STUDIES IN THE SAINTS OF WALES

golygwyd gan / edited by

David N. Parsons

a / and

Paul Russell



ABERYSTWYTH

CANOLFAN UWCHEFRYDIAU CYMREIG A CHELTAIDD

PRIFYSGOL CYMRU

2022

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Abbreviations / Byrfoddau

<i>AchS</i>	<i>Achau'r Saint</i> ; printed <i>EWGT</i> 68–71.
<i>BBCS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies</i> [=BBGC].
<i>BBGC</i>	<i>Bwletin y Bwrdd Gwybodau Celtaidd</i> [=BBCS].
<i>BD</i>	<i>Buched Dewi</i> , gol. D. Simon Evans (Caerdydd, 1965).
<i>ByS</i>	<i>Bonedd y Saint</i> ; printed <i>EWGT</i> 51–67, cf. below 66 and n. 4.
<i>CLIGC</i>	<i>Cylchgrawn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru</i> [=NLWJ].
<i>CMCS</i>	<i>Cambrian</i> [formerly <i>Cambridge</i>] <i>Medieval Celtic Studies</i> .
<i>CYSDT</i>	<i>Cywyddau Ymryson Syr Dafydd Trefor</i> , gol. R. Ifans (Aberystwyth, 2012).
<i>eLALME</i>	Electronic version of <i>A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English</i> , ed. A. McIntosh, M. L. Samuels and M. Benskin (Aberdeen, 1986; rev. edn. 2013) <amc.lel.ed.ac.uk/amc-projects-hub/project/elalme/>.
<i>EWGT</i>	<i>Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts</i> , ed. P. C. Bartrum (Cardiff, 1966).
<i>GBF</i>	<i>Gwaith Bleddyn Fardd ac Eraill o Feirdd Ail Hanner y Drydedd Ganrif ar Ddeg</i> , gol. Rh. M. Andrews <i>et al.</i> (Caerdydd, 1996).
<i>GCBM I</i>	<i>Gwaith Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr; I</i> , gol. N. A. Jones ac A. Parry Owen (Caerdydd, 1991).
<i>GCBM II</i>	<i>Gwaith Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr; II</i> , gol. N. A. Jones ac A. Parry Owen (Caerdydd, 1995).
<i>GDB</i>	<i>Gwaith Dafydd Benfras ac Eraill o Feirdd Hanner Cyntaf y Drydedd Ganrif ar Ddeg</i> , gol. N. G. Costigan (Bosco) <i>et al.</i> (Caerdydd, 1979).
<i>GDLI</i>	<i>Gwaith Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn</i> , gol. W. L. Richards (Caerdydd, 1964).
<i>GEO</i>	<i>Gwaith Einion Oeiriad a Dafydd Ddu o Hiraddug</i> , gol. R. Geraint Gruffydd a R. Ifans (Aberystwyth, 1997).
<i>GGMD III</i>	<i>Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd, III, Canu Amrywiol</i> , gol. A. Parry Owen (Aberystwyth, 2007).
<i>GIBH</i>	<i>Gwaith Ieuan Brydydd Hir</i> , gol. M. P. Bryant-Quinn (Aberystwyth, 2000).
<i>GIRh</i>	<i>Gwaith Ieuan ap Rhydderch</i> , gol. R. Iestyn Daniel (Aberystwyth, 2003).
<i>GLGC</i>	<i>Gwaith Lewys Glyn Cothi</i> , gol. D. Johnston (Caerdydd, 1995).

- GLIBH* *Gwaith Llywelyn Brydydd Hoddnant, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Hillyn ac eraill*, gol. A. Parry Owen a D. Foster Evans (Aberystwyth, 1996).
- GLIF* *Gwaith Llywelyn Fardd I ac Eraill o Feirdd y Ddeuddegfed Ganrif*, gol. K.A. Bramley *et al.* (Caerdydd, 1994).
- GLLIL* *Gwaith Llywarch ap Llywelyn 'Prydydd y Moch'*, gol. E. M. Jones (Caerdydd, 1989).
- GMB* *Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion*, gol. J. E. C. Williams *et al.* (Caerdydd, 1994).
- GPC* *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1950–2002; ail. arg., 2003–) <geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>.
- GSHLIF* *Gwaith Siôn ap Hywel ap Llywelyn Fychan*, gol. A. Cynfael Lake (Aberystwyth, 1999).
- IGE*² *Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill*, gol. H. Lewis, T. Roberts ac I. Williams, ail arg. (Caerdydd, 1937).
- LBS* S. Baring-Gould and J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints*, 4 vols (London, 1907–13).
- LL* *Liber Landavensis; The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv*, ed. J. Gwenogvryn Evans and J. Rhys (Oxford, 1893).
- LLA* J. Morris Jones and John Rhÿs (eds.), *The Elucidarium from Llyvyr Agkyr Llandewivrevi* (Oxford, 1894).
- MSPVM* Dominic of Evesham, *Miracula Sancte et Perpetue Virginis Marie*; ed. and trans. I. Mittendorf, 'The Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt and the Latin source of the Miracles of the Virgin Mary', in *The Legend of Mary of Egypt in Medieval Insular Hagiography*, ed. E. Poppe and B. Ross (Dublin, 1996), 226–31.
- NLA* *Nova Legenda Anglie*, ed. C. Horstman, 2 vols (Oxford, 1901).
- NLWJ* *National Library of Wales Journal* [=CLIGC].
- NSB* *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*; see below, 32 n. 4.
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <www.oxforddnb.com>.
- PL* J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus ... series Latina* (Paris, 1844–55, 1862–65).
- STC* A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland 1475–1640*, 2nd edn, rev. by W. A. Jackson *et al.*, 3 vols (London, 1976–91).
- TA* *Gwaith Tudur Aled*, gol. T. Gwynn Jones, 2 gyfrol (Caerdydd, 1926).

- VSBG* A. W. Wade-Evans, *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (Cardiff, 1944; new edn, ed. S. Lloyd, 2013 [pagination largely identical, differences are noted]).
- VSD* *Vita S. David*; ed. and trans. R. Sharpe and J. Reuben Davies, ‘Rhygyfarch’s Life of St David’, in *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation*, ed. J. Wyn Evans and J. M. Wooding (Woodbridge, 2007), 107–55.
- VSME* Paul of Naples, *Vita Sanctae Mariae Egyptiacae*; ed. and trans. H. Magennis, *The Old English Life of Saint Mary of Egypt* (Exeter, 2002), 139–209.
- VSW* *Vita Sancte Wenefrede*, ed. and trans. D. Callander, forthcoming at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition>; see below, 239 and n. 16.
- WLSD* *The Welsh Life of Saint David*, ed. D. Simon Evans (Cardiff, 1988)

The Welsh Versions of the Life of Gwenfrewy

JANE CARTWRIGHT

With the exception of St David, of all the saints studied as part of the Welsh-medium *Seintiau* project Gwenfrewy (or Winefride as she was known in English) is undoubtedly the most deserving of the accolade of ‘Welsh super saint’. The only native female saint for whom a medieval Welsh Life, or *buchedd*, survives, she has a substantial hagiographical dossier. While some Welsh saints’ names are preserved only in place-names, genealogies or medieval calendars (e.g. Wrw and Gwenog), others are referred to in poetry or snippets of medieval verse (Mwrog, Tydecho and Ffraid); for some their miracles are recounted in either Latin or medieval Welsh prose (occasionally both, e.g. David), or they are referred to in the Lives of other saints (e.g. Dunod, Dier, Barruc): St Winefride’s story is preserved in *all* of these sources.

She has two twelfth-century Latin Lives and a fifteenth-century Welsh *buchedd*, two of these three texts being extant in multiple manuscripts.¹ In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries Welsh poets, such as Tudur Aled and Siôn ap Hywel ap Llywelyn Fychan, as well as various anonymous poets, sang her praises, celebrating the refurbishing of her well chapel and the many miracles that became associated with the profuse natural spring water at Holywell.² Now, of course, considered to be one of the Seven Wonders of Wales, this is undoubtedly the most well-known of all Welsh holy wells.

¹ The anonymous twelfth-century *vita* is the only version of the Life preserved in a single manuscript: London, BL, Cotton Claudius A. v, although, as discussed later, London, BL Lansdowne 436 is a partial witness to the anonymous *vita*. The other manuscripts are listed when the texts are discussed in more detail below. Since this chapter focuses on the Welsh *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*, I will refer to her throughout as Gwenfrewy (not Winefride). On the etymology of her name and the suggestion that her Latin name (Wenefreda) is derived from Welsh, see F. Winward, ‘The Lives of St Wenefred (BHL 8847–8851)’, *Annalecta Bollandiana* 117 (1999), 89–132, at 100–3. I am grateful to Jenny Day, Ann Parry Owen, Paul Russell and David Callander for discussing particular aspects of this chapter with me and suggesting numerous improvements.

² *TA*, II, poem 139, *GSHLIF* poem 18, *IGE*² poem 35, *GIBH* poem 9. On the poetry, see also T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Two Mediaeval Welsh Poems: ‘Stori Gwenfrewi a’i Ffynnon’ by Tudur Aled and ‘Ffynnon Wenfrewi’* (Llandysul, 1971), D. Callander, ‘Y seintiau a thraddodiad llenyddol: achos y cywyddau i Wenfrewy’, *Studia Celtica* 54 (2020), 99–114.

Winefride is also a rare example of a Welsh female saint whose cult appears to have acquired political clout.³ She was one of the few native saints whose cult extended beyond the Welsh border, since her relics were translated from Gwytherin to Shrewsbury Priory in either 1137 or 1138. Middle English versions of her Life appear in the *Gilte Legende*,⁴ one particular copy of the *South English Legendary*,⁵ Osbern of Bokenham's translation of the *Legenda Aurea*⁶ and John Mirk's sermon for her feast in the *Festial*.⁷ Her cult was also promoted by William Caxton who printed two versions of her *Lyf*, one of which he included in his *Golden Legend* in 1483.⁸ In 1398 Roger Walden, the archbishop of Canterbury, declared that Gwenfrewy's November feast should be celebrated (along with those of SS. David and Chad) throughout the province with nine celebratory *lectiones*, and her feast was elevated again in 1416.⁹ St Gwenfrewy's feast was one of only four Welsh saints' feasts recorded in the Roman Martyrology in 1583, and even St David's feast was originally omitted.¹⁰

Both the privileged and the poor visited her well at Holywell, and it is thought that pilgrims seeking miraculous cures would slice off small fragments of her wooden reliquary at Gwytherin and take them home as a keepsake long after her relics had left Wales for Shrewsbury.¹¹ She was deemed suitable to be venerated by royalty: Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Edward IV all went on pilgrimage to Holywell and Richard III made a grant to the well to fund the role of chantry priest, a position which continued to be patronised by Henry VII and Henry VIII.¹² A statue of Gwenfrewy, depicted with her decapitated head at her feet, stands in Henry VII's Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey. She was venerated by the Cistercian monks of Basingwerk Abbey who benefited hugely from the

³ For an overview of the cults of female saints in Wales, see J. Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity and Spirituality in Medieval Wales* (Cardiff, 2008).

⁴ London, BL Additional MS 35298 is the only extant copy of the *Gilte Legende* that includes her Life. R. Hamer and V. Russell, eds, *Supplementary Lives in Some Manuscripts of the Gilte Legende*, EETS o.s. 315 (Oxford, 2000), 39–43.

⁵ The only copy of the *South English Legendary* to include her Life is Oxford, Bodleian Library MS 779.

