



ROBERT GERAINT GRUFFYDD

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1928–2015

GERAINT GRUFFYDD RESEARCHED IN EVERY PERIOD—the whole gamut—of Welsh literature, and he published important contributions on its complete panorama from the sixth to the twentieth century. He himself specialised in two periods in particular—the medieval ‘Poets of the Princes’ and the Renaissance. But in tandem with that concentration, he was renowned for his unique mastery of detail in all other parts of the spectrum. This, for many acquainted with his work, was his paramount excellence, and reflected the uniqueness of his career.

Geraint Gruffydd was born on 9 June 1928 on a farm named Egryn in Tal-y-bont, Meirionnydd, the second child of Moses and Ceridwen Griffith. According to Peter Smith’s *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* (London, 1975), Egryn dated back to the fifteenth century. But its foundations were dated in David Williams’s *Atlas of Cistercian Lands in Wales* (Cardiff, 1990) as early as 1391.

In the eighteenth century, the house had been something of a centre of culture in Meirionnydd where ‘the sound of harp music and interludes were played’, with ‘the drinking of mead and the singing of ancient song’, according to the scholar William Owen-Pughe who lived there. Owen-Pughe’s name in his time was among the most famous in Welsh culture. An important lexicographer, his dictionary left its influence heavily, even notoriously, on the development of nineteenth-century literature. And it is strangely coincidental that in the twentieth century, in his home, was born and bred for a while a major Welsh literary scholar, superior to him by far in his achievement, who too, for his first professional activity, had started his career as a lexicographer.

As Geraint Gruffydd's father, Moses Griffith, in his turn was a renowned figure in his own right in early twentieth-century Welsh culture, the house Egryn was revived somewhat, during his residence, as a centre that attracted meetings of well-known Welsh figures, such as Saunders Lewis—the finest Welsh dramatist ever and most original literary critic (as well as founder of Plaid Cymru); and J. E. Daniel, one of the most celebrated neo-orthodox theologians in Wales, and a professor at Bala-Bangor Theological College; and many others.

The father, Moses Griffith, was an agricultural scientist from Llŷn, and Plaid Cymru's original treasurer. His mother, Ceridwen (née Ellis) had been brought up on a farm, Erw Goed, Arthog, and had a degree in Welsh and Latin, and was for a while a teacher in Mold. Both Geraint Gruffydd's parents were legalistic and rather formal—but his father less so than his mother. Moses was not a man to waste words, but basically he was ever ready with his encouragement and help, and had a warm heart. Ceridwen seemed to be firmer but her manner was no less gracious. Their son grew up to be a particularly kind, beneficent and gentle person in his response to others.

Besides this strong family, there were other significant influences on the young Geraint Gruffydd's mind. Saunders Lewis was the major one. Although his political interest was not particularly obvious to me, Geraint Gruffydd's connection with Saunders Lewis was profound. He became literary executor in Saunders Lewis's will, and was the first to collect and edit his poems, which were first published in 1986 by Gwasg Gregynog (y Drenewydd, Powys). As a youth, Geraint wrote a sonnet in praise of Saunders Lewis in 1946, as well as seven articles on his poetry between 1983 and 1999. Geraint Gruffydd also edited the most important volume of Saunders Lewis's criticism, *Meistri'r Canrifoedd* (Cardiff, 1973). For many Catholics in Wales who know their church history, Lewis (a man honoured by Pope Paul VI as Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory) was the foremost Welsh Roman Catholic in fame ever. For a Calvinistic and Evangelical Christian such as Geraint Gruffydd, it is strange but fair to note that his first realisation of Supernatural Christianity had been through reading one of Saunders Lewis's books, *Williams Pantycelyn* (Llundain, 1927). After Moses Griffith moved from Meirionnydd to live in Ceredigion, Saunders Lewis (the Catholic) and J. E. Daniel (the neo-orthodox scholar) were still regular visitors to his home, Pwllpeiran in Cwmystwyth, which became a new centre of more experimental farming, the 'Cahn Hill Improvement Scheme'. Their overheard versatile debates

were the first stimulus for the young Geraint to question the presupposition of man-centred theological liberalism.

