

TYING UP THE LOOSE ENDS: PREPARING THE FIRST VOLUME OF THOMAS PENNANT'S *A TOUR IN WALES* (1778) FOR THE PRESS

by Ffion Mair Jones

Introduction

I had heard of your father in various parts of Wales, and that Pennant was wholly indebted to him for his information on many topographical as well as genealogical subjects.¹

This was the complimentary light in which Samuel Rush Meyrick (later, Sir; 1783–1848) and his contemporaries viewed John Lloyd of Caerwys, Thomas Pennant's faithful companion on his *Tours* in Wales. In a letter to Angharad Llwyd, Lloyd's daughter, in May 1822, Rush Meyrick asked her to receive a copy of his book, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Cardigan* (1810), a work which he now held with a modicum of self-criticism as 'but a young antiquarian ebullition, and a first essay on Welsh affairs'. This was his earliest contact with Wales, however, and the fact that he linked his comment about the widespread presence of the memory of John Lloyd with the period of his work on the antiquities and history of the southern county of Cardigan may suggest that an awareness of the significance of Caerwys's rector had spread over a wide geographical span by the early years of the nineteenth century. In the first decades of that century, and for generations after that, John Lloyd was the name associated with Pennant's *Tours*. In fact, his daughter went so far as to claim that her father was the author of the entry about Owain Glyndŵr that appeared in the first volume, one of Pennant's most famous and most influential

1. Samuel Rush Meyrick to Angharad Llwyd, 16 May 1822, Cardiff MS 3.105, pp.21–4, especially p.23.

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contributions in the view of his countrymen well into the twentieth century.²

There is no doubt that Lloyd deserves the credit suggested in Rush Meyrick's words, and his contribution to the *Tours* has received acknowledgement within the covers of this journal and elsewhere. In an article in the early 1980s, R. Paul Evans argued that Pennant had corrected and added significantly to historical aspects of the text of the *Tours* before the publication of the first volume in 1778 and again prior to the appearance of the second and third parts in 1781 and 1783. Drawing on the evidence of correspondence between the two men in eight letters, dated June 1777 to May 1793, together with notes giving specific comments on a manuscript of the *Tours* before they were published, Evans showed the nature of Pennant's dependence on one he described as 'my constant friend & companion in travel'.⁴ Lloyd could interpret information in Welsh-language texts for Pennant, including material from the manuscripts of John Sebright, Beechwood (previously Edward Lhuyd's collection) lent by the owner in August 1778, and numerous sources regarding Owain Glyndŵr.⁵ Moreover, he was an antiquarian in his own right: Evans suggested that it was for Pennant that he prepared a biography of Glyndŵr, bringing together evidence collected by John Thomas, Beaumaris, and a manuscript sent from Oxford by the keeper of the Bodleian library, John Price.⁶ His comments on archaeological excavations were so thorough and vivid that they led to 'direct plagiarism' by Pennant, who inserted material from Lloyd's letters almost verbatim in the printed *Tours*.⁷

2. See Ff. M. Jones, 'Rhwng Pennant a'i Thad: "Castellau y Fflynt" Angharad Llwyd (1780-1866)', *Studia Celtica*, LVII (2023), pp.131–50, especially p.144.

3. R. P. Evans, 'Reverend John Lloyd of Caerwys (1733–93): Historian, Antiquarian and Genealogist', *Flints. Hist. Soc. Journal*, 31 (1983/4), pp.109–24, especially p.116.

4. These letters, together with additional material sent by Lloyd to Pennant, can be seen in 'Welsh Circles: John Lloyd, Caerwys', URL (accessed 17 February 2024) <https://editions.curious travellers.ac.uk/letters>. The quotation ('constant friend ...') is from Thomas Pennant to Richard Bull, 22 August 1793, URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://editions.curious travellers.ac.uk/doc/1168>.

5. Evans, 'Reverend John Lloyd', pp.117, 118. On the loan of the manuscripts, see John Sebright to Thomas Pennant, 15 August 1778, at Warwickshire County Record Office (henceforth WCRO), CR 2017/TP356/1.

6. Evans, 'Reverend John Lloyd', p.117; G. A. Williams, 'Testun o Feirionnydd: Golwg Arall ar "The History of Owen Glyndwr"', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, XVIII, part III (2020), pp.237–53, 249, 251 n. 24.

7. Evans, 'Reverend John Lloyd', 119; and also *ibid.*, 120.

Having acknowledged the particular reliance on Lloyd, the purpose of this article is to consider whether he was as unique as Pennant's later readers were to assume. Although Pennant exalted him in the eyes of his fellow countrymen, whether relatively contemporary readers such as Rush Meyrick or the Welsh of the mid- and late nineteenth century, as 'my constant companion in these excursions', the reality is much richer than this.⁸ In the processes of reading draft versions of the *Tours* and offering comments on their content, of translating Welsh material, of providing relevant information (in a variety of fields), or of plain plagiarism, we find ourselves asking whether Lloyd was the only name that deserved recognition. Focusing on a small number of voices from the north-east and specifically on the period that led to the publication of the first volume of the *Tours* in Wales at the end of March 1778, the intention here is to examine how Pennant took advantage of several other informants to fulfill the functions of readers, translators, or providers of information during this busy period.⁹ Furthermore, it will be shown that his authorial interests in his square mile in north-east Wales were supported by a circle of gentlemen who, like himself, delighted in interpreting and analyzing the past through its antiquarian remains and its manuscript tradition. Certainly, he did not work in a vacuum, and it is possible that interests common to him and amateur antiquarians as well as those who worked professionally in the field of history and travel may have been a stimulus.

'I cannot pass unthanked ...': Acknowledged support

Who were the friends and acquaintances who made it possible for Pennant to bring to completion the first volume of his *Tour*, a project that he had a definite intention to see in print since 1774? North-east Wales, the counties of Denbigh and Flint, together with the neighboring city of Chester, are the focus of this first volume. Although Pennant had collected material for further volumes in Meirionnydd and Caernarfonshire by following actual journeys there in 1770, and had traveled as far as Bardsey Island and Anglesey back in the 1750s, probably before he had entertained the possibility of publishing travel books, it was the geographical areas of the first volume which claimed his real attention during 1777 and 1778, insofar

8. T. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770 [1773]* (London, 1778), I, p.iv.

9. For the publication date of the first volume of the *Tours*, see R. P. Evans, 'Thomas Pennant's Writings on North Wales' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Wales Swansea, 1995), pp.35, 90 n. 177.

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as Wales was on his mind at all.¹⁰ It is worth noting here that his homeland was in competition with many other projects in the same period: among them, his efforts to find European correspondents (a continuation of an interest vigorously pursued in the 1750s and 1760s);¹¹ receiving comments and corrections to his *Tours* in Scotland from native readers of that country (following the appearance of the latest editions of the two *Tours* in 1776);¹² and planning a map of Britain in Roman times.¹³

Setting aside the distractions of these other interests (as Pennant himself evidently did), we can turn to his preface to the 1778 volume of his *Tour in Wales* where, not surprisingly, we see the names of close neighbours appearing among the gentlemen whose assistance he wished to acknowledge. Those mentioned for their connection to the first *Tour in Wales's* north-eastern geography, and specifically within Flintshire and the parts of Denbighshire which border it, include some whose contributions are clearly named, others who are left as names only. It is very difficult to determine exactly how Pennant was helped by each of those noted: Thomas Mostyn of Talacre; Peter Davies, Broughton; or Lloyd Kenyon, Greddington, for example. Reference is made to the Talacre Mostyn family ('Trelacre' is the form given by Pennant) and their use until recently of parts of the remains of Basingwerk Abbey, and it is possible, therefore, that some help may have come in relation to that edifice, although there is no evidence of this. Peter Davies is recognized as 'my respected kinsman' and later correspondence between him and Pennant shows a common interest in electoral issues during 1784. Roger Kenyon, likewise, appears in Pennant's correspondence in a political context at the beginning of the 1780s, but the contribution of the latter two to the text of the first volume is unclear.¹⁴ One would

10. For Pennant's manuscript account of travels in Meirionnydd and Caernarfonshire during 1770, see NLW 2532B.

11. See e.g. Edward Darell to Thomas Pennant, 22 July 1777, at WCRO, CR 2017/TP210/5; Thomas Pennant to Baron [Albrecht von] Haller, 12 May 1777, at NLW MS 14005E; and Ff. M. Jones, P. Beeley and Y. Ryan, "'From the Cabinets of mere virtuosi into the busy world': Thomas Pennant's Natural Philosophical Networks and the Creation of British Zoology, 1752–1766", *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 86.2 (2023), pp.315–43.