⁶ Edinburgh, Advocates Library, Abbotsford MS, fol. 214v–218v.

⁷ T. Erbe, ed., *Mirk's Festial: A Collection of Homilies*, EETS e.s. 96 (London, 1905).

⁸ STC 24873. For an excellent overview of the cult and a detailed discussion of the Middle English sources, see J. R. Gregory, 'A Welsh saint in England: translation, orality and national identity in the cult of St. Gwenfrewy, 1138–1512' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Georgia, 2012).

⁹ D. Wilkins, *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae, ab Anno MCCCL ad Annum MDLXV*, III (Brussels, 1964), 234–6.

¹⁰ The others are Asaph, Samson and Maelor.

¹¹ N. Edwards and T. G. Hulse, 'A fragment of a reliquary casket from Gwytherin, North Wales', *The Antiquaries Journal* 72 (1992), 91–101.

¹² K. Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage, c. 1100–1500*, 187, suggests that this was 'to reinforce the idea that the Tudor dynasty they led was the natural inheritor of these earlier kings of England'.

proceeds from the nearby well; she was also important to the monks of St Werburghs in Chester who vied with Basingwerk for ownership of the well, as well as the monks of Shrewsbury Abbey who acquired her relics.¹³ Gwenfrewy is depicted as an abbess, alongside St Asaph, on the second seal of the Chapter of St Asaph demonstrating her authority within the diocese in the fifteenth century.¹⁴ Thus it can be seen that diverse groups, for a variety of personal, political, economic and spiritual reasons were motivated to venerate this seventh-century Welsh virgin who reputedly lived in Tegeingl in Flintshire, disseminate her narrative and contribute to the extant hagiographical corpus associated with her.

The two principal Latin versions of the Life of Gwenfrewy comprise an anonymous *vita*¹⁵ which focuses on the well cult at Holywell and a lengthier *vita* attributed to Prior Robert of the Abbey of SS. Peter and Paul at Shrewsbury.¹⁶ Prior Robert became Abbot of Shrewsbury *c.* 1148 and he dedicated the *vita* to Warin, prior of Worcester, who retired in 1142, so this version of the Life can fairly accurately be dated to between 1137 (when her relics were translated to Shrewsbury) and 1142. Prior Robert notes that he drew on both written and oral sources when compiling his text and his *vita* is unusual in the context of Welsh hagiography because, in this instance, the hagiographer is also a character in the tale. In addition to the usual account of how Gwenfrewy was decapitated by Prince Caradog for refusing his sexual advances and resurrected by St Beuno before becoming Abbess at Gwytherin (found in all versions of the Life), Prior Robert also relates how he travelled to Wales in search of the virgin's relics and exhumed the body which was translated to his own abbey.

The anonymous *vita* is more difficult to date and it is divided into two parts which are stylistically quite different: the Life itself and a list of posthumous miracles which includes some anti-Norman material.¹⁷ The well is said to cure everything from epilepsy to haemorrhoids and, as well as the various healing miracles, the anonymous *vita* narrates the numerous punishments meted out to those who abuse the sanctity of Holywell. It has been proposed that the section narrating the miracles may post-date the Life.¹⁸ Although Prior Robert includes numerous miracles that occur at

¹³ According to Prior Robert's *vita* and the Welsh *buchedd*, the monks at Shrewsbury first learned of Gwenfrewy's relics from the monks at St Werburghs and the prior from Chester accompanied them on their journey to Gwytherin to exhume the body.

¹⁴ Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity*, plate 13.

¹⁵ *VSBG* 288–309; R. Pepin and H. Feiss, trans., *Two Medieval Lives of Saint Winefride* (Toronto, 2000), 97–126; *VSW* (Claud) (forthcoming – see next note).

¹⁶ Pepin and Feiss, trans., *Two Medieval Lives*, 27–93; David Callander, ed. and trans., *Vita Sancte Wenefrede*, at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition> (forthcoming). The latter edition is here abbreviated *VSW*, and the distinct versions, which are separately edited, are specified.

¹⁷ The list refers to the expulsion of the Normans from Gwynedd (i.e. post 1135): see the discussion in Winward, 'The Lives of St Wenefred', 91, 99–100.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 91–3.

Holywell, he does not include the same selection of *mirabilia* as the anonymous Life. The current general consensus is that the two Latin Lives are independent of each other and were both written within a relatively short time frame in the twelfth century; one produced in a Welsh milieu possibly associated with Basingwerk Abbey and the other promoting the interests of Shrewsbury Abbey.¹⁹ A third Latin *vita*, usually referred to as the Lansdowne Life, combines both the anonymous twelfth-century account and Prior Robert's *vita*. This summarized composite version is thought to have been produced in the fourteenth century for the Benedictine nuns of Romsey.²⁰

While editions and translations of all the Latin versions of the Life of Gwenfrewy have been published and attracted considerable debate, neither an edition nor a translation of the Middle Welsh *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* has yet been published and, therefore, the Welsh text has not been subject to the same level of academic scrutiny.²¹ The purpose of this chapter is, firstly, to consider the different manuscript versions of the Welsh Life prior to the publication of an edition and translation of the *buchedd* and, secondly, to offer some preliminary observations on the characteristics and quirks of the *buchedd* focusing on some of the similarities and differences found in the Welsh manuscripts and how these compare to other versions of the text.²²

The Welsh *buchedd* survives in the following four manuscripts:

- Aberystwyth, NLW, MS Peniarth 27ii, unknown scribe s.xv² (hereafter Pen 27ii)
- Aberystwyth, NLW, MS Llanstephan 34, Roger Morris 1580 × 1600 (hereafter Llst 34)
- Aberystwyth, NLW, MS Peniarth 225, Thomas Wiliems 1594–1610 (hereafter Pen 225)
- Aberystwyth, NLW, MS Llanstephan 104 Moses Williams's amanuensis (hereafter Llst 104)²³

¹⁹ Winward, 'The Lives', 125–30; *VSW* Introduction.

²⁰ J. R. Gregory, 'The Life of St. Winifred: the *Vita S. Wenefrede* from BL Lansdowne MS 436', *Medieval Feminist Forum* 4 (2016), 1–39; *VSW* (Lansdowne 436).

²¹ L. E. Jones provided editions in her unpublished thesis, but her discussion included very little comparison between the texts including the Latin and English versions and she included two paragraphs on Pen 225 drawn mainly from J. G. Evans's *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language* (26–7). L. E. Jones, 'Golygiad o Fuchedd Gwenfrewy' (unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff, 2000). *LBS*, IV, 397–423, includes the Llst 34 version (partly copied by Timothy Lewis).

²² J. Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*, at <welhsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (forthcoming) will include an edition and translation of the Llst 34 text with full critical apparatus and transcriptions of the versions in Pen 27ii, Pen 225 and Llst 34. Although the paragraphing in the Welsh edition may differ from the Latin text, I have preserved the same chapter divisions so that the Welsh *buchedd* can be easily compared to the Latin text. Where I quote from Pen 27ii or Pen 225 in this chapter I have provided page and line numbers and I have also applied capitalization, word separation and punctuation to my transcriptions.

²³ Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes c.800–c.1800* (forthcoming).

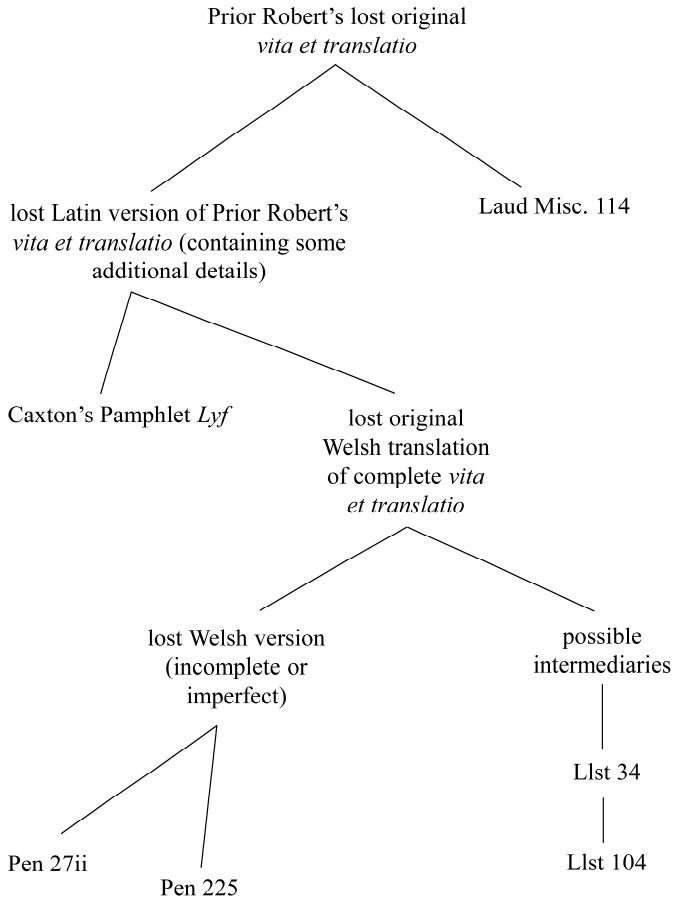


Figure 1. Stemma showing possible interpretation of the relationship between the Welsh manuscripts and the other versions of the text

All of the Welsh versions of the Life of Gwenfrewy have a great deal in common although they omit different sections or fragments of the tale. They are clearly based on a version of the *buchedd* that derives from Prior Robert's Latin version of the text rather than the anonymous version. The stemma above illustrates one possible interpretation of the relationship between the different versions which will be explained throughout the course of this chapter. Prior Robert's Latin *vita* is preserved in two medieval manuscripts, neither of which is thought to preserve his original text, but the late twelfth-century Oxford Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 114, is 'likely to represent something close to what Robert wrote' and is used

here when comparing the Welsh manuscripts to the Latin text.²⁴ All versions of the Welsh text omit the prologue in which Robert dedicates the *vita* to Warin, prior of Worcester, and begin in a similar fashion to §1 of the *vita* which describes the location of Wales, emphasizes that Wales had an abundance of saints and introduces St Beuno. The following quotations from Pen 27ii and Laud Misc. 114 allow us to see how the phraseology of the Welsh *buchedd* resembles Prior Robert's Latin text but is not identical:

Laud Misc. 114

In occidua Maioris Britannie regione est quedam prouintia Walia uocitata, ex una parte finibus regni Anglie, ex altera oceano mari collimitata. Hec olim a sanctis multorum et diuersorum meritorum est inhabitata, et usque ad hunc diem innumeris eorum *prerogatiuis* multipliciter decorata. Ex quorum numero quidam sanctus admodum insignis enituit, Bevnovs nomine, *uir summus* et in omni illa sanctorum multitudine precipuus. Is itaque cum paternum prius contempsisset solum, et, mundi gloriam calcans, perniciosas illius illecebras abdicasset, pauper effugiens, monachus effectus est, in breui perfectum in Christo agens uirum.