His education had led him through primary education in Dyffryn Ardudwy Elementary School until 1934; from there to Cwmystwyth School until 1939; on to the Ardwyn Grammar School, Aberystwyth in 1939. This was interrupted by a diversion to Gordonstoun in 1941 (which had been evacuated to Llandinam in Montgomeryshire for the duration of the war). Geraint was dreadfully homesick in Llandinam, but made numerous friends there. He also remembered that there, apart from his excellence in his studies, he developed as a sprinter. On then to the University College of North Wales in Bangor in 1945. Here he graduated with first class honours in Welsh.

But Bangor was a major experience for him. Here he met his future wife, Luned, a young student from Holyhead. They first noticed each other while acting together in a play. They joined a group of the Student Christian Movement at the university. Then, in the Christmas vacation of 1947/8, in Geraint Gruffydd's third year as a student at the university, a group of Bangor students held a retreat led by J. Elwyn Davies and J. P. Davies. In Plas-y-nant, Betws Garmon, Luned first, then Geraint, were both converted to evangelical Christianity. Before long an organised movement had begun among these students in Wales, centred around a Welsh Evangelical journal which they developed, *Y Cylchgrawn Efengylaidd*. Geraint Gruffydd had no little part in its beginnings. This proved a notable period of time for an unlikely Welsh religious 'revolution', a rebellion against the downgrade of belief.

The *Welsh Evangelical Magazine* stimulated regular Bible-study retreats and camps which led eventually to the establishment of the Evangelical Movement of Wales. The Plas-y-nant retreat turned out to be one of the most important happenings in twentieth-century religion in Wales. Intellectually, perhaps with the growth of interest in Barth and Brunner's emphases, as well as the influence of theology from Amsterdam and the early Princeton (and later Westminster) Seminary, the confessional mind of all these young people felt a strong sharpening of conviction under the critical preaching of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. For Geraint Gruffydd, this meeting in Plas-y-nant proved a turning point in so far as it clinched and gave firm substance to what had been previously an experiential awakening.

When he went up to Oxford to study for a D.Phil under the direction of Idris Foster, Geraint Gruffydd joined a circle of young Christians with

something of a Catholic turn of mind, although there was a sprinkling of some atheists present. He himself already had a fairly clear leaning to evangelical Calvinism; and there is no doubt that he began to question himself regarding the two great strands of Supernatural Christianity, and what was the relationship of one to the other; and what was basically common to them both. It appears that an American, Sheldon Vanauken, and his wife were a key influence in Geraint Gruffydd's maturation at Oxford. But among this circle that gathered for their discussions, there were some poets who would read aloud to the others from their work. Vanauken himself would read stimulating letters he had received from C. S. Lewis. Some of these were recorded later by Vanauken in an autobiographical volume, *A Severe Mercy* (London, 1977). He also made a reference to 'the bushy-headed Welshman, Geraint Gruffydd, who could read poetry in his vibrant voice so magnificently that it would send chills down the back of a statue'. Geraint Gruffydd wrote an elegy to Jean, Vanauken's wife, which was published in the *Welsh Evangelical Magazine* in 1960, and later in *Blodeugerdd o Farddoniaeth Gymraeg yr Ugeinfed Ganrif* (An Anthology of Twentieth-century Welsh Poetry: Llandysul, 1987).

From here on, we view his career through his progress as lexicographer in Aberystwyth and then lecturer in Bangor, on to the three leading posts he undertook in Aberystwyth. These three now were the framework within which his academic work must be envisaged. First of all, the Chair of Welsh Language and Literature in Aberystwyth 1970–80; secondly, the Head of the National Library of Wales 1980–5; and thirdly as Director of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies 1985–93. These were the three central appointments of his career and formed the framework for his academic work.