12. See Thomas Jones to Thomas Pennant, 9 April 1777, WCRO, CR 2017/TP266/1–2; James Lawtie to Thomas Pennant, 28 June 1777, enclosing a letter from Algernon Gordon to James Lawtie, 3 April 1777, WCRO, CR 2017/TP278/3 and /4.

13. J. Whitaker to Thomas Pennant, 5 April 1777, WCRO, CR 2017/TP388.

14. See Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.25, on the family of Mostyn, Talacre; *ibid.*, p.216, for a reference to Pennant's sojourn at the Broughton home of Peter Davies, where Davies's descent from the line of Tudor Trevor is noted; Thomas Pennant to Peter Davies, 16 March 1784 and 19

sooner assume that Paul Panton, Pennant's neighbor from Bagillt, would have offered a helping hand, but the evidence pushes his contribution onwards to the second volume of the *Tours*; this is hardly a surprise considering that his connection with Anglesey had been challenging his commitment to his native county somewhat since his marriage to Jane Jones, heiress of Plas Gwyn, Pentraeth, in 1756.¹⁵ One early contribution from Panton that would certainly have claimed Pennant's attention was a lengthy letter from Plas Gwyn in November 1774.¹⁶ Information about Anglesey — towns and rural areas, and traditions preserved in poetry and song, not to mention the stories of some of its renowned figures — was the main content of this correspondence, but Panton also paid attention to material from some other counties in the north (as in a discussion of a striking portrait of a leading Denbigh figure, the antiquary and map maker, Humphrey Llwyd (1527–68)). Pennant made an index to the material communicated in this letter of Panton's which indicates his use of some of it in the form of appendices to his published *Tours* and shows how he was probably planning the second volume of his work in parallel with the first.¹⁷ Later, further letters came from Panton to reinforce his contribution to the portrait of the western parts of north Wales given in the second volume of the *Tours*.¹⁸

Whereas Panton's involvement leant towards the second volume and other voices remained hidden from view within the first, it is clear, on the other hand, what contribution Owen Brereton of Shotton Park near Chester, had to make to the volume that appeared in 1778. Brereton becomes one of the contemporary, living personalities remembered in the *Tours*, invoked on those occasions when Pennant breaks down the barriers between past and present and populates significant historical civil posts with peers and acquaintances of his own days. A report about

October 1796, in NLW, Gwysaney Transcripts, 78A and 78B; and R[oger] Kenyon to [Thomas Pennant], 2 February 1780, NLW MS 12706E, pp.121–2.

15. See *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* [henceforth *DWB*] s.n. Panton, Paul (1727–1797). Note, however, that Panton sustained a strong interest in industrial enterprises in Flintshire: he established a smelting works at Coleshill-fawr in 1755, a year before his marriage to Jane. See T. Pennant, *The History of the Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell* (London, 1796), p.276.

16. Paul Panton to Thomas Pennant, 8 November 1774, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP21/7.

17. The appendices all appeared at the end of the second volume, among them items taken from this letter of Panton's ('Warrant for a stag out of Snowdon Forrest', Appendix IX; and 'Address of the inhabitants of Caernarvonshire to Richard Cromwell', Appendix XVI). See *ibid.*, and Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773] (1781, 1783), II, pp.465–6, 482–3.

18. See e.g. Paul Panton to Thomas Pennant, 20 July 1782, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP321/1, which discusses the Williams family of Faenol, Caernarfonshire.

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the fortunes of Flint castle during the Civil Wars, where one of his acquaintance's ancestors, Sir William Brereton, played a starring role on the King's side, is followed like this:

On the restoration, it was resumed by the crown, among its other rights, in which it still continues. The crown governs it by a constable, who is likewise mayor of Flint. These offices are at present filled by my friend Owen Brereton, esquire.¹⁹

Brereton deserved this attention in view of a notable and important contribution made to the first volume: he lent 'curious antiquities' found on his estate near Flint to Pennant, leading to extensive textual treatment by the latter and enabling 'the more descriptive description, a print' in the form of two engravings for the volume (plates viii and ix), both based on detailed drawings of the objects by Pennant's artist, Moses Griffith.²⁰ Pennant made a decision about which of the many items found deserved to be recorded by means of engraving, making his choice, he said, based on the condition of the objects, some of which were 'so mutilated or injured by time, as to be rendered quite unintelligible'.²¹ Most were Roman remains, Pennant surmised, and through his interpretations we catch a glimpse of an early civilization whose characteristics include the extremes of humane features on the one hand and the terrifying and superstitious on the other. The people who used the tools come to life, portrayed by Pennant as twofold beings – similar to his own contemporaries yet simultaneously completely different. The perfectly acceptable and understandable instincts of Roman ladies to decorate their cabinets with an attractive key, or the equally reasonable need of the Roman fisherman for a metal weight to sink a fishing net are confidently presented to the reader, but Pennant is clearly ill at ease when noting the blind devotion of these people to their gods (some of them obscene, it is noted), together with their possible attachment to uncivilized sacrificial rituals. Pennant's underlying tone is critical; yet, the objective scientist is present in his analysis as well, looking for contemporary evidence from the work of the classical

19. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.48–9.

20. *Ibid.*, p.ii; Pennant's discussion of the antiquities is on pp.67–72.

21. *Ibid.*, p.72. Griffith produced drawings of thirty-six of these objects, dating his work to the year 1776, with Pennant noting in pencil at the top of the page, 'a few of these not engraven'. See National Museum of Wales, NMW A 3147, 'Roman Remains at Flint', and Plate 1. Seventeen items in this illustration correspond to some among the twenty-nine engraved for *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, plates viii and ix.

poets to support and temper his views, or drawing on more recent research to cast doubt on his own analyses. In a footnote, for example, he acknowledges the work of the comte de Caylus, *Recueil D'Antiquités* (1752–67), when questioning his interpretation of one set of items as instruments for human sacrifice: 'According to the uncertainty that reigns respecting the uses of the ancient instruments, I may hazard another conjecture, that they have been surgical instruments', he notes.²² We do not know if Owen Brereton influenced this reading. Brereton was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1763, and although he only contributed one paper in 1781 on behalf of a friend to the society's journal, the *Philosophical Transactions*, it is hard to imagine that he and Pennant — two committed antiquarians — did not discuss this notable discovery.²³

Antiquarian circles: Philip Yorke and Kenrick Eyton

The likelihood that Pennant discussed his interests with others when preparing the first volume of his *Tours* is discussed by Mary-Ann Constantine in a new monograph, which draws attention to a shared interest among Flintshire antiquarians of the mid 1770s in the wall known as 'Wat's Dyke'.²⁴ Constantine shows that several friends or acquaintances of Pennant's were keen to theorize about the purpose of this dyke on the border between the Welsh and the English in Denbighshire and Flintshire — from the map maker from Llanymynech, Montgomeryshire, John Evans, to the clergyman William Warrington, then of Rhyddyn (or Rhydyn) Hill near Caergwrle, and the squire of Erddig, Philip Yorke. We can pause here with

22. P. C. A. de Tubières, comte de Caylus, *Recueil D'Antiquités Egyptiennes, Etrusques, Grecques et Romaines* (Paris, 1752–67), iv, 169, see URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/book/recueil-dantiquites-egyptiennes-etrusques-grecques-et-romaines>; Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.70.

23. ODNB s.n. Brereton, Owen Salusbury. See also O. S. Brereton, 'Account of the violent storm of lightning at East-bourn, in Sussex, Sept. 17, 1780', *Philosophical Transactions*, 71 (1781), URL (accessed 14 June 2024) <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstl.1781.0021>; and the entry on a colour drawing of a window at Brereton parish church, showed by Owen Brereton Salusbury to a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries on 22 May 1788, *Archaeologia*, 9, Appendix, 368, URL (accessed 14 June 2024) <https://www.twentytrees.co.uk/History/Books/Thing/Archaeologia-Volume-9-Appendix.html?x8e6xzBh#CvIFB98d>. A response to the last item is found in S. Pegge, 'Some Observations on the Paintings in the Window of Brereton Church ... in a Letter to Owen Salusbury Brereton, Esq. Vice President. Read Nov. 26, 1789', *Archaeologia*, 10, Section IV, URL (accessed 14 June 2024) <https://www.twentytrees.co.uk/History/Books/Thing/Archaeologia-Volume-10-Section-IV.html?S5WXyVld#S5WXyVld>.