In the western region of Great Britain, there is a certain province called Wales, adjoined on one side by the borders of the kingdom of England, on the other by the ocean of the sea. This was once inhabited by saints of many and diverse merits, and to this day is abundantly honoured by their innumerable *privileges*. From their number a certain very distinguished saint shone forth, Beuno by name, a *splendid man* and foremost in all that multitude of saints. And so when he had first refused his father's land, and, trampling on the world's glory, had renounced its deadly enticements, fleeing this as a pauper, he became a monk, in a short time performing the life of a perfect man in Christ.²⁵

Pen 27ii

Yngorllewin ynys Brydain y may gwlad a elwir Kymrv, o'r naill dv iddi i may tervyne Lloygyr ac, o'r tv arall, eigion y mor yn i chylchynv a saint gynt yn i chyvanheddv, ac ir hynny hyd heddiw yn i thekav o *wy[r]thiav kyvwlch*. Ac o eiryf y saint hynny *gwrda santaidd ardderchoc kyvwlch* a elwid Bevno. A gwedy trymygv ohono dref i dad a gogoniant y byd ir

²⁴ D. Callander, Introduction to *VSW* (forthcoming). I am very grateful to David Callander for providing me with copies of his editions and translations of the Latin *vitae* prior to their publication on the website.

Laud Misc. 114 is associated with Pershore Abbey in Worcestershire. The other medieval Latin manuscript is Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 0.4.42 (early thirteenth century from Abbey Dore in Herefordshire) and Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 8072 (dated 1631) is a copy of the Laud manuscript. There is also London, BL Lansdowne 436 c. 1300 which, as noted above, is a composite version of Prior Robert's Life and the anonymous *vita*.

²⁵ *VSW* §1. I have added italics to quotations throughout this chapter in order to highlight specific words or phrases that I am comparing in the different versions.

mwyn Duw, ef a wneythbwyd yn vanach ac ar vyrder ef a ayth yn wr perffaith ynGrist.²⁶

In the west of the island of Britain there is a country called Wales, on one side of it are the borders of England and, on the other side, it is surrounded by the ocean of the sea, and saints once inhabited it, and from that time forth until today, have adorned it with *splendid miracles*. And amongst the number of those saints was a *holy, excellent, splendid nobleman* who was called Beuno. And having spurned his father's estate and worldly glory for God, he was ordained a monk and soon became a perfect man in Christ.

The Welsh *bucheddau* often contain very long sentences that are sometimes cumbersome and occasionally betray the fact that they are translations or Welsh adaptations deriving from an exemplar based on the Latin *vita*. While the Welsh texts, on the whole, demonstrate a tendency to summarize, in this particular passage the Welsh versions include more adjectives praising Beuno than does the Latin version in Laud Misc. 114.²⁷ In Latin he is merely a 'uir summus' (splendid man), whereas in all three of the Welsh manuscripts (not only Pen 27ii) he is a 'gwrda santaido ardderchoc kyvwlch' (holy, excellent, splendid nobleman).

Given that Pen 27ii is the earliest extant manuscript to preserve the *buchedd*, one question that needs to be addressed is whether this version is the 'original' Welsh Life: is the anonymous scribe here merely copying the Life of Gwenfrewy or translating it into Welsh for the first time in the late fifteenth century? Unfortunately, there is no colophon in Pen 27ii that indicates whether the scribe is translating the text from Latin, unlike, for example, the note provided at the end of *Hystoria Gweryddon yr Almaen* in Peniarth 182 which clearly indicates that Huw Pennant was translating the Middle Welsh Life of Ursula from Latin into Welsh for the first time 'val y gallai rhai kerddgar i dyall o'i hiaith e hun' (so that lovers of literature could understand it in their own language) c. 1514.²⁸ In the passage quoted above 'kyvwlch', the adjective used to describe miracles performed in Wales, occurs directly above the second 'kyvwlch' used to describe Beuno in Pen 27ii²⁹ and one wonders whether this could have been a copying error. Has the scribe, growing tired or becoming distracted, mistakenly copied the word from the previous line in his own text rather than from his exemplar? While in this instance it is difficult to determine the nature of the error, since 'kyvwlch' makes sense within the context of

²⁶ Pen 27ii 91.1–8 §1. All translations from the Welsh texts are my own.

²⁷ A comparison between the word counts of the first chapter in Pen 27ii (571 words) and Laud Misc. 114 (576 words) reveals that they are very similar and this section of the *buchedd* has not been significantly abbreviated.

²⁸ J. Cartwright, ed., *Hystoria Gweryddon yr Almaen The Middle Welsh Life of St Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins* (Cambridge, 2020), 58.

²⁹ Pen 27ii 91.5–6 §1.

the sentence, there are other examples of copying errors in Pen 27ii that perhaps suggest that the scribe is copying rather than translating his source. On page 95 when Caradog is first introduced as he arrives at Gwenfrewy's home 'yn dyvod i mewn' (coming in) is repeated in line 15 directly under 'yn dyvod i mewn' in line 14. On this occasion the repetition, which does not make sense in the context of the sentence, is not replicated in Llst 34 and Pen 225. A similar copying error also appears in Pen 27ii when the scribe describes Beuno singing mass frequently and Gwenfrewy and her parents going to mass ('aent wrth yr efferen'). The noun 'efferen' occurs directly below the first example of 'efferen' in Pen 27ii;³⁰ whereas in Llst 34 and Pen 225 Beuno is described as singing mass frequently, and Gwenfrewy and her parents *go to listen* which removes both the unnecessary repetition of the word 'efferen' and the awkward preposition 'wrth' before the noun.

While these small errors appear to suggest that the scribe is copying, comparison with the other two Welsh manuscripts certainly confirms that Pen 27ii cannot be the original Welsh translation for both contain more episodes from the *vita*: while Pen 27ii omits Prior Robert's journey to Gwytherin and the translation of the relics to Shrewsbury, Llst 34 contains the full account of the expedition to Gwytherin and the translation of the relics, and Pen 225 contains some of the account of the expedition to Gwytherin but not the translation. We shall return to the significance of the omissions before the end of this chapter, but for the present it remains to be said that the similarity in the phraseology of the three Welsh manuscript versions, and Pen 27ii and Pen 225 in particular, suggest that they were ultimately drawn from the same common original which must have provided a more comprehensive account of the Life of Gwenfrewy than that currently found in Pen 27ii. However, as we shall see, it is plausible that there were intermediaries of varying completeness between the 'original' translation and the surviving copies.

All three of the Welsh manuscripts are of north-Walian origin and Gwenfrewy was a saint whose cult was primarily centred in the area around Holywell in Flintshire and Gwytherin in Denbighshire in north-east Wales. Thomas Pennant was educated at Valle Crucis and became Abbot of Basingwerk (c. 1481–1522). He is praised in Welsh poetry for erecting the current Perpendicular well chapel at Holywell in honour of Gwenfrewy and one can imagine that the monks at Basingwerk would certainly have

³⁰ Pen 27ii 92.26–7 §2. Another copying error occurs in Pen 27ii 99.5 when the scribe begins the line with 'gan gostvriaw' repeating the initial 'g' found in the previous word rather than noting 'gan dostvriaw' (sympathizing). The verb occurs twice in the same sentence in Pen 27ii, but the repetition is avoided in Llst 34 and Pen 225. Of course, scribes also make errors when translating.

been familiar with her legend and keen to promote her status.³¹ The only versions to actually name Basingwerk in connection with Gwenfrewy are John of Tynemouth's fourteenth-century Latin version of the Life which later circulated as part of the *Legenda Nova Anglie* and the fourteenth-century Lansdowne composite *vita*. These Lives acknowledge Basingwerk's particular interest in the saint and the abbey's ownership of the well in that period although neither of these *vitae* were produced there.³² All other connections between the manuscripts and Basingwerk can only be surmised.

Relatively little work has been undertaken on medieval Welsh dialect and far more work in this area is needed.³³ The orthography of a number of words in Pen 27ii suggests that the scribe was adapting his text into the language that was familiar to him and that he was spelling words as he heard them. So in addition to the predominantly north-Walian terms 'genthi', 'ganthaw', 'ganthunt' and 'arnaddvnt', *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* in Pen 27ii also includes words such as 'dyallt', 'gadel', 'ddowad', 'diwaytha' and 'eisde' (north-east Walian perhaps rather than the more Gwynedd-orientated 'eisda'), as well as 3rd pl. conjugated prepositions ending in *-ynt* ('idoynt', 'vddynt', 'drosynt'), a feature which originated in the north east according to Sims-Williams.³⁴ Pen 27ii also includes some words derived from English such as 'serkl' (instead of 'kylch' for circle) and 'rwol' (instead of 'rheol' for rule). The other saints' Lives that occur in Pen 27ii (David and Mary Magdalene) do not initially appear to betray a north-Walian bias, but Jenny Day has shown in her discussion in the present volume that Beuno was unusually given a cameo role in the Pen 27ii *Buchedd Dewi* and the author was clearly not familiar with some of the

³¹ Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity*, 73–4. On the history and development of the well chapel, see R. Turner, 'The architecture, patronage and date of St Winefride's Well, Holywell and the "Stanley Churches"', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 169 (2020), 245–75. It is likely that Thomas Pennant or his son Nicholas Pennant is depicted on one of the bosses on the well chapel ceiling.

³² See F. Marzella, ed. and trans., *Vita Sancte Wenefrede* (John of Tynemouth), at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (forthcoming), and *VSW* (Lansdowne 436), §4.

³³ There are numerous valuable articles, for example, P. W. Thomas, 'Middle Welsh dialects: problems and perspectives', *BBCS* 40 (1993), 17–50, D. Willis, 'Lexical diffusion in Middle Welsh: the distribution of /j/ in the law texts', *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 9.1 (2005), 105–33, P. Sims-Williams, 'Variation in Middle Welsh conjugated prepositions; chronology, register and dialect', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 111.1 (2013), 1–50. However, there is nothing to compare with *eLALME* which considers linguistic variation in written English in over 1,000 medieval texts.

³⁴ Sims-Williams, 'Variation', 19, 44. As Ann Parry Owen notes in her discussion of language and dialect in the poetry of the Anglesey poet Gruffudd ap Maredudd, one cannot, of course, assume that words that are now believed to be north Walian or south Walian in spoken Modern Welsh were also only associated with north or south Wales in Middle Welsh (*GGMD* III, 13). For a discussion of some of the possible oral forms of Welsh associated with three north-eastern manuscripts that preserve the poetry of Guto'r Glyn (i.e. Pen 127, NLW 17114B and C5.167 – e.g. 'rinwedde' which also occurs in Pen 27ii *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*), see <gutorglyn.net>, poem 104, textual notes.

place- and river-names in south Wales: he leaves a gap where Henllan (Ceredigion) should be noted and this is stated as ‘Henllan yn Arfon’ in the corresponding text in Llst 34 and Pen 225.³⁵ Thus, in the Pen 27ii version of *Buchedd Dewi* Henllan moves north, and this is either meant to be the same Henllan (Denbighshire) that features in *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* as the place where she meets St Sadwrn or perhaps Henllan in the parish of Llannor (Caernarfonshire), closer to Arfon. While the biblical figure Mary Magdalene, on first impressions, might not strike one as a saint associated with north-east Wales, her church and holy well at Cerrig-y-drudion in Denbighshire were likely to have been known to the author. She features in *Buchedd Ieuan Gwas Padrig*, another north-Walian saint and one of the few native saints whose Welsh *buchedd* is preserved in Welsh in Llst 34.³⁶

When we compare all versions of the Welsh *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* it is clear that Llst 104 is an eighteenth-century copy of Llst 34. Moses Williams (1688–1742) must have had possession of Llst 34 at some point for he compiled an index to the manuscript and his amanuensis copied *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* almost word-for-word into Llst 104, altering only the orthography. For this reason, the remainder of the discussion will focus on the other three Welsh manuscripts. Pen 27ii, Pen 225 and Llst 34 have a complex relationship and, for the vast majority of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*, Pen 225 compiled by Thomas Wiliems of Trefriw, Caernarvonshire, 1594–1610 mirrors the syntax and vocabulary of Pen 27ii more closely than it does Llst 34. Roger Morris of Coedytalwrn, Denbighshire was, like Thomas Wiliems, a recusant, and both men not only knew each other but were close associates.³⁷ Roger Morris appears more willing to adapt and modernize the vocabulary of the *buchedd* although he does not always do this consistently. Table 1 below provides a brief selection of variants that demonstrate the similarity between Pen 27ii and Pen 225 and Roger Morris’s attempts to alter the vocabulary and perhaps make the text more easily understood.