The first major academic work Geraint Gruffydd completed had been a dissertation, 'Religious Prose in Welsh from the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth to the Restoration' (D.Phil, Oxford, 1953). It began in Oxford, but would prove to be a life's labour. It was never abandoned. Having moved back to Wales, Geraint Gruffydd (in Bangor and Aberystwyth) changed the language medium, and used his spare time to add new material to this study, fill out the picture, and read more profusely in the background materials. Thus, what was originally a brilliant doctoral thesis had now been rethought and meditated upon, and became

a major study of one of the great revolutions in thought and experience in a European context. As this manuscript in its later form was not published in his lifetime, but is still in existence and is being carefully 'edited', we can look forward to seeing it in the near future. Some ideas his admirers may already have about Geraint Gruffydd's unflagging activity will soon be enhanced.

After leaving Oxford, for two years (1953–5) his first post was in the National Library in Aberystwyth as sub-editor of the team-work *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (the National Dictionary, a permanent project by the Board of Celtic Studies which corresponds to the massive Oxford Dictionary). In this position he came to read, analyse and know many scarce manuscripts and printed books at the National Library, and experience in his daily work a 'collective endeavour'. This lexicographical task he was to return to later, when in the chair at Aberystwyth he became an advisory editor, subsequently chief adviser to the dictionary for the rest of his life.

Indeed, twenty-five years after this brief stay in the National Library at Aberystwyth as lexicographer, he was to return to the same building as Head of the National Library for a fairly brief while, 1980–5. This time, he left his mark indelibly on that establishment in three ways. He arranged for the world authority Glenn Zimmermann (from the Library of Congress, Washington) to come to Aberystwyth to examine and advise on the evolution from the former 'card' cataloguing towards modern computer methodology. He himself led a working party to consider together reorganising the relationship between various departments. He also sought an opportunity for the staff to take on personal research, permitting a free half-day for private projects, and thus allowing them to be a more active part of a powerhouse that was dedicated to research.

After the Dictionary, in 1955, however, he was appointed lecturer in Welsh at Bangor University, and was able to return to his labours in Welsh Reformation prose. Here, happily, he bought a house opposite that of a scholar who would be probably the greatest academic influence on his life, namely R. Tudur Jones (1921–98). It was a friendship that neither of them had planned, though neither believed in accidents. R. Tudur Jones, who eventually became principal of the Bala-Bangor Congregational Theological College in Bangor, was the most important Church historian that Wales has ever had. A remarkably prolific writer, Tudur Jones presented his work deliberately in two parts. He was basically a most knowledgeable authority on Puritanism and Nonconformity—the field that Geraint Gruffydd had adopted. And secondly, he believed conscientiously that

any teacher of Christianity had a duty to present his knowledge and faith to laymen. This responsibility he felt regarding the general public became a part of Geraint Gruffydd's programme.

In some ways, Geraint Gruffydd recognised Tudur Jones as his mentor. He described him in a memorial essay published in *y Traethodydd* (153 (1998), 198–202), in this way:

Apart from the literally thousands of newspaper articles—he contributed over one thousand six hundred to the *Cymro* alone—his bibliography includes over three hundred items, fourteen of which were substantial volumes, besides about the same number of slighter booklets. His first magisterial volume was *Congregationalism in England 1662–1962* (1962). This established him immediately as one of the foremost historians of the nonconformist tradition in these islands, and compelled him also to master the whole scope of church history in Britain from the days of Vavasor Powell till today.

The two men met regularly over a period of years, sharing knowledge and ideas, and were an inspiration to one another. Tudur Jones's *magnum opus* was printed in two volumes. *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl: Cristnogaeth a Diwylliant yng Nghymru 1890–1914* (Swansea, 1981 and 1982), published in translation as *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890–1914* (Cardiff, 2004). This emphasis on culture and Christianity is important and reflects a most significant characteristic in Tudur Jones's influence on Geraint Gruffydd. He had now discovered a teaching, often related to the Free University in Amsterdam and also to Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia (a teaching sometimes maligned because of its connection with the reactionary views of Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch Prime Minister/theologian). More important than Kuyper were the works of Hermann Dooyweerd and Cornelius Van Til. They developed an epistemology and sociology that emphasised sphere-sovereignty (a devolved view of God's Sovereignty in the case of Dooyweerd, and a presuppositional view of all philosophy in the case of Van Til). Both these Dutch philosophers developed the Calvinistic doctrine in combining Particular Grace with Common General Grace. This realisation incisively explained the contribution made to world-and-life culture by non-believers, as well as believers of Christianity.