24. M-A Constantine, *Curious Travellers: Writing the Welsh Tour* (Oxford, 2024), pp. 63–5.

Yorke, who was an important figure among the antiquarians of the north-east during the preparation of the first volume of Pennant's *Tours*. Through his correspondence with Pennant we have an insight into how ancient remains were found, interpreted, and discussed, and how these processes impacted on Pennant's published work. Beyond the question of the dyke and the interest which it sparked, a letter from Yorke to Pennant in November 1777 shows a rather different preoccupation. Yorke wrote about the conversation he had had with Mr Newcome (Henry Newcome, vicar of Gresford between 1764 and his death in 1803)²⁵ regarding a statue of an 'ancient Briton' that had come to light under the wall of his church.²⁶ Yorke's intention was to bring together his own carpenter and the herald George Wilkinson of Chester in order to try and displace the 'Briton' from his position and, perhaps, give Wilkinson the opportunity to make a record of the heraldic or inscribed material that may have formed part of the statue.²⁷ In the fieldwork required in relation to this monument, therefore, Yorke could draw on his connections with an employee ('My Mason (who is a careful Person, and like his Master, having a due veneration for Antiquities)'), with the local vicar with whom he discussed the matter over a meal at Erddig ('Mr Newcome dined with me last Thursday ...'), and with the herald from Chester ('if he should be at leisure [*sic*] to attend us in the Course of next week').²⁸ Furthermore, intellectual assistance was available to take the process a step further, in the figure of John Lloyd, Caerwys, who was prepared to lend from his library rare manuscript material and copies of printed books with valuable interpretive marginalia.²⁹ Yorke, by reconciling what he knew about the 'old Briton' under the wall of Gresford church with a marginal note in Lloyd's copy of David Powel[I]'s *The Historie of Cambria, now called Wales* (1584), thought it was a statue to

25. See URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/jsp/search/index.jsp> s.n. Newcome, Henry (1754–1803).

26. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 17 November 1777, WCRO, CR 2017 / TP23/4, URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://editions.curiostravellers.ac.uk/doc/1357>.

27. Wilkinson was an acquaintance of Pennant's as well. For information provided by him regarding Chester antiquities, see George Wilkinson to Thomas Pennant, 20 January 1777, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP4/8.

28. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 17 November 1777, WCRO, CR 2017/TP23/4, URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://editions.curiostravellers.ac.uk/doc/1357>.

29. See e.g. the reference to Richard Powell, 'Pentarchia' ('Powell's latin verses'), in Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 19 July 1791, URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://editions.curiostravellers.ac.uk/doc/1361>.

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commemorate Madog ap Llywelyn ap Griffri, who was buried at Gresford around the year 1330.

Getting to the root of who this ‘old Briton’ was is not at all straightforward, however. When Pennant came to draw up the final text of the *Tours*, he referred in a complimentary manner to work done by the vicar, Newcome, inside Gresford church (‘The neat reparation of the inside, is owing to the direction and excellent judgment of the reverend Mr .Newcome, the present vicar’).³⁰ In the northern aisle, Pennant reported, lay the tomb of a warrior in a coat of mail, holding a shield and on it the image of a ‘lion rampant’, and the words ‘Hic jacket MADOC AP LLEWELIN AP GRUFF.’, who was buried on St Matthias’ day (24 February) 1331.³¹ Was this the ‘old Briton’ about whom Yorke and his assistants were so exercised a few months before the publication of the first volume of the *Tours*? And was his relocation in the north aisle of the church part of the vicar’s efforts to tidy up the interior of the building? In a new edition of the *Tours*, a century later, further attention was paid to a ‘tomb of a warrior’ in the church by Trevor Parkins (1822–1908), a native of Gresford who assisted John Rhys with this edition, adding valuable local antiquarian information in notes to the text.³² Parkins contended that ‘Griffri’ (not Pennant’s ‘Gruff’) was the correct reading of the name, and revealed that this ‘portion of a tombstone’ was discovered ‘a few years ago’ at Pantiocyn (Pant-yr-Ochain), nearby, then returned to Gresford church, which was its original home.³³ The similarity between the stone seen by Parkins and the tomb Pennant recorded at Gresford church is tantalizing: the description of the shield with its lion rampant; the inscription (‘Hic jacet Griffri’ according to Parkins’s reading and the name Madog ap Llywelyn ap Griffri on which Yorke honed in after reading John Lloyd’s marginal note); and the two close burial dates noted (1330 and 1331) all offer points of contact. Nevertheless, it is clear that two different individuals are under discussion here, one commemorated in a tomb, the other on a stone slab only: Madog ap Llywelyn ap Griffri of the tribe of Tudor Trefor, from Eytyn, Erlisham (Erlas) and Rhiwabon (in Pennant’s *Tours*), and Madog son of Gruffudd ap Madog,

30. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.298.

31. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.299.

32. J. Rhys (ed.), *Tours in Wales by Thomas Pennant, Esq; With Notes, Preface, and Copious Index*, 3 vols. (Caernarvon, 1883), I, p.388.

33. For Pantiocyn, see URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/27613?term=pant%20yr%20ochain%2Cgresffordd>.

the White Baron (according to Yorke's interpretation).³⁴ We can, perhaps, only note how open to misinterpretation the information attached to tombs and other commemorative stones could be, and how vivid and mutable were the elucidations of antiquarians as they came together to try and understand and explain them.³⁵

Yorke's efforts on Pennant's behalf continued later into November 1777, although he had to lighten the tone of his correspondence at times, turning away from the weighty concerns of the antiquarian to his other 'love', composing doggerel. What else could a man do when he found himself beset by obstacles wherever he turned? Yorke searched assiduously but in vain for some small book or other to provide answers to specific queries raised by Pennant: 'I have searched diligently for the small book you mentioned, in hopes of Returning you the desiderata, but without effect', he said, asking whether he might have more time to lay his hand on information about the commot of Bromfield (or Maelor Gymraeg).³⁶ And he had never managed to remove the 'old Briton' from the bottom of the wall in Gresford. In the same month, there was more favourable news from other quarters: William Wynne of Mold sent Pennant a list of the names of Flintshire manors and their owners on 24 November, presenting the information clearly in two neat columns for Pennant's perusal.³⁷ Evidence of this kind could be used where needed within the first volume of the *Tours*, as Pennant attempted to formalize the connection between the historical and contemporary ownership of territory in this area. Maelor Saesneg is described as 'a hundred of FLINTSHIRE disjoined from the rest of the county' and, furthermore, fragmented within itself, with pockets appearing like

34. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.299, and L. Dwnn, *Heraldic Visitations of Wales and part of the Marches*, ed. S. R. Meyrick, 2 vols. (Llandover, 1846), II, p.360; and Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 17 November 1777, WCRO, CR 2017/TP23/4, URL (accessed 20 July 2024) <https://editions.curiostravellers.ac.uk/doc/1357>.

35. For two graves at Gresford church which share some of the features discussed here, including appropriate dates, one a stone slab and the other a substantial monument, see a discussion based on C. A. Gresham, *Medieval Stone Carving in North Wales* (Cardiff, 1968), nos. 136 and 174, URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2018/03/04/gresfords-medieval-monuments/>.

36. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 30 November 1777, URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://editions.curiostravellers.ac.uk/doc/1358>.

37. W. Wynne to Thomas Pennant, 24 November 1777, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP22/3. For correspondence by Wynne addressed to Chester attorney Ralph Griffith(s) on legal issues, some relating to the designation of the boundaries between the lordships of Mold and that of Bromfield and Yale (1762–3, and n.d.), see URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/letters-to-ralph-griffith-s>.