Llst 34 frequently omits the preverbal particle ‘ry’ when it is employed in Pen 27ii and Pen 225 in the perfect, imperfect and pluperfect tense: for example, ‘ry wnaythoydd’ (Pen 27ii), ‘ry wnaethoedh’ (Pen 225) and ‘a wnaethoedd’ (Llst 34). While the particle was commonly used in the earlier medieval period, Evans notes that its usage ‘greatly declined during the fourteenth century’.³⁸ Although the particle is omitted in Llst 34 in the vast

³⁵ J. Day, ‘The later Lives of St David in NLW MSS Peniarth 27ii, Llanstephan 34 and Peniarth 225’, Chapter 6 above, 132–3, 137.

³⁶ J. Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Ieuan Gwas Padrig*, at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (forthcoming).

³⁷ Huws, *Repertory*: see ‘Wiliems, Thomas’, ‘Morris, Roger’, ‘Peniarth 27ii’ and ‘Peniarth 225’. Thomas Wiliems preserved some of Roger Morris’s lost texts in London, BL, MS Add. 31055.

³⁸ D. Simon Evans, *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* (Dublin, 1964), §185.

Pen 27ii	Llst 34	Pen 225
gigle	glywas	gigleu
anryveddawd	anrhydedd	anryuedhawt
addwyn	da	adhwyn
ysgrvbl	anifeiliaid	yscrybyl
dyhvddaw	distewi	dyhudhaw
o'r naill barth	o'r naill du	o'r naill barth
ac yn yr ymryson ysbrydawl hwnnw	ac yn yr amser hwnnw	ac yn yr ymrysson ysprytawl
hoycl	hwedel	hoedl
llawenhav	llywenydd	llawenhau

Table 1. Selected variants in the versions of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*

majority of the cases where it occurs in Pen 27ii and Pen 225, Roger Morris does not consistently modernize the text and four examples of the preverbal particle 'ry' are preserved in *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*.³⁹ Its frequent usage in Pen 27ii and Pen 225 does not allow us to date the *buchedd*, but it suggests that the texts are most likely drawing on an exemplar that pre-dates the fifteenth century. However, another linguistic feature that is sometimes used to suggest a pre-fourteenth-century date for Middle Welsh texts is not employed in any of the extant Welsh versions of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*. None of the Welsh manuscript versions contain any examples of the third person preterite ending '-wys' which Rodway has shown to have been largely replaced by '-awdd' in the fourteenth century.⁴⁰ Both Pen 27ii and Llst 34 have a tendency to modernize third person endings and alter '-awdd' to '-odd', but neither do this consistently: Pen 27ii preserves '-awdd' in 58% of these verb endings and in Llst 34 this rises to 76% (though, of course, the two texts are not directly comparable since Llst 34 also contains the account of the translation of the relics). Interestingly, in the version of *Buchedd Dewi* that occurs in Pen 27ii '-awdd' has been changed to '-odd' 93% of the time and '-awdd' is only allowed to creep in on three occasions.⁴¹ The Llst 34 version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* demonstrates that the compiler is more keen to modernize the text for his audience

³⁹ 'rygawsei' §1, 'ryroddi' §4, 'rygaphael' §6 and 'rywrandaw' §28.

⁴⁰ S. Rodway, *Dating Medieval Welsh Literature: Evidence from the Verbal System* (Aberystwyth, 2013), 163–5; *id.*, 'The where, who, when and why of medieval prose texts: some methodological considerations', *Studia Celtica* 41 (2007), 47–89.

⁴¹ See J. Day, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Dewi*, at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/>. Thomas Wiliems uses '-awdh' in 3 person preterite endings in his Pen 225 version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*, employing 'dh' for 'dd'. Roger Morris adopted a system of underdotting, e.g. 'd' for 'dd', 'l' for 'll', 'u' for 'w'. I have replaced the underdotting in my edition of Llst 34.

than is the compiler of the same *buchedd* in Pen 27ii, including adapting verb endings.

Not only are Pen 27ii and Pen 225 similar in their vocabulary but their phraseology and the level of detail that they convey means that, in many passages, they more closely reflect Prior Robert's Latin *vita*, as preserved in Laud Misc. 114, than does the version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* found in Llŷst 34. One notable example we can use to illustrate this is the section in which Beuno emerges from the church where he is saying mass to curse Caradog and punish him for decapitating Gwenfrewy.

Laud Misc. 114

Preemptor uero illius adhuc iuxta exanime corpus tumidus foris assistens, gladium suum cruore uirginis madidum cunctis aspicientibus *per herbam* detergebat...His dictis, iuuenis ilico ad terram corruens expirauit. Mirumque dictu, in conspectu omnium astantium corpus defuncti *liquefactum* disparuit, multis asseuerantibus tellure dehiscente absortum fuisse, et cum spiritu suo in baratro demersum.

But her killer, still standing by the dead body outside, swollen by pride, was wiping his sword, drenched in the blood of the virgin, *on the grass*... These things being said, the youth, falling to the ground there and then, breathed his last. And, amazing to say, in the sight of everyone standing nearby, the body of the dead man vanished, having *melting*, with many affirming that it had been engulfed by the gaping ground and sunk with his spirit in the pit of darkness.⁴²

Pen 27ii

A'r gwr a'i lladdasai yn sevyll yn grelon lidioc eto yn emyl y gelain ac yn sychv i gledde gwaydlyd yngwydd pawb *ar y llysiev*... A'r awr i dyvod ef hynny, i digwyddawdd y gwas i'r llawr yn allmarw. A ffeth rryvedd yngwydd pawb, myned y korff *yn llyn tawdd* a'i lyngkv o'r ddayar ef a myned i enaid i vffern.⁴³

And the man who had killed her standing cruelly and angrily near the body wiping his bloody sword in front of everyone *on the grass*... And the moment he said this, the youth fell to the ground stone dead. And a wondrous thing in front of everyone [was that] the body became a *molten lake* and the earth swallowed him and his soul went to hell.

Pen 225

A'r gwr a'e lhadhassei yn seuylh yn greulawn litioc etto, ac yn sychu ei cledhyf gwaetlyt yngwydh pawb *ar y llysieu*... A'r awr y dyweit ef hynny, digwydh o'r gwas y'r lhawr yn alhmarw. A pheth rhyuedh

⁴² *VSW* §4.

⁴³ Pen 27ii 97.26–98.1–15 §4.

yn gwydh pawb mynet y corph yn *lhydd tawdh* a'e lyncu o'r dhaear ef a mynet ygyt a'e eneit y uphern.⁴⁴

And the man who had killed her still standing cruelly and angrily, wiping his bloody sword in front of everyone *on the grass*... And the moment he said this, the youth fell to the ground stone dead. And a wondrous thing in front of everyone [was that] the body became a *molten lake* and the earth swallowed it and it went together with his soul to hell.

Llst 34

A'r gwr a'y lladdassai yn sevyll yn greulon lidioc yn emyl y corph ac yn sychu y gleddyf gwaedlyd yngwydd pawb... A'r awr y dywad ef hynny, y llynckawdd y ddayar ef a myned y enaid a'y gorph y vphern.

And the man who had killed her standing cruelly and angrily near the body wiping his bloody sword in front of everyone... And the moment he said this, the earth swallowed him, and his soul and his body went to hell.⁴⁵

Llst 34 omits the detail that Caradog insolently wiped his bloody sword *on the grass* and that his body *melted* before being swallowed by the earth. Pen 27ii and Pen 225, on the other hand, include these details which are also found in the Latin text. Examples of this are too numerous to list here, but by modernizing and abbreviating the text, the author of the Llst 34 version moves one step further away from the Latin original. Of course, overall, the Llst 34 text is more complete, since it includes the *translatio*, so in this respect it better reflects the Latin original.

Roger Morris's willingness to adapt the *buchedd* means that occasionally he misinterprets the text, provides a slightly alternative interpretation, or simply introduces errors.⁴⁶ When Beuno reveals to Gwenfrewy's parents that a divine spirit has *secretly* urged him to settle near them, 'dan gel' (secretly, covertly) occurs in both Pen 27ii and Pen 225 which corresponds to the Latin 'latenter', but this phrase is reinterpreted in Llst 34 as a noun 'angel' – the divine spirit of an angel – and there is no suggestion that this is carried out covertly.⁴⁷ In all versions of the *buchedd* when Caradog catches up with Gwenfrewy after she has fled from her parents' house he speaks to her and tells her that he once loved her. His admission is somewhat unexpected since he appears to have called at her house as a stranger and, thus far in the narrative there has been no indication that he has ever met Gwenfrewy before. Whereas in Pen 27ii and Pen 225 he fixes his gaze on her roughly and savagely 'edrych yn graff arw

⁴⁴ Pen 225 276.14–34 §4.

⁴⁵ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §4.

⁴⁶ Of course, when I refer to Roger Morris throughout it is also possible that the author of his Welsh source introduced these changes.

⁴⁷ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §1 and *VSW* §1.

anhugar' before he murders her, in Llst 34 Caradog addresses her in a loving or amicable fashion ('anhugar' is altered to 'hygar'):

Llst 34

a dywedud wrthi yn hygar fal hynn: 'Kynn no hynn y kerais i dy di, ac y damunais ymwasgu a thi, a thithau yn pho rhagof. A'r awr honn, yn lle gwir, gwybydd di oni byddi di vn a mi o'th vodd, y lleddir dy benn a'r cleddyf hwnn.'

and he spoke to her affectionately like this: 'Before now I loved you, and I wished to embrace you, and you fled from me. And now, truth be told, know that if you will not be one with me willingly, your head will be cut off with this sword.'⁴⁸

This could simply be a copying error or it could have been deliberately altered because of the incongruous nature of the address. Does he address her affectionately when he mentions that he previously felt he loved her or is it incongruous that he addresses her affectionately when in the next sentence he threatens to cut off her head?

In the middle of §11, Pen 27ii and Pen 225 (again like the Latin text) note that when all of Gwenfrewy's companions have passed away, she grows to hate ('kassav') Holywell and thus moves on. The reference is not meant to be disparaging since it has been pre-ordained that Gwenfrewy will leave Holywell after seven years, but it is possible that Roger Morris felt that the verb was inappropriate and, not wishing to cast Holywell in a negative light, he altered this to 'cophau' (memorialise, commemorate): instead of hating the location of her first convent Gwenfrewy commemorates the place before she moves on.

One further example of how the text in Llst 34 is abbreviated and two sentences joined which leads to an alternative interpretation of the narrative is found at the end of §16 which describes Theon's particular fondness for Gwenfrewy. In Llst 34 Abbess Theon is described as preferring Gwenfrewy to her own son Eleri and his brothers:

Llst 34

Ac er daed genthi bob vn o'r gweryddon, mwy oedd genthi hi Wennvrewy nac Eleri a'i frodyr hefyd.