Such a standpoint was helpful, even central, to Geraint Gruffydd as he meditated on the presuppositions he now made regarding his own clearer personal experience of Christianity and his 'neutral' general position in scholarship. 'Neutrality' could not deny presupposition. He took to heart what Paul meant when he required that all Christians should strive to subject all things in obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). There were two

other sentences that proved effective in this understanding of his own calling: 'Work . . . while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work' (John 9:4), and 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it' (Psalm 127:1). Such a realisation influenced his Calvinistic doctrine of work.

After Geraint Gruffydd began his research in Oxford on the religious prose of the Protestant Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the Puritans, his first published academic note (in *The Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society* in 1951–3) was to do with a rare book that had promoted the Reformation. This was a translation of 'Catecism y Deon Nowell yn Gymraeg' (Dean Nowell's Catechism in Welsh). It was followed by a characteristically modest review in *Y Llenor* (1951) of Garfield Hughes's anthology *Rhagymadroddion 1547–1659* (Book Introductions 1547–1659). This was the first of Geraint Gruffydd's reviews that were original, thorough and fully-developed articles. Here too we have the emergence of Geraint Gruffydd the literary critic. He not only tackles the task of defining anew the 'form' of the Introduction and its origin, but contrasts it with the Preface, as well as examining its style in the context of the new, fairly contrasting needs of scholars and ordinary people of the time in their prose-works. Then he published in *Llên Cymru* II (1952, 36–45), his first academic article on two letters by Owen Lewis (1553–95), the most well-known of the Counter-Reformation Roman Catholics of the sixteenth century. These mark the beginning of his scholarly career in public. Since then, as long as his energy remained, every year, he worked diligently in this field. In the early years, he began a period of acquainting himself with the manuscripts and printed books of Protestantism with a thoroughness not experienced in Wales previously nor subsequently. He was already beginning to win his soon-secure status as the master of one of our most difficult periods, but one during which scholarship contributed to the renewal of the nation at a time of great religious and political upheaval, when the language was officially threatened but the literary tradition was being slowly restored, and he came to realise that much was relevant still.

Much more could be mentioned. Welsh publishing in the native tongue exceeded that of all the other Celtic languages between 1546 and 1700. Although the oral literature itself, in both story and verse, was very active at the time, one volume above all reigned supreme, and that was William

Morgan's magnificent Welsh translation of the Bible. Not many of the Christianised countries in Europe found such a dominant single-mindedness. This, during the years between its publication and the mid-eighteenth century, released a vitality that had wide consequences in producing literacy and thoughtful discussion, but it had its cultural defects too (due to pietism) as well as its spiritual values. Such a central drive had its positive inspiration, but so had the then more serious opposite drive towards unself-critical man-centred belief, which latter movement crystallised in the first half of the eighteenth century into a truly 'Modern' period, a movement which eventually made a positive contribution to understand some of the character of the Welsh tradition and its inherent critical crisis.

As already noted, having ended his stay in Oxford, Geraint Gruffydd began the revision of his DPhil dissertation for publication, a conclusion which was not completed during his lifetime. It was however rewritten *in toto* and will prove to be Geraint Gruffydd's *magnum opus* when published. Hitherto not known to the public, this new overview of the Reformation will prove for Wales an intertwined experience of the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation, and fills a gap in our history. What had formally been supposed a literary anti-climax, and a rather flat pair of centuries, was now introduced positively as an awakening in Welsh scholarship and learning. It was an essential renewal of intellect and self-respect, that could lead Wales into the modern period, newly equipped.