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islands within Denbighshire.³⁸ 'The chain is supposed to have been once entire; but as many of the links were often fields, which (by reason of their smallness) were neglected, and lost', he said, before naming some settlements which were later added to Maelor Saesneg (designated as part of Flintshire by Edward I), and others which were lost.³⁹ The culmination of Pennant's treatment of this administrative geography is to name the holders of the lordship of Maelor Saesneg, starting in the period of Henry IV and ending with the current owners, Sir Walden Hanmer and Philip Lloyd Fletcher, information that had been communicated to him by William Wynne.⁴⁰ In the lordship of Mold, a central part of Flintshire located to the north of Maelor Saesneg, we hear Wynne's voice clearly in Pennant's discussion of the right to benefit from the minerals on the land. 'Mold is at present the property of lady Vincent. The mineral advantages of the manor, which have, at times, been very considerable, are equally divided between her ladyship, the Trevors, and Mr. Lloyd of Tyddyn', he stated, closely reflecting Wynne's notes ('The Minerals within the Lordship are divided into 3 parts – Lady Vincent 3d. Lloyd of Tythin 3d. & the Trevors the other 3d.').⁴¹

Alongside this attention to the interests of the aristocracy into whose hands the lordships of Flintshire fell, conveying the early history of these influential families was key to the narrative of Pennant's *Tours*. To fulfill this aim, he required access to information about tombs and facts set out in ancient volumes on genealogy, sometimes accessible by the favour of older members of the gentry in the neighbourhood. In September 1777, Pennant received material through John Lloyd, Caerwys, 'from Mr Eyton's book', outlining the lineage of Richard Mutton of Rhuddlan and his wife Elen, daughter of John Aer Hen Conwy of Botryddan.⁴² Kenrick Eyton of Eyton in Maelor Saesneg, Denbighshire, high sheriff of the county in 1753, was the owner of this book. Pennant thanked him for his help in the preface to the first volume of the *Tours*, and also inserted specific references within his text to the book (or manuscript) described by John Lloyd as 'Mr Eyton's Book'.⁴³ Direct

38. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], pp.214–15.

39. *Ibid.*, p.215.

40. *Ibid.*, p.216; and W. Wynne to Thomas Pennant, 24 November 1777, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP22/3.

41. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.399; and W. Wynne to Thomas Pennant, 24 November 1777, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP22/3.

42. John Lloyd to Thomas Pennant, 6 September 1777, WCRO CR 2017/TP286, URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://editions.curious travellers.ac.uk/doc/1380>.

correspondence between Eyton and Pennant has survived which shows the willingness of the elderly man to share all he could in order to bring the history of his ancestors to light in Pennant's printed work. 'Excuse good Sr the blunders and inaccuracy of an Old man who has little ability but much good will to promote your laudable design', he said in conclusion to the second of two extant letters to Pennant in April 1777.⁴⁴ In his first letter, dated only a few weeks earlier, the complexity of the Flintshire borders as discussed in the published *Tours* is reflected (see above). Eyton was aware of the instability of the boundaries of the counties of Denbigh and Flint and of the difficulties facing those who wished to attribute lands to historical owners. Looking back at the history of one of his ancestors, John ap Ellis Eyton, who was rewarded with lands by Henry VII following his contribution to the 1485 victory of Bosworth Field, for example, he expressed the view that it was difficult to discover the names of the former owners of these lands:

to discover who these Lands belongd to before, will prove a difficult tasc [*sic*]. it is probable that in those days property was very uncertain. perhaps the Land had for a Long time lain common, and cultivation prevented by hostile incursions[.] till the following reign the Counties of Denbigh and Flint had no name.⁴⁵

Writing of the parish of Erbistock, also in Maelor Saesneg, he reinforced the impression of the unstable boundaries of the two counties:

The Counties of Denbigh and Flint are so intermixd with each other, that in some places, particularly in the parish of Erbistock, ~~that~~ a man in walking half a mile ~~without~~ must crossing both the Counties several times. the reason of this is supposed to be, that the Earle of Derby insisting that all his estates should be in the County of Flint, part of them being then in common fields, where very rarely any one Person has more than two or three butts⁴⁶ of Land contiguous. what was the Earle of Derbys property is now Flintshire, and the rest Denbighshire.⁴⁷

A specific echo of this information is found in the *Tours*, which show the complexities

43. See *ibid.* for the references in Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.226, 286. Pennant makes no recognition here of the material from the book transmitted by Lloyd in his letter of 6 September 1777.

44. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, in NLW MS 15421C, no. 63.

45. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, in NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

46. See *OED* s.v. butt: 'A raised strip of cultivated land between two furrows, a ridge. Also: a measure of land equivalent to this in size'.

47. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, in NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

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of two historical administrative systems – that of the Edwardian conquest of 1284 leading to the establishment of Flintshire, and Henry VIII's later innovations resulting in the creation of Denbighshire – and the implications of these changes for the landed aristocracy.⁴⁸ According to tradition, Pennant noted, the Earl of Derby demanded the relocation of the Hope within Flintshire so as to ensure that all its territory fell within the borders of the same county.⁴⁹

Another border known to Eyton was that between the Britons and the Saxons represented by the two parallel dykes of Offa and Wat. He approached them through his ancestral interest in the descendants of John ap Ellis Eyton, a branch of the Eyton family who had settled in Watstay (later Wynnstay, as Pennant explains in the *Tours*): 'There is yet to be seen I believe in Wynstay park part of a trench called Claud. Watt. it runs North and South Parallel to Offas Dyke and about a mile to the East of it.'⁵⁰ Here is another voice to add to those concerned with this dyke during the 1770s and, being an elderly man, Eyton's testimony regarding traditions attached to the dykes was a significant indication of their longevity. Like Yorke, he knew how the gap between the two banks was used as a location where the two nations came together to discuss trade and other matters, and that it was a capital offense for a Briton to be found east of Wat's dyke, 'and probably not very safe for a Saxon to venture on the West side of Claud-Offa'.⁵¹ The most valuable testimony provided in this letter for the author of the *Tours*, however, may have been Eyton's discussion of John ap Ellis, who was commemorated with an impressive tomb at Rhiwabon

48. On the creation of seven new counties, including Denbighshire, from the territory of the Marcher lordships in 1536–43, and their incorporation within the six counties established by the Statute of Wales in 1284, see G. H. Jenkins, "'Taphy-land historians' and the Union of England and Wales 1536-2007", *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies*, Volume 1: Issue 2: Unions: Past – Present – Future (Aberdeen, [2008]), pp.1–27, especially p.4.

49. 'It is a common notion in the country, that the last [i.e. relocating Hope within Flintshire] was effected by the interest of the earl of Derby, in order to have his Welsh estates in the same county; for at that time, the family was possessed of Hawarden, Molesdale, and this manor; which had been granted, on January 1st 1401, by Henry IV. to Sir John Stanley ... This manor of Hope is the only one possessed at present in Wales by the earl of Derby': Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.404.

50. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.; and Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.288.

51. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.; and cf. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, NLW 15423C, no folio nos., URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://editions.curious-travellers.ac.uk/doc/1356>.

church. It seems that Pennant noticed this tomb, the statue of a monk riding a lion catching his eye. Eyton could reveal some of the history of those whom it commemorated: in his letter he disclosed information about the grandfather and grandmother of John ap Ellis, John Eyton hen of Rhiwabon and Gwenhwyfar his wife, which merited a place in the first volume of the *Tours*. After being married for a few years, the two in question were divorced, Eyton explained, before later making arrangements to remarry, with a son resulting from the 'two' marriages.⁵² In a section on Rhiwabon church, Pennant gave a transcription of the inscription on the monument and a detailed description of it as a monument to Johannis ap Elis Eyton and his wife (here called Elizabeth), both recumbent, their feet resting on the back of a lion, and a monk mounted on the latter's back, a feature that Eyton did not remember ('I dont remember that I ever took notice of the monk riding upon a Lyon').⁵³ Explaining the justification for the divorce as 'some pretence of consanguinity', Pennant explained how the estate was divided between the sons, as Eyton had told him.⁵⁴ It is possible that he was further assisted by the manuscript that John Lloyd had mentioned to him – 'Mr Eyton's Book' – where he could have verified the details of the story (correcting the name Gwenhwyfar, for example). As a postscript to his letter, Eyton offered to send his old pedigree book (which was probably this manuscript): 'Since this was wrote an opportunity has offerd of sending an old Pedgree book along with this letter which may be of use in ascertaining dates of some facts'.⁵⁵

Less than a month later, on 10 April 1777, Eyton, together with the squire of Erddig, was one of two neighbours of Pennant's who wrote to him offering their response to material from the first volume of his *Tour*. Short points covering a range of issues in the areas of Hope, Wynnstay, Malpas parish (which covered parts of Flintshire as well as Cheshire), Bangor Is-coed, Bodfari, Caergwrle, and Marchwiel caught Eyton's attention when proffering comments on what was, clearly, a draft copy of the *Tours* shared with him by Pennant.⁵⁶ The elderly man felt his own ignorance and lack of skill as a reader; 'Ignoramus' he said in answer to one

52. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

53. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.286; Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

54. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], p.286.

55. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

56. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, in NLW MS 15421C, no. 63.

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question. There may be an element of false modesty in Philip Yorke's claims about the paucity of his critical responses, on the other hand. He was undoubtedly excited by Pennant's work, and was keen to see more of it:

Impatient to Receive another of your most Entertaining Volumes, I return you this, which I have gone through with the greatest pleasure to myself, but I fear without any use to you. – I [...] can pay you but with thanks, the poor man's Excheques. If [...] you this finds you at home, pray send me another book.⁵⁷

This brief note is followed by a list of detailed comments identified by page and line numbers, Wat's dyke once again featuring among the matters that claim attention.⁵⁸

Voluntary contributors and practical assistants: Roger Kenyon and John Smalley

As Pennant circulated his *Tour* in draft form among a select group of friends in April 1777, he also received voluntary information either, from others who could help him bring his project to buckle. On 3 October that year, his neighbour Roger Kenyon, from Cefn near Wrexham, wrote to him, having heard that he was going to present the history of north Wales to the public, and that the areas covered would include his own native parish of Hanmer.⁵⁹ Kenyon presented a transcript of an epitaph to his parents in Hanmer churchyard and although Pennant did not see fit to include this in the *Tour*, another letter sent by Kenyon a few days later shows he had been contacted with a request about voting rights in Flint boroughs.⁶⁰ Alongside his response, Kenyon promised to bring relevant papers in his possession with him to the next Sessions — an event in October which would have claimed both his and Pennant's attendance as members of the landed gentry. The answer that Kenyon offered in his letter was apparently enough to please Pennant: his text about the right of the inhabitants of Overton-foreign and Knolton to send a member to Flint borough, and about the right to vote at Hope and elsewhere, quotes Kenyon's

57. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, in NLW MS 15423C, no page nos., URL (accessed 23 January 2025), <https://editions.curious-travellers.ac.uk/doc/1356>.

58. Ibid.

59. R. Kenyon to Thomas Pennant, 3 October 1777, in NLW MS 15422C. For Kenyon (1735–c.1796), see URL (accessed 29 June 2024) https://www.ancestry.co.uk/genealogy/records/roger-kenyon-of-cefn-park-24-2scy0rq?geo_a=r&geo_s=us&geo_t=uk&geo_v=2.0.0&_ga=2.1746163.312781674.1603363556-2022012426.1576767757&o_iid=41013&o_lid=41013&o_sch=Web+Property.

60. R. Kenyon to Thomas Pennant, 6 October 1777, in NLW MS 15422C.

information almost verbatim.⁶¹

Pennant did not shy away from seeking assistance outside members of his own social circle, either. A short note from John Smalley of Holywell on 16 August 1777 responds to a specific inquiry regarding St Winefride's well in the town.⁶² In his *Tour*, Pennant extolled the well as one of the best in the kingdom; it never froze and the volume of water which it held hardly ever varied, be it drought or heavy rain. According to experiments and calculations made recently on his behalf, he said, the well discarded about twenty one tons of water per minute.⁶³ We see from Smalley's letter that he had advised that the best answer to Pennant's query about the well that Mr Morris (apparently a worker on the site) could offer was that he believed well and basin held about 54½ tons of water and that the well discharged about nineteen tons of water per minute; but he intended to carry out another survey on Monday and would inform Pennant of the result, as he was not satisfied regarding waste water produced when conducting the last measurement. It is may be that Pennant recollected this waste water when he mentioned how the water became 'discolored by a wheyey tinge' following heavy rainfall.⁶⁴

The translator: Richard Williams

The last name to be considered here in the context of Pennant's preparations towards publishing the first volume of his *Tour* is Richard Williams of Fron, Mold. The son of his namesake, rector of Hawarden, he became a student at Brasenose College, Oxford in 1765, thereafter following in his father's footsteps to serve as an Anglican rector, in Machynlleth (1789–1805) and then at Llanferres, Denbighshire (1805–11).⁶⁵ A few years after his death, Williams's talent as a translator was recorded in the

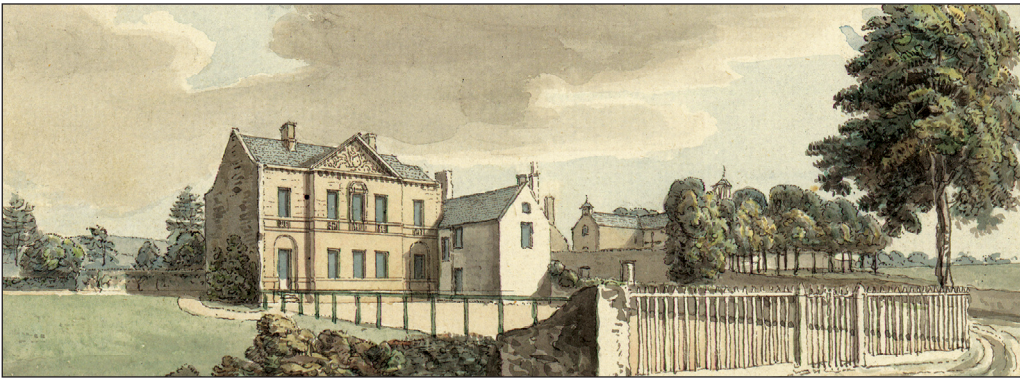
61. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.227.

62. Mr Smalley to Thomas Pennant, 16 August 1777, in NLW MS 15423C, no folio nos. John Smalley (1728–82), the former partner of Richard Arkwright, moved from Derbyshire to Holywell in the mid-1770s and set up a cotton factory in the Greenfield Valley in 1777 with his son Christopher. *Ex inf.* Paul Evans.

63. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.39.

64. *Ibid.*

65. DWB s.n. Williams, Richard (1747–1811); Clergy of the Church of England Database s.n. Williams, Richard (1789–1811), URL (accessed 7 June 2024) <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk>; and for a watercolour drawing by Moses Griffith of his coat of arms and his home, Fron, Mold, see Thomas Pennant's extra-illustrated *A Tour in Wales*, URL (accessed 30 September 2024) <https://www.llyfrgell.cymru/darganfod-dysgu/arddangosfeydd-arlein/europeana-rise-of-literacy/llyfrau-teithio/tours-in-wales#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-1204%2C-1%2C6614%2C5127>, vol. 8, p.390, and Plate 2.



Plates 2 & 3: Moses Griffith Fron, Mold, and Williams family coat of arms,
in Thomas Pennant's extra-illustrated copy of *Tours in Wales*.
[National Library of Wales]

Cambro-Briton: he could turn his hand to translating from Latin to English material such as Seneca's tragedy, *Medea*, or translating English and Greek texts into Latin. Furthermore, he was well known as a translator of Welsh material into English on behalf of Pennant and Edward Jones (Bardd y Brenin; 1752–1824).⁶⁶ Extant correspondence together with the evidence of printed works show that, as a poet, Williams played a leading and unique role in Pennant's career. In the first place, his ability to handle and discuss Latin material, a language in which Pennant would have been steeped through his education in the Classics, brought the two together within the covers of the *Tours in Wales* and in other works. The fact that Williams composed an original Latin poem in honour of Pennant in 1775, expressing the hope that his friend would get it published, is an indication of the ease felt by both in their engagement with this language and the laureate customs of its literary traditions.⁶⁷ Turning to the *Tours*, we see that Williams translated Classical and medieval material from Latin on Pennant's behalf, three examples for the first volume. On 17 August 1777, he sent two translations, stating that he was

66. *Cambro-Briton*, I (September 1819–August 1820), p.263; quoted in E. W. Jones, 'Williams of Fron – Cleric and Satirist', *National Library of Wales Journal*, (1965–6), 13, no. 4, pp.377–96, especially p.384.