And as fond as she was of every one of the virgins, she preferred Gwenfrewy to Eleri and his brothers too.⁴⁹

Comparison with Pen 27ii, Pen 225 and the Latin *vita*, however, suggests that Roger Morris (or his source) has misinterpreted the start of the next chapter (§17) and the sentence that originally described Eleri and his

⁴⁸ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* § 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, §16.

brothers performing penance in a different section of the monastery. The Peniarth manuscripts, like the Latin text, make it clear that this is a double monastery and that Eleri and the monks live in a separate part of the abbey to the women. This important detail is lost in the Llŷt 34 version of the text.

Pen 225

[...]a chyt bai mawr ei hamgeledh hi am bob rhai o'r gwryfon, digrifaf hagen oedh genthi hi gytimeithas Gwenvrewy a mwyaŷ y parchei.

§17 Eleri ynteu a oedh a'e gyturotyr a discyplion yn penytiaŷ vwchlaw hynny.⁵⁰

[...] and although her care for all of the virgins was great, she found Gwenfrewy's company the most entertaining and respected her the most.

§17 Eleri was with his fellow brethren and disciples performing penance above there.

This particular section of text occurs in a portion of Pen 27ii where parts of the manuscript have been nibbled by rodents, but enough words and snatches of phrases exist to see that the full text is reflected in Pen 225.⁵¹ For this reason, Pen 225 is a far more valuable text than it might first appear, since it can, in many places, provide us with an almost identical version of the text that would once have existed in the earliest extant manuscript.

Fragments from the bottom of each page in Pen 27ii are missing throughout and although this does not significantly affect the main body of the text in the first half of the *buchedd*, from page 109 onwards several lines at the bottom of each page are either missing or fragmentary and in the final three pages the text deteriorates further with fragments missing from both the top and the bottom of each of the pages. Episodes which can be read in Pen 225 in full that would otherwise be lost because of damage to the Pen 27ii manuscript include: (i) the section in which Gwenfrewy explains to Eleri that she has not been sent by God to bury him and predicts that his mother Theon will die first of all, and that she (i.e. Gwenfrewy herself) will then pass away; he will be required to bury both his mother and Gwenfrewy and he will end his days in peace (§18); (ii) the section in which Gwenfrewy falls ill and calls Eleri to her so that she can provide him with instructions regarding her funeral and how she wishes to be buried next to his mother's body; also how she passed away on 3 November (§22); (iii) details concerning how Eleri later dies and is buried in his own church, the location of many miracles to this day (§22). Transcripts of the surviving fragments in Pen 27ii alongside transcriptions from Pen 225, strongly suggest that, in these sections of the manuscript, Pen 27ii resembled the

⁵⁰ Pen 225 290.30–3 §§16–17.

⁵¹ Compare Pen 27ii 114.23–6, 115.1 and Pen 225 290.30–3 in the transcriptions.

wording found in Pen 225 although it is possible that the Pen 225 text may have been slightly longer.

The authors of the versions in both Pen 27ii and Llst 34 tend to abbreviate although they sometimes do this in different ways. While the author of Pen 27ii tends to omit phrases, sentences or short sections, Roger Morris more freely adapts the sentence structure, omitting superfluous doublets or unnecessary details in Llst 34, as well as occasionally omitting short sections: for this reason the phraseology of the versions of Pen 27ii and Pen 225 often reflects the Latin phraseology more closely and, as we have seen, these manuscript versions preserve more details in the episodes they include.⁵²

Where Pen 27ii abbreviates, often by shortening or omissions, Pen 225 regularly provides superior readings that more closely resemble the contents of Prior Robert's *vita*. In §2, for example, Pen 27ii omits a few sentences that explain how the devil was drawn to Gwenfrewy because of her beautiful countenance and shapely body and how he was angered since his power in Wales was growing weaker because of Gwenfrewy, so he set out to destroy her. In Pen 225 this is recounted in full in a similar fashion to Laud Misc. 114 and the same explanation, in a slightly abbreviated form, occurs in Llst 34. However, the narrative in Pen 27ii moves straight to the tension of the section in which Gwenfrewy remains at home alone on the day Caradog calls at the house (§3) and the author of this version obviously felt that the preamble setting the scene with reference to the devil's evil intentions was not necessary.

When Caradog boasts that he is so wealthy he can look after Gwenfrewy, Pen 27ii (like Pen 225) renders this to: 'gallaf dy ddiwallu di a'th *osymweithiaw* o olud ac anrhydedd'⁵³ (I can satisfy and maintain you in riches and honour), but Llanstephan 34 omits '*osymweithiaw*' and simplifies this: 'gallaf i dy ddiwallu di o olud ac anrhydedd' (I can satisfy you with riches and honour).⁵⁴ Again when Beuno prepares to leave Gwenfrewy (§7) both Pen 27ii and Pen 225 list who will receive physical and spiritual benefits: 'ac i kaiff pawb yma les enaid a chorff, a gwr a gwraic, a hen a iyvank, hyd yn oyd yr ysgrvbl a gaffant wared yn y lle hwnn' (And everyone here will benefit in spirit and body, both man and wife, and old and young, even animals will be healed in this place); whereas in Llst 34 the list of pairs is omitted, the text simplified and

⁵² Of course, the text is much shorter in Pen 27ii because it contains only §1–22 of the *vita*.

⁵³ Pen 27ii 95.25–6 §3.

⁵⁴ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §3. The Latin text in Laud Misc. 114 also refers to riches and honour although the phraseology is different: 'Regis me filium esse non ignoras, diuitiis et honoribus multis refertum, te etiam affluenter locupletaturum, si mee petitioni assentire uolueris.' ('You are not unaware that I am the king's son, abundant in riches and many honours, and that I will also enrich you copiously if you want to agree to my request.') *VSW* §3.

‘ysgrvbl’ modernized: ‘ef a gaiph dynion ac anifeiliaid wared yn y lle hwinn’ (people and animals will be healed in this place). Occasionally Llst 34 improves the narrative by increasing the pace of the story and omitting superfluous details. One example of this is that Roger Morris does not feel it necessary to explain that Gwenfrewy no longer sent Beuno a cassock every year after he had died. Llst 34 thus avoids stating the obvious and focuses the audience’s attention on the death of Beuno; whereas Pen 27ii, Pen 225 and the Latin *vita* note that ‘she did not send the aforementioned gift anymore’ (§11).

Although Pen 225, for the most part, resembles the phraseology of Pen 27ii more frequently than it does Llst 34, this is curiously not true of every section. In §12 all three of the Welsh versions narrate the same episode which occurs in the church and cemetery of St Dier at Bodfari. Thieves steal two horses from the cemetery and the owners hold a candle-lit vigil in the church beseeching Gwenfrewy that their animals be returned. In the meantime, the thieves believe they have travelled a long way from the church, but they have merely encircled the churchyard and been led back to the place where they started. Caught red-handed holding the horses’ reins outside the church, they are allowed to go free without punishment and the horses are returned to their rightful owners. The expression and phraseology in this particular episode is substantially different in Pen 27ii and Llst 34 although both describe the same events and, on this occasion, Pen 225 mirrors the wording in Llst 34 not Pen 27ii:

Pen 27ii

Ac val i may yn mynegi, yr oydd ladron yn lladrata. Ac i doythant i vonwent y bendi[g]edic Ddier i ddwyn dav varch yn lladrad o’r vonwent. Ac y doythant perchynogion y meirch i’r lle i gadowsynt y meirch ac nis kawsant, a gwybod i dwyn yn lladrad. Ac i doythant y’w llety ac a wnaythant ganhwyllav ac a aythant i’r eglwys y bendigedic gonffesor ac a’i roysant ar yr allor.⁵⁵

And as it is reported, there were thieves thieving. And they came to the cemetery of the blessed Dier to take two horses by theft from the cemetery. And the owners of the horses came to the place they had left the horses and they did not find them, and knew they had been taken by theft. And they came to their lodgings and they made candles and they went to the church of the blessed confessor and they placed them on the altar.

Pen 225

Lhatron gynt a aethent hyt ymynwent Dier, y sanct a dhywetpwynt vchot, ac a gawssant deu varch yno, ac a’e dugant. A’r gwyr oedh berchennocion ar y meirch a dhaethant y geissiauw eu meirch yn y lle gadawssant. Ac wedy nas cawssant, wynt a wybuant eu ry dhwyn yn lhatrat. A mynet

⁵⁵ Pen 27ii 109.8–14 §12.

adref a orugant a duyn canhwylheu ganthunt a chyrchu y'r eccluys a dodu eu canhwylheu ar yr alhawr.⁵⁶

Thieves previously went to the cemetery of Dier, the above-mentioned saint, and they found two horses there and they took them. And the men who owned the horses came to fetch their horses in the place they had left them. And having not found them, they knew that they had been taken by theft. And they went home and took candles with them and set out for the church and placed their candles on the altar.

Llst 34

A lladronn gynt a aethant hyd ymynwent Ddier, y sant a ddywetpwyd vchod, ac a gawssant ddeu farch yno ac a'i dugant. A'r gwyr y bioedd y meirch a ddoethant y geissaw y meirch yn y lle y gadawssent. Ac wedu nas cawsant, hwynt y gwybuant y dwyn yn lledrad. A myned adref a orugant a dwyn canhwylle ganthun a chyrchu y'r eglwys a dodu y canhwylle ar yr allor.

And thieves previously went to the cemetery of Dier, the above-mentioned saint, and they found two horses there and they took them. And the men who owned the horses came to fetch the horses in the place they had left them. And having not found them, they knew that they had been taken by theft. And they went home and took candles with them and set out for the church and placed the candles on the altar.⁵⁷

When Eleri makes a long speech to the virgins introducing Gwenfrewy in §15, Pen 225 again reflects the wording found in Llst 34 rather than Pen 27ii and the two versions in this episode (like the previous one involving the horses) read like two independent translations:

Pen 27ii

'Bid ych ywyllys chwi yn vvydd i'r gyredic verch honn. Gosdyngedigayth Duw y sydd ir arddangos yn drvgaoc i chwi gimint ac i may hi yn ych golevo chwi drwy olevni ysbrydol; wely val i llywadraythodd Duw y verch ysbrydol eiddo ef i drigaw ac i vyw gida nyni. A chwithe kymerwch axsiampl o'i bywyd hi a chwi a vyddwch

⁵⁶ Pen 225 286.2–9 §12.

⁵⁷ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §12. Cf. the Latin text in Laud Misc. 114: *Fures quidam, ad latrocinandum exeuntes, in cimiterio beati Deiferi duos inuenerunt equos. Quos secum educentes, libere se illos abituros fore sperauerunt. Domini uero illorum ad cimiterium in quo eos deposuerant uenientes, et non illos ibidem repperientes, furto ablato cognouerunt. Ad hospitiaque reuersi, candelas fecerunt, atque ecclesiam sanctissimi confessoris ingressi, super altare illas posuerunt* (VSW §12). (Certain thieves, going out to loot, found two horses in the cemetery of blessed Diheufyr. Leading these out with them, they expected that they were about to have them free. But the masters of those horses, coming to the cemetery in which they had left them and not finding them there, knew that they had been taken away by theft. And having returned to the lodgings, they made candles, and, having entered the church of the most holy confessor, they placed them upon the altar.)

ddedddvolach yngwasanayth Duw. A chwi a gewch mwy o obrwy yn y nef. Hon yw Gwenfrewy, yr honn i klowsoch yn y blayn i hanrriedd, yr honn a ddirmygodd overedd y byd a'i salwedd ac a oddevodd blinder ir mwyn i diweirdeb ac yn y diwedd, ir kadwedigayth ar i gweryndawd, a ddiodevawdd yn llawen dori i ffenn a marw, yr h[o]nn i may i gwyrthiav yn golevo kwbl o'r eglwys a thrwyddi hi y llywenha y wlad honn.⁵⁸

'May your will be obedient to this kind girl. God's condescension is to demonstrate mercifully to you how much she enlightens you via divine light; behold how God guided the spiritual girl belonging to him to reside and live with us. And take her life as an exemplar and you will be more devout in God's service. And you will receive greater reward in heaven. This is Gwenfrewy, she whose honour you have heard about previously, who spurned worldly frivolity and its sordidness and who suffered persecution for the sake of her chastity, and in the end, for the preservation of her virginity, joyously suffered decapitation and death, she whose miracles light up the whole of the church and through whom this region rejoices.'