Examples of this revamping of his dissertation, and the continuing interest in this period and in early Welsh publishing, can be found throughout his career in his occasional articles, such as 'The Welsh language in scholarship and culture 1536–1660', in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution* (Cardiff, 1997); 'The first printed books, 1546–1604', in P. H. Jones and E. Rees (eds.), *A Nation and its Books: a History of the Book in Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1998); and on the Jesuit Robert Persons in *Welsh History Review* (1998), besides a review of *Y Drych Kristnogawl* in *Welsh History Review*, (19 (1998), 160–2), and another of *Wales and the Reformation* in *Y Traethodydd* (1998).

The DPhil thesis was thus being gradually rewritten completely and revised over a period of sixty-two years, though hitherto unpublished, and is, I would claim, his first major work in a series of four achievements I would like to draw attention to in his career. For the present, this work is almost unknown in its entirety.

In recent years, the academic work for which Geraint Gruffydd is generally remembered is his editorship of *Beirdd y Tywysogion* (The Poets of the Princes—Caerdydd, 1991–6) of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This was the crowning point of his career in the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies—the first standard edition of the whole work of this school of poets. This massive masterpiece of editorial scholarship was one of the great moments in the whole history of Welsh academic accomplishment.

When he became Director of the Centre in 1985, he adopted these poets as the principal project. Later he developed another project examining the Social History of the Welsh Language. For the third project, he succeeded in winning substantial British Academy and Leverhulme grants to complete an index of the vast, complicated and unorganised records of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* (The Poets of the Nobility) from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. This latter project led on to the series of texts of the Poets of the Nobility. For this, the short-term salaries for individual researchers were dedicated to edit numerous unedited and unpublished manuscripts up to 1536.

Seminars were a part of these three team projects, organised (at one period) every fortnight. Geraint Gruffydd was also anxious to disseminate this knowledge throughout Wales via his itinerary of lecturing. This all arose from his inherent desire ‘to make a difference’. Care was also taken to maintain a link between these three projects and four other Celtic centres of research in the British Isles.

From the outset at the Welsh Centre, he had in mind a very clear vision of the content, methodology and challenge that confronted him, knowing from the very first day where and how to proceed. This involved setting down a pattern of work that could be continued for years to come, as the gaps in Welsh scholarship are enormous. Each editor working in the team on the Poets of the Princes would take a poem he or she was responsible for, and occasionally the team would come together *in toto* or in smaller groups to compare common problems, discuss additions, historical references and emendations for a final reading. Geraint Gruffydd sometimes would mention the ideal of ‘the whole scholar’, the person who would seek out every significant aspect in the tradition.

Each volume in the seven-volume series of the Poets of the Princes followed a similar general plan of presentation. In the case of volume 1, (1994, 563 pages), the first two poems are by anonymous poets and were edited by the General Editor, who also co-operated and advised on the work throughout the team to ascertain consistency. The introduction to

each text presents the historical background, a metrical analysis, a survey of the various manuscripts and their relationship, together with a modernised version of the poem, explanatory notes and vocabulary. The co-editors (with the General Editor) for the rest of this particular volume—working on Meilyr Brydydd and family—were J. E. Caerwyn Williams and Peredur I. Lynch, who followed the same pattern.

The second volume (561 pages) included the work of eleven poets and six editors. The team now was seen to comprise a brilliant group of scholars overseen by the General Editor, Geraint Gruffydd—Catherine McKenna, Kathleen Anne Bramley, Gruffydd Aled Williams, Nerys Ann Jones, Morfydd E. Owen and J. E. Caerwyn Williams. Professor Caerwyn Williams had a special position in all this. He had been one of Geraint Gruffydd's lecturers in Bangor, and head of the department from 1953 to 1965, and had himself taken an abiding interest in the Poets of the Princes, long before this particular series had been foreseen. His presence in Aberystwyth was partly the reason for choosing the Poets of the Princes as the first project. This volume included two of the most outstanding poets in the series, namely Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd and Owain Cyfeiliog, who were harbingers of the more emotional poetry to be found in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, when love poems, powerful elegies and personal praise tributes to much-loved friends and patrons were more common.