67. Richard Williams to Thomas Pennant, 13 November 1775, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP24/4.

revising his versions of two further, unnamed, poems.⁶⁸ He offered two versions of an epigram to King Alfred's daughter, Ethelfleda, from the *Historia Anglorum* of Anglo-Norman historian Henry of Huntingdon (c.1088–c.1157), a figure admired by Pennant in his discussion of the earldom of Mercia.⁶⁹ Following the death of her husband in 912, Ethelfleda set about ruling her territory and leading the army, gaining so much prestige that the feminine titles of 'Lady' or 'Queen' were not deemed sufficient for her: she had to be called 'Lord' and 'King' as well. To convey the prowess of her courage, Richard Williams ended his translation of the *Historia Anglorum's* epigram with a description of Ethelfleda as an 'illustrious Amazon'.⁷⁰

An insight into Williams's methods as a translator is given through the letter with which he sent this material to Pennant. In the first place, we see that he offered two versions of the poem to Ethelfleda, the second superior, he believed, as its line count corresponded with that of the original. In his second attempt, he weeded out and compressed lines from his original version, creating a powerful epigrammatic poem which emphasized more clearly Ethelfleda's male heroism by exchanging 'manly Name' for 'Hero's name' and completely omitting the female term 'Heroine', for example. Secondly, Williams admitted in this letter, referring to his poem to Ethelfleda and another which translated the story of the death of the Viking hero Agnerus from the work of Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus (c.1150–c.1220), that his translations were not literal: 'I cannot say they are quite literally ~~done~~ rendered', he said.⁷¹ In the case of the poem to Agnerus, one obvious but uncharacteristic omission (as will be seen further below), is the fact that Williams did not use the reference to Hercules which opens the Latin text, providing an impressive starting point to the promotion of the Viking hero. For '*Herculè nemo illo visus mihi fortior unquam*' (literally, 'No one ever seemed to me stronger than that Hercules'), Williams offered 'Ne'er did my eyes such Fortitude behold', words changed in the print text to 'Ne'er did I yet such fortitude behold!'.⁷² But if Hercules was omitted, it was possible to authenticate the translation by using another proper name that does not appear in the original quotation: Williams added to the Classical 'Elysium' the name of 'Odin's hall', home of the god of war and death in Norse mythology, and the location to which the souls of the dead were brought. It is an appropriate addition

68. Richard Williams to Thomas Pennant, 17 August 1777, in NLW MS 15423C, no folio nos.

69. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.120-2.

70. Richard Williams to Thomas Pennant, 17 August 1777.

71. Richard Williams to Thomas Pennant, 17 August 1777, in NLW MS 15423C, no folio nos.

72. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.277.

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in the context of Pennant's discussion, which is part of his treatment of Chirk Castle on the border between Denbighshire and Shropshire. The intention in the *Tours* was to contrast the cowardice of recent countrymen (members of the contentious Kyffin families discussed by Sir John Wynn in his manuscript history of the Gwydir family) with the unmistakable courage of the Druids.⁷³ In the absence of Welsh metrical material on the theme, Pennant turned to the Scandinavian Agnerus and Saxo Grammaticus's description of that hero's brave end in order to convey the contempt in which the ancestors of the Britons held death.

Classical literature came into play again as the *Tour* turned its attention to early burial methods ('Antient Internment'), in a section attached to a topographical discussion of the village of Llanarmon. This parish was full of funerary cairns, and Pennant recounted his experience of being present when one of these was excavated:

Sepulchral tumuli are very frequent in this parish. I was present at the opening of one, composed of loose stones and earth, covered with a layer of soil about two feet thick, and over that a coat of verdant turf. In the course of our search, were discovered, towards the middle of the tumulus, several urns made of sun-burnt clay ...⁷⁴

The excitement of the occasion tempered by the decision to give a scientific report of the discovery, Pennant described in detail the location of the urns in question inside the cairn, noting that they held the ashes of the burnt body as part of a burial ritual, and were encircled by the remains of some of the bones not destroyed by the fire — the femur, the arm, and even a skull — mixed with pebbles. He did not elaborate upon his description of the company that was present on the occasion of the excavation, however, nor therefore on the consequences of the actions of those involved on the discovery. To get a better understanding of that, we must turn to John Lloyd, Caerwys, who recounted how one urn had already been destroyed

73. Pennant takes this story from the colourful record by Sir John Wynn of the lives and activities of his ancestors. Ievan (or Ieuan) ap Robert ap Meredith, a relation of the Kyffin family, stars as one of the intractable heroes of the past. See D. Barrington (ed.), *The History of the Gwedir Family* (London, 1770), pp.104–8; and for a description of the impressive physicality of Ieuan, J. Wynn, *The History of the Gwydir Family and Memoirs*, ed. J. G. Jones (Llandysul, 1990), p.xxviii. Pennant closely reflected the testimony of Sir John Wynn in Barrington, *History of the Gwedir Family*, pp.107–8, and acknowledged his debt in a note ('Gwydir family, 107'), in *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.276.

74. *Ibid.*, p.381.

when he and Mr Pennant arrived at the excavation site.⁷⁵ It is not clear from Lloyd's words — 'Employed people to open the remainder of a tumulus in a field called Kefrydd' — whether it was Pennant who directed the work but it seems that the owner of the land was hardly interested in the historical value of what was found, as he used other examples of urns and bones from the excavation as compost on his land. For Pennant, the author of the *Tours*, the discovery sparked a more extensive discussion of ancient burial practices in a seven page long section headed 'Antient Internment' which considers the prehistoric remains of Classical, Druidic and Scandinavian peoples. A notable part of the discussion, towards its conclusion, is Pennant's instinct to use Classical metrical evidence to bring to life before his readers the subject of burials, with all their significance to human society. He quotes from Alexander Pope's well-known translation of the story of Patroclus' funeral in the *Iliad* and Christopher Pitt's of the burial of the two contending factions, the Tuscan Italians and the Trojans, in Virgil's *Aeneid*.⁷⁶ The service of his friend from Mold, Richard Williams, was required for an English version of the words of the Roman poet Tibullus (c.55 B.C.–c.19 B.C.) in a poem which describes how, whilst sick in Phaeacia, far away from home, the poet fears that the important women in his life — his mother, his sister, and his beloved Delia — could have no assurance that his bones and ashes had been collected and he fittingly mourned, were he to die.⁷⁷ Like Pope and Pitt, Williams used heroic couplets to translate, in this case, Latin elegiac couplets, but some of his lines are spasmodic (including the first, where he once again omits a key proper noun, Phaeacia, the geographical setting of the poem, choosing instead to include it in a note only). On this occasion, he was also unable to secure a correspondence between the number of lines in the original and in the translation, his goal in the case of the poem to Ethelfleda, as we have seen.

In addition to these quotations from Latin poems, there are two translations of

75. The find is discussed with a quotation from John Lloyd's account, in Evans, 'Reverend John Lloyd', 120; and further in S. J. Briggs, 'Thomas Pennant: Some Working Practices of an Archaeological Travel Writer in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain', in M-A Constantine and N. Leask (eds.), *Enlightenment Travel and British Identities: Thomas Pennant's Tours in Scotland and Wales* (London, 2017), pp.41–63, especially pp.53–4.

76. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.383, 387; ODNB s.n. Pope, Alexander (1688–1744), on Pope's six-year project to translate the *Iliad*; and for Pitt's translation, URL (accessed 30 June 2024) <https://www.rct.uk/collection/1055033/the-works-of-virgil-translated-by-christopher-pitt-joseph-warton-v-4>.

77. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.386.

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Middle Welsh poems in the first volume of the *Tours*. As Pennant noted in his preface, he was extremely grateful to Williams 'for his poetical translations, marked R.W. and for the elegant version of the ode on Owen Glyndŵr, to which that mark is omitted'.⁷⁸ The ode on Glyndŵr referred to here was a translation of a poem by Gruffudd Llwyd; in the text of the *Tour*, it was further described by Pennant as a work 'agreeably paraphrased by a bard of 1773'.⁷⁹ In view of this, perhaps his translation of Gruffudd Llwyd's poem was not among those that Williams revised in August 1777, when he sent his Latin poems to Pennant.⁸⁰ Another Welsh poem in the first volume is the poem by Hywel ab Einion Lygliw to Myfanwy Fychan from Dinas Brân, 'which an ingenious friend was pleased to favor me with in an English dress', says Pennant.⁸¹ In his work on the Welsh poems, Williams turned away from the established metrical pattern of English poets who converted the dactylic quatrains of the Classical tradition into English heroic couplets to seek choices suited to the *cywydd unodl union* metre of Gruffudd Llwyd's poem and the multiple metres found within Hywel ab Einion Lygliw's *awdl* (ode). Contrary to the pattern displayed in the Welsh originals, the translations chose the most regular form for the ode (a series of four-part iambic couplets), while the '*cywydd*' appears in nine stanzas, in which both the length of the lines and the pattern of the rhyme are varied. This irregularity in Williams's version of Gruffudd Llwyd's poem is used to effect in order to convey the tensions of the poet's relationship with his patron, Glyndŵr, together with the turmoil of the battle and the celebrations of the success that is commemorated. Drawing on elements within the original text, Williams diverted the understanding of the particular circumstances of the poem's composition towards historical military disputes between Briton and Saxon. Saxons in the traditionally Brythonic region of the Old North fell by the hands of Owain ab Urien, and the term 'Saxon' (which does not appear in the original poem) is seized upon by Williams in order to place Glyndŵr's bravery within the non-political patriotic tradition adopted by Pennant in his *Tours*.⁸² Another novelty introduced by Williams

78. *Ibid.*, p. iii.