Pen 225

'Bydhwch lawen, hyuryt hygaraf verchet, canys maur wyrthiawc yw ynn maint y goleuni a ynnawdd dwyuawl drugaredd y dywynnu arnawch chwi. Lhyma,' eb ef, 'y dhiheuyt, dyuot y wry honn attawch y drigaw ac y vuchedhoccau y gyt a chwi vegys y boch diwydiach yngwasanaeth dwyuawl o'e buchedh hi a'e hangreiff, ac y capho hitheu dâl gan Dhuw am ych dyscu chwithe. Lhyma,' eb ef, 'Wenfrewy, y vorwyn y clywsoch lhawer y wrthi a dremygawdh gynt amynhyedh a bygwth y neb a'e gordherchawdh ac yn y diwedd, er cadw y diweirdeb, a dhewisawdh lhadh y phenn.'⁵⁹

'Be joyful, lovely most amiable girls, for the extent of the light which divine mercy has deigned to shine on you is highly miraculous to us. Here,' he said, 'is his earnest desire, that this virgin come to you to reside and live with you so that you may be more devout in divine service as a result of her life and her example, and that she may receive payment from God for teaching you. This,' he said, 'is Gwenfrewy, the virgin about whom you have heard a great deal who previously scorned the flattery and intimidation of the one who wanted to have sexual intercourse with her and in the end, in order to preserve her chastity, chose decapitation.'

Llst 34

'Byddwch lawen, hyfryd hygaraf ferched, canys mawr wrthiawc yw in faint y goleuni a fynawdd dwyfawl drigaredd Dduw y dywynnu arnawch chwi. Llyma,' heb ef, 'y ddiawy[dd]ys wry honn [a ddoeth]

⁵⁸ Pen 27ii 113.11–21 §15.

⁵⁹ Pen 225 289.18–29 §15.

attawch y drigaw ac y vucheddockau gyda chwi megis y boch diwidiach yn guassanaethu Duw a'i buchedd hi a'i help, ac y capho hithau dâl gan Dduw am ych dysgu. Llyma,' heb ef, 'Wennvrewy, y vorwyn a glywsoch lawer o i wrthi a ddirmygawdd gynt am hedd⁶⁰ a bygwth y neb a fynnassei y gordderchu, ac yn y diwedd, er cadw y diweirdeb, a ddewissawdd dorri i phenn.'

'Be joyful, lovely most amiable girls, for the extent of the light which the divine mercy of God has deigned to shine on you is highly miraculous to us. Here,' he said, 'this virgin devotedly [comes] to you to reside and live with you so that you may be more devout in divine service with her life and her help, and that she may receive payment from God for teaching you. This', he said, 'is Gwenfrewy, the virgin about whom you have heard a great deal who previously scorned for peace the intimidation of the one who wanted to have sexual intercourse with her and in the end, in order to preserve her chastity, chose decapitation.'⁶¹

In Pen 225 and Llŷt 34 Gwenfrewy is described as having received the palm of martyrdom (omitted in Pen 27ii) and the signs of her triumphant martyrdom 'ymdywynnygu'r ecclwys ac yr wlat honn' (light up the Church and this country). 'ymdywynnygu' in Pen 225 has been underlined and 'goleuo' noted in the margin by Thomas Wiliems.⁶² Since 'goleuo' rather than 'ymdywynnygu' is the word used in Pen 27ii at this point, Thomas Wiliems is clearly comparing the two versions, but is he drawing on both

⁶⁰ Roger Morris appears to have miscopied 'amynhyedd' (flattery) here and misinterpreted this as 'am hedd' (for peace).

⁶¹ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* 15. Cf. The Latin text in Laud Misc. 114: '*Animis estote attentiores, karissime filie. Est enim opereprecium uobis insinuare, quanto splendore uos illustrare dignata est misericorditer diuina clementia. Ecce hanc deuotam sibi uirginem ad commanendum uobis et conuiuendum destinauit, quatinus, inspecta uita eius, exemplis illius in Dei famulatu deuotiores efficiamini, et ipsi pro melioratione uestra in celis detur retributio. Hec est illa uirgo Wenefreda cuius ad aures uestras iam olim preclara conuolauit fama, que ne castitatis sue detrimentum pateretur, persecutorum infestationes simul et blandientium lenocinia contempsit, atque ad ultimum pro uirginitate sue custodia, abscisione capitis mori libenter elegit. Hec est, inquam, illa, cuius triumphus insignia late per ecclesiam emicant, et cuius titulus omnis ista prouincia magno se donari bono gloriatur.*' ('Be more persistent in your hearts, dearest daughters. For it is necessary to tell you with what brilliance divine clemency has mercifully deigned to enlighten you. Behold he has sent this virgin devoted to him to dwell and live together with you so that, having observed her life, you will be made more devout in God's service by her examples, and so that a reward should be given in heavens to herself because of your improvement. This is that virgin Winefride whose outstanding fame has for a long time now hastened to your ears, who, in case she should suffer the loss of her chastity, disdained the vexations of persecutors as well as the allures of flatterers, and, for the preservation of her virginity to the end, she chose willingly to die by the severing of her head. This is her, I say, whose signs of triumph spring forth widely through the church, and on account of her distinctions all that province exults that it is endowed with a great good.')

⁶² Pen 225 289.30. It is also possible that he has added 'goleuo' in order to explain the meaning of the word, but see the discussion below on 'glybu' and 'yMhotfarri'.

Pen 27ii and Llst 34 to create his superior version in Pen 225? Occasionally when phrases or sentences are omitted in Pen 27ii and found in Llst 34 they are also reflected in Pen 225 and when Llst 34 omits short sections found in Pen 27ii, Pen 225 includes these too.

Thomas Wiliems, author of the Latin-Welsh dictionary *Thesaurus linguae Latinae et Cambrobrytannicae*, was clearly capable of producing his own translations of Latin texts, for example ‘Lhyvran o’r sacrafen o benyd’, the recusant tract he translated that is referred to in NLW MS 3561.⁶³ Occasionally a Latin word is noted in the marginalia of Pen 225 and this is the only manuscript version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* to include ‘Verbum dei air Duw’ in both Latin and Welsh.⁶⁴ This section of §10 that describes Gwenfrewy’s miraculous abilities to persuade and influence the Welsh population so that they would avoid sin is one of the sections excised in Llst 34, but included in a briefer format in Pen 27ii and a slightly expanded version in Pen 225 that nevertheless is less wordy than the Latin version.

As tempting as it is to come to the conclusion that Thomas Wiliems is producing his own version of the *buchedd* drawing on both Pen 27ii and Llst 34, this is clearly not the case for even when his text mirrors the phraseology of Llst 34, as in the episode involving the stolen horses, his use of language displays the same traits as the rest of his text. So for example, Pen 225 will note the more archaic ‘ry dhyuot’, ‘ry dhugessit’, ‘orugant’ and ‘caphel’, while Llst 34 has ‘wedi dyfod’, ‘a ddygessid’ ‘wnaethant’ and ‘cael’. Nor would Wiliems have any incentive to fake Middle Welsh if he were producing his own translation directly from Latin c. 1594–1610. It is far more likely that Thomas Wiliems is faithfully copying a version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* that predates Pen 27ii but is no longer extant, a version that may have been more faithful to the Latin original and preserved more detail than the surviving copy of the Latin text in Laud Misc. 114 but may also have been incomplete or imperfect in parts, for, as we shall see, Pen 225 along with the other Welsh manuscripts are interesting from the point of view of omissions as well as additions.

As Daniel Huws notes: ‘in copying manuscripts, Wiliems was accurate and eclectic’.⁶⁵ In Pen 225 Wiliems records that his versions of the Lives of Beuno, David and Mary Magdalene are copied from an old authoritative book written on parchment that he estimated was about two hundred years

⁶³ Huws, *Repertory*, ‘Wiliems, Thomas’; G. Bowen, ‘“Lhyuran or Sacrauen o Benyd”, Thomas Wiliems o Drefriw (un o weithiau defosiynol reciwsantiaid Cymru)’, *CLIGC* 13 (1963–4), 300–5.

⁶⁴ Pen 225 284.19. Laud Misc. 114 has ‘diuini uerbi’ at this point (*VSW* §10) which either suggests that Thomas Wiliems is drawing on a different Latin version that is no longer extant or that he is merely adding a familiar Latin phrase. His is also the only version to include ‘die Calan gaeaf’ Pen 225 295.12 (§22), for ‘dydd Calan gaeaf’ 1 November and he Latinizes terms such as ‘ecclwys’ (church).

⁶⁵ Huws, *Repertory*, ‘Wiliems, Thomas’.

old, i.e. c. 1398.⁶⁶ Unfortunately he does not provide the same note on his version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*: although it is certainly plausible that the Life of Gwenfrewy may have been adapted into Welsh around the same time, it cannot be stated with certainty. In addition to the gloss ‘goleuo’ found in the margins of Pen 225 and the main body of Pen 27ii, Wiliems also has a gloss elsewhere, ‘glybu’ with ‘gigleu’⁶⁷ (he heard) underlined in the text, that does not correspond to either Pen 27ii or Llst 34 at this point in the text and, therefore, ‘glybu’ appears to refer to yet another version of the *buchedd*. It is certainly plausible that there were slightly different versions of the text circulating. While it is also possible that Wiliems is providing his own explanatory gloss on the more archaic form here, I feel this is unlikely since, elsewhere in the *buchedd*, he includes ‘Mhotyuarry’ in the margin where he notes the place name (Bottyuarry) correctly in his narrative as ‘yMottyuarry’ applying the spirant mutation after the preposition: thus, becomes <M> in Pen 225; whereas in Llst 34 is incorrectly nasalized as though it were <P> ‘yMhotfarri’ and Wiliems notes this incorrect variant in the margin which, once again, suggests he is comparing versions.⁶⁸

Having narrated *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §§1–22, Wiliems temporarily suspends the story midsentence at the start of §23 which is an episode that praises Holywell, the first place associated with Gwenfrewy (‘y llye cyntaf ynteu y...’). Here the text would normally recount a series of miracles involving various healings and punishments for theft that took place at the church and well (§§23–28). Several blank lines are left on page 296, along with an empty leaf and a further gap for approximately the first third of page 298, as though Wiliems intended to return to this section and fill in the gaps at a future date. The narrative then somewhat disjointedly continues with an account of how the seven who had journeyed to Gwytherin came to the place where Gwenfrewy’s body lay (§31). Prior Robert is described as ‘y prior a dhywetpwynt vchot’ (the aforementioned prior), but since he has not been introduced before in Pen 225 due to the missing text, this is confusing. Pen 225 then continues (§§31–35) and ends with the episode in which a man who hacks at an oak tree in the cemetery at Gwytherin with an axe loses the use of his arm as a punishment. This is again followed by one and a half empty leaves. Having begun the account

⁶⁶ Pen 225 242, 252, 259. On this version of the Life of David, see Day, ‘The later Lives of St David’, above 142–6.