The third and fourth volumes may be taken together. They were the work of a single remarkably prolific poet, Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr (Prydydd Mawr—Great Poet), and edited by two scholars, Drs Nerys Ann Jones and Ann Parry Owen. Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr was primarily a classical craftsman with well-known themes, but his work had a great deal of intricacy, energy and even imaginative understanding. In his day, he was celebrated in the expression 'beauteous of phrasing'. The two volumes (of 373 and 449 pages) happily filled a regrettable gap hitherto in our appreciation of medieval Welsh literature.

The fifth volume had a special part to play in the centre's history. It was not actually fifth in publication but first in the order of preparation, and the whole team at the beginning used it as a touchstone for planning and an object of vigorous discussion. Thus, in this particular volume in the series the editing was unable to include cross-references to the other publications. It is again the work of a single poet, Llywarch ap Llywelyn. The original edited copy, begun as an 842-page doctoral dissertation by Elin M. Jones, was adapted working under the direction of Professor J. E. Caerwyn Williams. Daniel Huws, Keeper of Manuscripts in the National

Library, gave generously of his advice and knowledge, which, as he is a scholar who knows more of the history of the copiers and their co-relationship and the various owners and techniques of manuscripts than anyone ever, was very considerable. The team working on the National Welsh Dictionary too was unsparing in its support.

The sixth volume (1995—580 pages) was very much a teamwork, with almost all hands on deck, twelve poets being edited by eight scholars, the names of whom are now becoming familiar: Peredur Lynch, Catherine McKenna, Morfydd Owen, N. G. Costigan and Gruffydd Aled Williams, and the General Editor (with individual editing of some material), R. Geraint Gruffydd. It centred on the doctoral dissertation by N. G. Costigan (1998) on a particularly important poet, ‘Gwaith Dafydd Benfras ac Eraill’ (The Work of Dafydd Benfras and Others). The cross-referencing was considerable, which reflected some of the possibilities for further research.

The seventh and final volume (1996) of 666 pages seemed formally to be almost a rerun of the preceding collection (with two new editors, Christine James and Brynley F. Roberts) in so far as it edited the work of a group of poets centring on Prince Llywelyn the Great and his family with two particularly important poets among them, namely Y Prydydd Bach (The Small Poet) edited by Morfydd Owen, who judged him to be the most able *englynwr* of all the ‘Poets of the Princes’ (the *englyn* is an ancient Welsh metre, viewed by some critics as concentrating on a single image or group of images, not unlike the *haiku*); and secondly Bleddyn Fardd, edited by Rhian M. Andrews of Queen’s University, Belfast.

In this roll-call, the great period of the ‘Poets of the Princes’ seems to come to an end. But there is another poet in this last volume, and he is quite different in many ways from the others we have been discussing. He is Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch, who wrote an elegy to the last native Prince of Wales. The poem, a personal experience of great import to Geraint Gruffydd, is an awesome expression of frightening passion. This immense topic had found its fitting voice. The poet was literally in a fit of wild despair as one who had betrayed his great prince, Llywelyn the Second, and now experienced heart-wrenching repentance. The poet had conspired with the enemy, for a fee, in a sort of controlled madness. This is an immense religious poem, where the sufferings of Christ and the horrors of hell are the appropriate images, foregrounding what is actually a huge metaphor of the end of the world (which must have seemed true at the time). The poem has a terrible but disciplined beauty, in two halves, turning on an axle leading from personal woe into a woe for the whole of

creation and utilising a gross pun—‘pen’, meaning ‘head’ = part of the body, that was severed, and also meaning head = chief and end. In my view, this is the greatest poem in the language. And from this moment on, the ‘Poets of the Nobility’ begin, with a violent tragic social revolution (when the independence of Wales collapsed with the Princes)—with these noblemen providing the next series in Welsh literature for the Centre for Advanced Studies to edit, versifiers who open up the most energetic flourishing of poetry in our history.