79. *Ibid.*, pp.311–15.

80. See the reference above to refashioning the translation in Richard Williams to Thomas Pennant, 17 August 1777; and Richard Williams's version in Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.311–15.

81. *Ibid.*, pp.281–4; quotation on p.281.

82. See D. Johnston, 'Shaping a Heroic Life', in Constantine and Leask (eds.), *Enlightenment Travel and British Identities*, especially pp.114, 116. Note that Williams refers to Owain ab Urien by his father's

was naming Henry [IV] as Glyndŵr's enemy in this poem, a completely anachronistic choice, as demonstrated by modern discussions of the text which date it to 1384, when England and Wales were ruled by Richard II.⁸³ Henry is named twice by Williams: as a challenger from afar to Glyndŵr at the beginning of the poem, and as one envisaged weeping at the slaughter of his soldiers at the end (stanzas 2 and 9). The last stanza has been read by Dafydd Johnston as a prophecy of future successes, a reading supported by the volatility of the use of verb tenses in stanzas 3 to 8 — past, present, and future — which leads to difficulties in interpreting the poem as a purely chronological account of Glyndŵr's activities.⁸⁴ Taking Williams's translation as a prophecy, we find that the focus on the future dislodges the sense of a narrative given in the original. The physical figure of the 'herod' ('herald at arms' or 'envoy') whose report of Glyndŵr's success places the latter firmly on Scottish soil is exchanged for the more nebulous reference to 'Loud fame' in Williams's version (stanza 8), paving the way for his glorification by 'Cambrian bards' at the end of the poem.⁸⁵

Williams's version was not the first attempt to translate this poem about Owain Glyndŵr. A prose translation appeared in an anonymous work, attributed after his death to the clergyman and scholar John Thomas (1736–69), a contemporary of John Lloyd, Caerwys, at Jesus College, Oxford.⁸⁶ If we accept Pennant's claim that Williams created this version of Gruffudd Llwyd's poem in 1773, John Thomas's prose translation would not have been available to him, at least in print, but the heavy reliance on its choice of words suggests that Williams made considerable use of it. The interpretations of *hwyl/hwyllo* are Thomas's;⁸⁷ and there are also many echoes of particular vocabulary (e.g., 'illustrious lord' (Williams) | 'Thou illustrious

name, probably so as to avoid any competition for, or confusion with, the name of the more recent hero, Owain Glyndŵr.

83. See Rh. Ifans (ed.), *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill* (Aberystwyth, 2000), p.251.

84. See Johnston, 'Shaping a Heroic Life', p.109.

85. Ifans, *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill*, p.135, line 80; John Thomas, *A History of the Island of Anglesey: From its first invasion by the Romans, until finally acceded to the crown of England* (London, 1775), p.88; and GPC s.v. herod, herodr.

86. See DWB s.n. Thomas, John (1736–69).

87. Ifans, *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill*, pp.135–6, 143–5, lines 39, 74, 85. Ifans's modernization of the text interprets *hwyl/hwyllo* as an attack or incursion ('cyrch'). See GPC s.v. *hwyl*,¹ 2. Williams, on the other hand, is led by Thomas, *A History of the Island of Anglesey*, pp.86, 88, who envisages Glyndŵr out at sea.

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Lord' (Thomas);⁸⁸ 'How terrible thy ashen spear' | 'thy ashen spear terrible in battle'; 'Meet emblem of a two-edg'd sword' | 'equal to a two-edged sword'; 'Steer thy swift ships to Albion's coast' | 'Steer thy swift ships to Britain'; 'Thy robes are white as driven snow' | 'clad in garments as white as flakes snow'; 'Stubborn as steel thy nervous chest' | 'Thou art severe and undaunted like steel'; 'An hero's toils' | 'your successful toils'; 'Thy noontide blaze' | 'the terrible battle fought at noon'). Williams is responsible for the choice of the English word 'bower' to describe the location where the poet would spend time in Glyndŵr's company: for *llys* in the original poem, John Thomas gave 'thy royal palace' but Williams's evocation of the 'bower', with its aura of domestic coziness and even homoerotic penetration, is an alternative way of presenting Gruffudd Llwyd's supposed discourtesy towards Glyndŵr, a disrespect which may be characterized as having taken his leader's generosity for granted.⁸⁹

The characteristics of the relationship between the poet and his patron are reflected in even more complex twists in a poem to Myfanwy Fychan by another member of the Llygliw family, Gruffudd Llwyd's uncle, Hywel ab Einion Lygliw.⁹⁰ Again, a prose translation was available to Richard Williams to aid his interpretation of a peculiarly convoluted Middle Welsh text, courtesy this time of an anthology by Evan Evans (Ieuan Fardd; 1731–89), *Some Specimens of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764). Echoing the earlier prose text is a feature of Williams's work here once again, as he conveys the addictive charm of Morfudd's beauty over the poet's feelings ('Divine enchantress' (Williams) | 'thou that hast enchanted me' (Evans); 'O thou that shinest like the sky' | 'O thou that shinest like the heavens'; 'in golden verse' (Williams and Evans); 'Pensive, as Trystan, did I speed / To Brân, upon a stately steed' | 'The well-fed steed carried me pensive like Trystan, and great was his speed to reach the golden summit of Bran'; 'Oh fairer than the cherry's bloom' | 'O thou with the countenance of cherry-flower bloom'; 'O, lovely flow'r of Trevor's race' | 'O thou beautiful flower descended from Trefor'; 'Bright rival of the mid-day sun' | 'O thou that shinest like the meridian sun'; 'Shou'dst thou demand thy lover's eyes, / Gladly to thee I'd sacrifice / My useless sight' | 'Shouldst thou demand my two eyes, I would part with them on thy account, such is the pain I suffer'; 'scarlet robes'

88. Further quotations in this sentence are presented according to the same pattern, with Williams's wording followed by Thomas's.

89. Thomas translates the *f'anfoes* of the original as 'disrespectful'. See Ifans, *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill*, pp.134, 143, lines 11–14; and Thomas, *A History of the Island of Anglesey*, p.85.

90. See Ifans, *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill*, pp.3, 76.

(Williams and Evans); 'Not half so fine the spider's thread, / That glitters on the dewy mead' | 'O thou that shinest like the fine spider's webs on the grass in a summer's day'; 'O, fairer than the flowers adorning / The hawthorn in a summer's morning' | 'O thou whose countenance is as bright as the flowers of the haw-thorn'). Further to the use of such examples in the text of the poem, Williams also drew on Evans's explanatory notes regarding proper names, importing them directly into his translation of the poem, reproducing them in his own notes, and even using them as his inspiration for adding elements to the topography. He referred to the note regarding 'Aran, the name of two high mountains in Merionethshire', acknowledging here his debt to Evans's collection; and reproduced the misreading of the meaning of the name *Alban* ('It seems that the Bard rode upon a Scotch steed', says Evans).⁹¹ He expanded on Evans's address to Morfudd as 'O thou that hast the whiteness of the curling waves', with a geographically appropriate reference to the river Dee ('White as Dwrddwy's curling wave'), not named either by Evans or by Hywel ab Einion Lygliw.⁹² Emphasizing the topographic in this poem appropriately reinforces its relevance to Pennant's *Tours*, but perhaps Williams's main intervention in the text was to start a process of turning the contentious circumstances between a poet and a privileged patroness which is the background to Hywel ab Edinion Lygliw's original into the basis of the love story developed by John Ceiriog Hughes from this material in his poem 'Myfanwy Fychan o Gastell Dinas Brân'.⁹³ The constant naming of 'Myfanwy' and the 'faithful Howel', and the extended note that Williams inserted to explain the relationship between Creirwy and Garwy, which identifies them with 'Syr Gareth' and 'Damoysell Lynet', a pair united in marriage despite every obstacle, all seem to gesticulate in the direction of the Hywel and Myfanwy which were later immortalized by Ceiriog; indeed, the doyen of second half nineteenth-century Wales's poetic firmament was fully aware of the debt, as he acknowledged Williams' translation (not Evans's) in his preface to the poem when it was published.⁹⁴

91. Ifans suggests that Scotland is invoked as a geographical location because of a historical event, and may be a reference to the defeat of the Scots at the battle of Nevill's Cross, 1346. See *ibid.*, pp.12 and 17, line 31.