⁶⁷ Pen 225 272.28.

⁶⁸ Pen 225 285.28 ‘ymottyuarry’, Llst 34 211.27 ‘ym Hotfarri’: I have altered the capital letters. As discussed above, in this section of the narrative recounting the miracle involving stolen horses in Dier’s cemetery the phraseology of Pen 225 more closely resembles Llst 34. Pen 27ii 109.2 avoids the spirant mutation as it has instead ‘lle a elwir Botvarv’ (a place named Botfari).

of the quest for Gwenfrewy's relics halfway through §31, Pen 225 again suspends the story omitting §§36–37 of the translation of the relics.

Since Pen 27ii omits the entire account of the *translatio*, the author has previously been assumed to have done this deliberately for political reasons, denying the removal of her relics from Gwytherin by ignoring the episode altogether; Gregory suggests:

that copying a Welsh translation of Robert's text while ignoring his first-hand account of the *translatio* is, in effect, an attempt to re-claim the saint and to re-situate her power in her native land at a time when her cult was achieving high political currency in England. The *Buchedd* is, in effect, both linguistic translation and figurative *translatio* that brings Gwenfrewy's story and her power back to Wales and denies the claims of Shrewsbury to possess her true spiritual essence.⁶⁹

His conclusion above is extremely interesting and it is certainly the case that hagiography is a highly politicised genre. Different versions of saints' Lives could reflect particular preoccupations with certain places and be designed to defend the property and economic interests of specific churches within the diocese. Robert's *vita* has been described as the 'Gwytherin version' of the text (as opposed to the 'Holywell version' represented by the anonymous *vita*), and the Pen 27ii *buchedd* has been assumed to exemplify this by placing particular emphasis on the sanctity of the graveyard at Gwytherin as the text breaks off.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the fragmentary sentences that survive at the end of the Pen 27ii *buchedd* 'y ffynon a'r avon ... y dwr ... a phawb a gant gwared o'i heiniav yno' (the well and the river ... the water ... and everyone will receive cures from their illnesses there) suggest that this version returns briefly to Holywell and ends noting the primacy of her first site, not Gwytherin.⁷¹ What should have come next is not the account of the translation to Shrewsbury but in fact a miracle in which a blind girl who bathes in the water at Holywell regains her sight after spending the night in the church there, other miracles involving both healing and vengeance and a climactic section in Prior Robert's Life (and Llst 34) in which he declares that divine power was at work in Holywell and that the numerous miracles that occurred indicated that 'she always held that place to be particularly special'. I am not convinced that the author would deliberately omit these if his main aim was to emphasize the importance of Gwenfrewy's sites in Wales.

The final sections in Pen 27ii (§§19–22) for the most part mirror the phraseology of Pen 225 and it is particularly significant that Thomas Wiliems's *buchedd* breaks off mid sentence with the section that opens §23,

⁶⁹ Gregory, 'A Welsh saint in England', 349.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 7, 164, 346.

⁷¹ Cf. Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §23, Llst 34 which includes the whole section.

i.e. the section where Pen 27ii also ends.⁷² Wiliems, I would suggest, is using the same exemplar as the anonymous author of Pen 27ii and the fact that he also encounters problems at this point in the *buchedd* (when the text returns to Holywell) is revealing since it appears to suggest that there was also something wrong with the exemplar and that the problems begin at §23. Did the text deteriorate or become illegible at this point? Without Pen 225, it is easy to imagine that the anonymous Pen 27ii author ended his version of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* here for political reasons (ignoring the *translatio*), but did he in fact choose to end the *buchedd* here because his exemplar was incomplete or damaged and extremely difficult to read at this point? The large gap left by Wiliems at §23 suggests that he intended to return to this section and work on the text further. If Wiliems had deliberately intended to omit the account of the translation of the relics to Shrewsbury permanently (as has been assumed for the author of Pen 27ii), he would surely have excised the episode and not left gaps where the missing text should be, since there would be no need at any future date to revisit these sections. If his source intentionally omitted the translation of the relics and ended at this point in §23, then why would his account in Pen 225 begin again, in very much the same style, part way through the narration of the quest for the relics?

Playing devil's advocate, you could argue that Thomas Wiliems's source also deliberately omits a section here, for political reasons, because included in it is the local Welsh prince's approval of the removal of the relics (noting that the Welsh did not venerate her body as they should §31) and the Pen 225 Life ends just before Gwenfrewy's body is exhumed. However, the section of text omitted is substantial (§§23–31) and the author of Wiliems's source is not averse to portraying the local Welsh *priest* as keen to approve the removal of the relics: included in Wiliems's version is the episode in which the local priest recounts how he experienced an angelic visitation taking him to Gwenfrewy's grave and advising him that should an expedition arrive and wish to dig up the bones, he should not object. The Welsh priest, keen to facilitate, agrees to act as an interpreter between Prior Robert and the local people (§33).⁷³ In summary, then, it seems that it is no mere coincidence that Thomas Wiliems suspends the narrative and leaves a gap in the same chapter in which Pen 27ii ends the *buchedd* and it is plausible that the primary reason for this was the defective nature of their joint source rather than any deliberate editing in order to reclaim Gwenfrewy (however satisfying it would be to argue otherwise).

⁷² Although Pen 27ii includes a few more fragmentary sentences about 'the first place'.

⁷³ Pen 225 300.

When Thomas Wiliems's disjointed narrative resumes it continues part way through §31 and names the prior of Chester and the Welsh priest who accompanied Prior Robert and the other men to Gwytherin:

Ar hyt y fordh yn vniawn yny dhoethant y'r lhe ydh oedh y corph, yr anrhydedhus Wenfrewy, wedy'r ossot. Ydh oethynt wynt seithwyr y gyt nyt amgen y prior a dhywetpwynt vchot, a chyt ac ef gwyr anrhydedhus, prior Caer, Wlmor y henw, ac ofeiriad sancteidh y elwyt Idhon a hanoedh o genetl honno, a brawt a dugassei o'r vanachloc gyt ac ef, a try wyr creilh.⁷⁴

[They went] straight along the road until they came to the place where the body, the honourable Gwenfrewy, had been placed. They were seven men in total namely the aforementioned prior, and with him honourable men, the prior of Chester, named *Wlmor*, and a holy priest called *Iddon* who was descended of that nation, and a brother whom he had brought with him from the monastery, and three other men.

The same names (Wlmor/Wlmar and Iddon) are provided in the Llŷt 34 version which provides a full account of the expedition and also includes the Holywell miracles omitted in Pen 225. Prior Robert's *vita*, nevertheless, omits the names and the only other extant account of the Life that names these characters is Caxton's *Lyf of the holy and blessid vyrgyn saynt Wenefryde* (STC 25853):

Thenne they wente straye vnto the place where the body of the venerable Wenefred was leyd. / And they were of them seuen persones, / that is to wyte the pryour, / and with hym the pryour of Chestre, named *Wulmare*; / & a preest, a man of grete virtue, named *Idon*, born of the same country; / a monke also whome the pryour toke with hym; / and thre other men.⁷⁵

This Pamphlet *Lyf* is thought to have been published in 1484 shortly after his more abbreviated *Lyf* in his *Golden Legend* collection appeared in print in 1483 (STC 24873). Sutton argues that the Pamphlet *Lyf* quoted here was produced for a ready-made market in Shrewsbury⁷⁶ and Lowry has suggested that this text, in which the expedition takes up at least half of the narrative, was produced specifically for Thomas Mynde, abbot of Shrewsbury (1460–98). In his view, the *Lyf* helped secure royal patronage of the confraternity associated with the saint and facilitated the Tudor dynasty's acceptance of Caxton's press.⁷⁷ The Pamphlet as a whole contains

⁷⁴ Pen 225 298.1–6.

⁷⁵ C. Horstman, 'Prosalegenden I. Caxton's ausgabe der h. Wenefreda,' *Anglia* 3 (1880), 293–360, at 30–8.

⁷⁶ A. F. Sutton, 'Caxton, the cult of St. Winifred, and Shrewsbury', in *Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2005), 109–26, at 126.

⁷⁷ M. J. C. Lowry, 'Caxton, St Winifred and Lady Margaret Beaufort', *The Library*, 6th ser., 5.2 (1983), 101–17, at 116.

a substantial amount of Latin liturgy and may well reflect the liturgy in use at Shrewsbury at the time.⁷⁸

The initial impression of Caxton's *Lyf*, when read in its entirety, is that it does not have a great deal in common with the Welsh versions since its perspective is skewed in favour of the *translatio* which it enlarges while it abbreviates the *vita*. In §32, for example, a section set in Shrewsbury which describes the former Abbot Godfrey's vision, Caxton's text is longer than the Latin text preserved in Laud Misc. 114 (257 and 149 words respectively). One might perhaps expect the Welsh versions in which this section is preserved (i.e. Pen 225 and Llst 34) to betray less interest in events that take place in Shrewsbury and abbreviate, but this does not appear to be the case (165 and 157 words respectively); nor does the Llst 34 *buchedd* significantly abbreviate the *translatio* although, where sections appear in both Llst 34 and Pen 225, then (as in the rest of the *buchedd*) they are slightly more detailed in Pen 225.⁷⁹ Caxton's Pamphlet *Lyf*, on the other hand, abbreviates the *vita* to such an extent that many sections are approximately two thirds shorter than they are in the Welsh and Latin versions.⁸⁰ Its brevity in these sections, therefore, means that its phraseology differs considerably from the Welsh *bucheddau*. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that certain additional details, such as the names of the characters noted above are shared by both this version of Caxton's Pamphlet *Lyf* (STC 25853) and the Welsh *bucheddau*. It is also noticeable that Caxton omits the Holywell miracles that commence with the healing of the blind girl (§23–28) as do both Pen 27ii and Pen 225, although they are included in Llst 34 and Prior Robert's *vita* and must, therefore, have appeared in the original lost Welsh adaptation.⁸¹

Gregory noted a number of other idiosyncrasies that Caxton's Pamphlet *Lyf* shared with the Welsh *buchedd*, pointing to a common source: (i) in Robert's *vita* the second gift granted to Gwenfrewy when Beuno leaves is that whoever makes a request to her will receive what he desires, but if he does not receive his wish after making the request three times he will die since heaven provides a greater reward than anything in this life; in Caxton's *Lyf* and the Welsh *buchedd* the blow is softened and the petitioner does not die (§7); (ii) only in Caxton's *Lyf* and the Welsh *buchedd* is it noted that Beuno settled 15 miles from Holywell when he left Gwenfrewy (§ 11); (iii) Caxton and the Welsh *buchedd* update the calendar for their contemporary audiences noting that Gwenfrewy passed away on 3 November (2

⁷⁸ D. Callander, personal communication.

⁷⁹ The full account of the translation of the relics in Llst 34 (§29–37) comprises 3,314 words, cf. 3,647 words in Prior Robert's *translatio* as preserved in Laud Misc. 114.

⁸⁰ For example, the word count in §1 is as follows using Llst 34 as a representative of the Welsh *buchedd*: 576 (Laud Misc. 114), 640 (Llst 34), 199 (Caxton's Pamphlet *Lyf*) and §2 is 845 (Laud Misc. 114), 945 (Llst 34) and 256 (Caxton's Pamphlet *Lyf*).

⁸¹ See the proposed stemma in Figure 1 above.

November, as one might expect, is noted by Prior Robert §22); (iv) When a local Welshman objects to Prior Robert exhuming Gwenfrewy's relics he is paid off according to Robert's *vita* but the bribe is omitted in Caxton's *Lyf* and the Welsh *buchedd* (§34).⁸²

Given that Caxton's *Lyf* is such an abbreviated account, it is noteworthy that it preserves additional details (such as the names of Robert's companions and the distance between Holywell and Beuno's abode) that appear to be unique to his account and the Welsh *bucheddau*. However, closer scrutiny of the Welsh versions reveals that the level of detail preserved depends upon the level of abbreviating within the different manuscript versions. For the most part, Pen 225 contains the fullest account and the greatest level of detail (although, as we have noted, it is not complete); whereas Llst 34, although it abbreviates slightly, contains all episodes and is, therefore, more comprehensive in its coverage of the story. Pen 27ii sometimes surpasses Llst 34 in its shortening of the text since it omits phrases, sentences and even whole sections. This three-tier structure of abbreviation can be illustrated by examining the first idiosyncrasy noted above as (i):

Pen 27ii

Yr ail yw pa ovid bynac a vo ar dyn a ddel i geisiaw gwared i gennyt yn vucheddol, ef a'i kaiff.⁸³

The second is that whatever affliction is upon a person who comes to seek deliverance devoutly from you, he will have it [i.e. he will be cured]

Llst 34

Yr ail, pa ofid bynnac o'r byd a fo ar y neb a'th weddio ac a geisio gwared gennyd, ef a'i caiph y waith gyntaf, ne yr ail, neu yr drydydd. Beth bynnac a archo ar a fo kyfiawn, ef a'y cayph yma ac yn y nef.

The second, whatever worldly affliction at all is upon a person who prays to you and seeks deliverance from you, he shall have it the first time, or the second, or the third. Whatever the just person requests, he will have it here and in heaven.⁸⁴

Pen 225

Yr ail yw pa ouit bynac o'r byt a vo ar y neb a'th wedhiaw ac a geissiw gwaret y gennyt y caiph y waith gyntaf, neu yr ail, neu y drydedd. Beth bynac a archo o'r a vo cyuyawn neu y dwc Duw ydhaw, ynteu a vo gwelw yn y nef noc a eirch yn y byt hwnn.⁸⁵

⁸² Gregory, 'A Welsh saint in England', 307–18.

⁸³ Pen 27ii 102.23–5 §7.

⁸⁴ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §7.

⁸⁵ Pen 225 280.23–7 §7.

The second is that whatever worldly affliction is upon a person who prays to you and seeks deliverance from you, he shall have it the first time, or the second, or the third. Whatever the just person asks for or God brings to him, it will be better in heaven than that which he requests in this world.

Laud Misc. 114

Secundum uero est quod quicumque aliqua infortunia passus te requisierit, et per te a sua inualitudine seu oppressione se liberari petierit, prima siue secunda aut certe tertia uice uoluntatis sue compos effectus, quod postulauerat se impetrasse gaudebit. Si autem contigerit petentem te trine uicis petitione quod optauerat non consecutum fuisse, certissime sciat se presentis uite luce in proximo cariturum, atque ideo occulto Dei iudicio precis sue fructu in presenti frustratum fuisse. Proficere sibi tamen ad animę suę medelam te inuocasse constanter intelligat, atque per te aliquid sibi maius diuinitus prestari, quam si quod petebat exterius consequeretur.

Now the second is that whoever, having suffered from misfortune, will have sought you, and through you tried to be freed from his illness or oppression, having obtained his desire at the first or second or certainly the third time, he will rejoice that he has obtained that for which he had asked. But if it should happen that the petitioner has not obtained what he had desired in request three times, let him know most certainly that he is about to lose the light of this present life very soon, and for that reason by the hidden judgement of God he was deprived of the proceeds of his request at present. Yet let him understand that it aids the cure of his soul to have called upon you constantly, and something greater is provided from heaven through you to him, than if he attained that which he was seeking externally.⁸⁶

In this case Pen 27ii provides the briefest account and although Pen 225 does not state that the person requesting the gift will pass away, it preserves something of the essence of Prior Robert's much longer version quoted above by suggesting that 'it will be better in heaven'. When it comes to the fourth idiosyncrasy noted above, only Ll1st 34 omits the bribe since it provides a more abbreviated account of §34. Pen 27ii has ended before this episode and Pen 225 which, as noted above, often provides more detail and is generally somewhat closer to the Latin *vita*, does note that when Prior Robert encounters opposition from a local man at Gwytherin he sends a messenger to him '*a rodhi da ydhaw a'e wneuthur yn vn ac wynt*' (and gave him goods and made him agree with them).⁸⁷ The man's companions,

⁸⁶ *VSW* §7.

⁸⁷ Cf. Prior Robert's Latin *vita*: '*dataque pecunia arctius eum sibi confederauit*' (after money had been given he allied that man more closely to himself) *VSW* §34.

in this version of the Welsh *buchedd* (as in Prior Robert's *vita*) do not suspect that he has been bribed:

Pan welssant wy ef yn medhalhau mor dhissymwth a hynny, ryuedhu yn vawr a thebygu mae o gariat Duw ydh oedh yn hynny.⁸⁸

When they saw him softening as suddenly as that, they were very surprised and assumed that it was because of God's love.

The level of abbreviation, thus, determines which details remain in the Welsh *bucheddau* and Pen 225 is notable because, unlike Caxton's adaptation, it does in fact retain the bribe given to the local Welsh man.

One further noteworthy addition, which in this instance appears to be unique to the Welsh *buchedd* in Llst 34, for it is not found in Caxton's *Lyf* nor the extant copies of Prior Robert's *vita*, is an episode in which a thief steals a saddle from a horse outside the church in Holywell. The man whose saddle is stolen complains to Gwenfrewy: 'Ac oni ddanfoni di y kyfrwy yn ebrwydd y mi, mi a beidiaf a thydi ac a af at sant arall a ymarddelwo a'm kwyn i.' ('And if you do not send me the saddle immediately, I'll give up on you and turn to another saint who will support my complaint').⁸⁹ The threatening tone of the complainant might lead the reader/listener to expect that the victim rather than the perpetrator would be punished for insolence towards the saint, but instead the thief is struck blind and comes to the church to beg forgiveness and return the saddle to its owner. The miracle does not appear in Pen 27ii and Pen 225 since it would have occurred in the missing section recounting the Holywell miracles (§26). One wonders whether it was excised from the Laud Misc. 114 version of Prior Robert's *vita* since it could be interpreted as showing insolence towards the saint.

In conclusion, the Welsh *bucheddau* all appear to stem from one Middle Welsh translation of a lost version of Prior Robert's *vita* that was not dissimilar to the Laud Misc. 114 *vita* but preserved certain additional details including the names of the prior's companions and the miracle involving the stolen saddle. Caxton would also appear to have had access to this version. Pen 27ii and Pen 225 appear to stem from a Welsh intermediary which may have been incomplete or imperfect with possible deterioration beginning in §23. While it is possible that these two manuscripts deliberately omitted the account of the translation of the relics in an attempt to erase the event from history and focus on the Welsh sites associated with Gwenfrewy, it is unlikely that Willems would have chosen to include one fragment of the translation account and that both compilers of these Welsh versions would have willingly omitted Prior Robert's praise for both Gwytherin and Holywell. Careful comparison of the phraseology in both Pen 27ii and Pen 225 demonstrates that Pen 27ii has far more in common

⁸⁸ Pen 225 301.13–14 §34.

⁸⁹ Cartwright, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* §26.

with Pen 225 than it does with Llst 34 and that although all three texts ultimately stem from the same original Welsh exemplar, Pen 27ii and Pen 225 appear to derive from the same (possibly incomplete or imperfect) intermediary. Llst 34, on the other hand, modernizes and abbreviates an exemplar that included the full legend and *translatio* in Welsh. Given that Pen 225 is one of the later manuscript versions (1594×1610) it might initially appear to be one of the least important texts which might explain why previous discussions of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* have ignored this version.⁹⁰ However, on the contrary, this version of the *buchedd* frequently preserves the best and least abbreviated readings which often are more detailed and faithful to the Latin account. This chapter has hopefully shown the significance of the text and why examining each of the manuscript versions is important. Matching the fragments of text that occur in the damaged sections of the oldest extant manuscript (Pen 27ii) reveal that they are echoed in Pen 225 and this allows us to piece together the fragments and recover the sections which would otherwise be unintelligible.

Some mysteries, however, remain. For it is not clear why Thomas Wiliems who clearly compared different versions of the *buchedd*, and elsewhere copied manuscripts that belonged to his colleague Roger Morris, did not return to fill in the gaps in his version of the *buchedd*; nor can we be sure of the date when *Buchedd Gwenfrewy* was first adapted into Welsh. It certainly pre-dated the Pen 27ii incomplete version produced in the latter half of the fifteenth century which *may* have coincided with Thomas Pennant's abbacy and the rebuilding of the well chapel at Holywell. Whilst it is plausible that Wiliems used a fourteenth-century source similar to the one noted for his copies of the Lives of SS. David, Beuno and Mary Magdalene, it cannot unfortunately be confirmed.

One further mystery is why Prior Robert chose not to include a section of post-translation miracles occurring at Shrewsbury if he was keen to promote his abbey's acquisition of the relics. Perhaps, if he composed the *vita* directly after the *translatio* there may have been little opportunity to add a list of post-*translatio* miracles. Llst 34, like Robert's *vita*, is valuable in that it provides us with a first-hand account of a medieval *translatio*. Other than the description of the miraculous weather conditions, the account provides an eyewitness description of the pomp and ceremony that accompanied the candle-lit procession of the relics from St Giles to the Abbey church where Gwenfrewy's body was laid on the altar. Prior Robert alone briefly refers to 'innumerable cures' that took place at Shrewsbury, but he has nothing to compare to the appendix of Holywell miracles found at the end of the anonymous *Vita Sancte Wenefrede* or indeed his own list of miracles that take place at Holywell that also occurs in Llst 34, where it

⁹⁰ Jones, 'Golygiad', 33, assumed Pen 225 was a copy of Llst 34 as did Gregory 'A Welsh saint in England'.

is noted: ‘A mwy o lawer yw y gwyrthiau yno noc yn y lle y mae y corph yn gorphowys’ (And there are far more miracles there than in the place where the body rests) (§28). The pre-eminence of Holywell is stated in all versions of the *buchedd* including the fragmentary ending in Pen 27ii as well as Prior Robert’s own *vita*. Although the importance of Gwytherin and Shrewsbury are also highlighted, none of the versions of the Latin *vita* and the Welsh *buchedd* discussed in this chapter challenged the primacy of Holywell, for, in twelfth-century England and in Wales throughout the Middle Ages, Gwenfrewy’s cult was far too deeply rooted in the location of her martyrdom and healing well.

In Welsh we have the recusant tradition to thank for the preservation of the full *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*. Given that there are only six other *bucheddau* extant to native Welsh saints, some of which are extremely short texts preserved in only two manuscripts, the significance of *Buchedd Gwenfrewy*, which is the lengthiest of all Middle Welsh saint’s Lives, preserved in four manuscripts, cannot be overstated. Its publication will, hopefully, spark further interest in this text and its place in the canon of medieval Welsh literature. This article has shown that all the Welsh manuscripts of a text, including late copies, repay further scrutiny.