92. *Ibid.*, pp.12 and 17, line 57.

93. See Ff. M. Jones, *Thomas Pennant: Cysylltiadau Cymreig* (forthcoming, Caerdydd, Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 2025), chapter 6.

94. J. C. Hughes, 'Myfanwy Fychan', *Oriau'r Hwyr* (Rhuthyn, [1860]), pp.15–27, especially p.16n.

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Conclusion

This discussion has drawn attention to a range of contributors from Flintshire and the eastern parts of Denbighshire who contributed to the first volume of Pennant's *Tours* and to the varied nature of their support and the way in which they became part of the first phase of Pennant's Welsh project as it gathered speed during 1777 and 1778. Many of them were members of the gentry like Pennant, who shared the common interest of their class in their heritage and who saw in the activity of the squire of Downing a 'laudable design', as Kenrick Eyton put it. Beyond family interests, discussing changes and developments in the political history of their territory in north-east Wales was important to these men. Philip Yorke was very aware of the effect that Henry VIII's Acts of Union had had on the internal borders of Wales: 'Denbighshire and Montgomeryshire being taken from the Baronies Marchers, were added to these 4 anct. Shires by the incorporating Act of H: 8', he wrote in a note on a draft of the *Tour*, indicating the importance of an understanding of the two key historical stages in the formation of the administrative units of Wales, the Statute of Wales 1284 and the Acts of Union 1536–43, and the relationship of those units with the Norman Marcher Lordships.⁹⁵ Kenrick Eyton, too, knew about the struggle in the counties of Denbigh and Flint for the designation of the territory of the nobles of the easternmost area, Maelor Saesneg, and its surroundings. In addition, these two men joined Pennant to try and interpret the nature of the parallel structures of Wat's Dyke and its more famous counterpart, Offa's Dyke, which ran on this border between England and Wales, forming a dividing line between Briton and Saxon. The older Eyton was clearly aware of the traditions regarding the dykes revealed to Pennant by Yorke but it is equally clear that Pennant's interest in the matter also motivated Eyton to research and deepen his own knowledge of the subject. After reporting what he knew about the peaceful and punitive elements of life along and between the two dykes, he proposed to go further in order to find out more about that of Wat ('I shall endeavor to get better intelligence of Wat').⁹⁶ In this regard, he offers a tangible example of the type of interaction between a small, and geographically close, group of antiquarians.⁹⁷

The significance of Yorke and Eyton to Pennant's *Tour* is underlined by the fact

95. Philip Yorke to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, in NLW MS 15423C, no folio nos., URL (accessed 29 June 2024) <https://editions.curious-travellers.ac.uk/doc/1356>.

96. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, in NLW MS 15424E, no folio nos.

97. Constantine, *Curious Travellers: Writing the Welsh Tour*, p.64.

that draft copies of the book were shared with them and their comments sought in advance of publication. In the surviving documentary evidence, we can see specific examples of the impact of their responses on the final work. Eyton, for example, is a background presence within an extended section of the *Tour* in the Rhiwabon area, which considers a statue of his ancestors, John ab Ellis Eyton and his wife, at St Mary's church; the neighbouring mansion, Wynnstay, located on the banks of Wat's dyke; and the beautiful glen, Nant y Bele, which 'merits a visit from every traveller'.⁹⁸ In this case, Pennant profited not only from Eyton's attention as a reader but also from manuscript material that we know Eyton shared with him, and that he acknowledged in footnotes referring to 'Eyton Pedigree'.⁹⁹

Richard Williams, Fron, had a unique role in Pennant's preparations for the publication of the *Tours*. He stood alongside two well-known translators of Classical texts into English, Alexander Pope and Christopher Pitt, offering translations of quotations from Classical and medieval Latin poems; and, furthermore, could turn his hand to translating Welsh poems from the work of two generations of the Llygliw family from the counties of Meirionnydd and Maldwyn — Hywel ab Einion Lygliw, and his nephew, Gruffudd Llwyd.¹⁰⁰ The evidence examined in this article suggests Williams's strong dependence on earlier scholarly prose translations in his renditions of the Welsh poems, however. There is extensive borrowing from the vocabulary and interpretations of Evan Evans and John Thomas in his metrical versions of the works of the two Llygliw poets, which suggests that he probably converted from the English rather than from the original Welsh versions. He can easily be forgiven for this. When Celtic scholar John Rhys set out to translate Pennant's *Tours* in their entirety into Welsh, he broke with his practice of going back to the original text for poems in Middle Welsh in the case of one poem, the ode of Hywel ab Einion to Myfanwy, judging that 'Welsh of that age ... is as dark as Latin for the present age' and that 'it was better to put the above paraphrase of it here, instead of the original composition'.¹⁰¹ The 'paraphrase' seen in *Teithiau yn Nghymru* is a translation of

98. Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.286-8, quoted at p.288. For related comments by Eyton, see Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 10 April 1777, in NLW 15421C, no. 63.

99. Kenrick Eyton to Thomas Pennant, 25 March 1777, in NLW 15424E, no folio nos.; Pennant, *A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, pp.286, 288.

100. See Ifans, *Gwaith Gruffudd Llwyd a'r Llygliwiaid Eraill*, pp.3, 75.

101. See J. Rhys (trans.), *Hynafiaethau Cymreig. Teithiau yn Nghymru, sef Cyfeithiad o'r "Tours in Wales," gan Thomas Pennant, Ysw.* (Caernarfon, n.d.), p.177; and further Jones, *Cysylltiadau Cymreig*, chapter 6.

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Williams's poem, therefore, and not a transcription of Hywel's ode. Rhiannon Ifans's modern editions allow us now to see the misinterpretations of the early translators, Evans and Thomas, and how Williams enriched the skeletons they proposed to create poems compatible with the fashions and patriotic vision of Pennant and his period.

Alongside these gentry and clerical contributors, stands the uncharacteristic voice of John Smalley, extending his practical help in measuring the outflow of water from St Winefride's well; and a glimpse of the assistance offered by a herald from Chester, George Wilkinson, together with Philip Yorke's carpenter, as the landed gentry grappled with new evidence that came to their attention in their efforts to interpret the past. One other contributor not discussed in detail here (but represented in the accompanying images) was Pennant's personal artist, Moses Griffith. A native of the Llŷn Peninsula, Griffith had settled in Flintshire by the end of the 1770s and was bound in service to Pennant. Twenty-six plates of engravings from his work appeared in the first volume of the *Tours*, their subjects spanning examples of specific antiquities, castles, abbeys, and mansions, alongside depictions of specimens from the natural world.¹⁰² John Lloyd, Caerwys, was one among many assistants, therefore, but one who reveals himself on several occasions when the local circles which provide the basis for this first step in Pennant's exciting Welsh project are explored. Just over a year before the appearance of the volume that traces the journeys in north-east Wales from Henry Hughes's press on 23 March 1778, Pennant's effort to record his *Tours in Scotland* was praised by one reader in words that echo the better-known eulogy of Samuel Johnson: 'Mr Pennant appears to possess every Ingredient in his disposition that can be wish'd in a Traveller, curious Observation and indefatigable Industry', said Thomas Jones, writing from Park Street in April 1777.¹⁰³ We know from examining his correspondence that the result of the same effort in the case of the *Tours in Wales* was not the work of one man, but a composition brought together by an author prepared to receive and ask for information, and put in order a variety of resources that came into his hands from a multitude of contacts.

102. See n. 21 above; *Pennant, A Tour in Wales 1770* [1773], I, p.vi; and for Pennant's recognition of his 'worthy servant', *ibid.*, pp.iv-v.

103. See n. 9, above, on the publication date; Thomas Jones to Thomas Pennant, 9 April 1777, in WCRO, CR 2017/TP266/1; and R. E. Jenkins, "'And I travelled after him': Johnson and Pennant in Scotland", *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 14, no. 3 (1972), pp.445-62, especially p.445.