As we have concluded reviewing the ‘Poets of the Princes’, perhaps a number of statistics would be in place in summarising them descriptively. There were thirty-seven poets, writing 3,706 lines and 193 poems. Two individual poets stand out (apart from the great deviation in Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch)—forty-eight poems by Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr and thirty by Llywarch ap Llywelyn. The number of actual individuals was probably more, as ‘Anonymous’ is noted formally as one name, but certainly represented more than one poet. They seemed a fairly unified band of poets, with similarity of tone, diction, archaic vocabulary and verbal structuring, metre and purpose. But further examination reveals a great deal of variety and development. They were responsible for the beginning of *cynganedd* (sound patterning) or rather *gogynghanedd* (partial undeveloped *cynganedd*), and for a new formation of metre. One basic division in their ranks was between two social types of poets: the *pencerdd* (chief poet of the whole territory) and the *bardd teulu* (poet of the local war-band). These adopted two different traditions in *cynganedd* and measures. Each of these offices specialised in what was a slightly different style of social and leadership praise, a sort of propaganda service that was responsible for boosting confidence and courage among their particular audience. It was a critically influential time for Welsh literature.

But in the wake of the ‘Poets of the Princes’—almost as an appendix—Geraint Gruffydd planned immediately another poetic medieval series: the ‘Poets of the Nobility’ (Beirdd yr Uchelwyr). The former series had been a complete unit, and poets of a whole period had been published in a rounded work. The following period had already received substantial attention from modern scholars. Geraint Gruffydd now planned a series of editions of lesser-known works to tackle this next more prolific period from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. He acted as Advisory Editor for 37 volumes of Poets of the Nobility, during the period from 1994 to 2010. The seventh of these volumes he produced himself together with co-editor, Rhiannon Ifans, namely *Gwaith Einion Offeiriad a Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug* (Aberystwyth, 1997).

Having noted the unpublished volume on the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the Renaissance as the first substantial contribution to Welsh scholarship, then the Poets of the Princes together with the Poets of the Nobility is the second.

Thirdly I must mention something that may seem somewhat less ambitious. It is an anthology in two volumes of Professor E. Wyn James's choice (approved by Geraint Gruffydd) of published essays written by him over the years—I will call it the Bryntirion pair. In other words, they emanated from the Bryntirion Press of the Evangelical Movement of Wales; but as a collection, gathered together from the coffers as it were, they make a very general survey of his own scholarly 'memoirs'. This third work in two volumes may stand besides the two major contributions already discussed and represent the more popular aspect of his work.

Although companion volumes, these two are quite different in both content and audience, and deal with literature and religion. The first, *Y Ffordd Gadarn* (Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr, 2008), includes radio scripts (from 1965 onwards), an essay from a theological compendium edited by Dewi Z. Phillips in 1967, as well as groups of essays and some poems from Welsh journals. They are predominantly selected from *Y Cylchgrawn Efengylaidd* (the Welsh-medium Evangelical journal) from 1949 onwards. Here, one important section in this volume—'Memories and Tributes'—is a revealing survey of Welsh Christian history during the author's lifetime and also includes important autobiographical material.

The second volume, *Y Gair a'r Ysbryd* (Bridgend, forthcoming), consists of thirteen essays, more academic in style and content, and bears the subtitle 'Essays on Puritanism and Methodism', namely what Welsh people would consider the Early Modern Religious Period. Four of the essays deal with three well-known Welsh Puritans—William Wroth, Morgan Llwyd and Charles Edwards—and another, lesser-known figure from Anglesey, Michael Roberts. 'Early Methodism', stemming from Puritanism, centres primarily on two major hymn-writers during the period, namely William Williams, Pantycelyn, and the finest female writer in Welsh, the mystic Ann Griffiths. Then, the last two essays refer to the major religious revival in Wales in the nineteenth century, 1859, and to the little-known sermons of the finest Welsh novelist of the nineteenth century, Daniel Owen.

Much of the main material for 1650–1900 appears in the two Bryntirion volumes. For the nineteenth century, Geraint Gruffydd in 1980 delivered the Daniel Owen Memorial Lecture. Daniel Owen is the most significant novelist Wales has ever raised. With all his technical faults as a writer, his image of the industrial revolution in north-east Wales was a most revealing and powerful analysis of the downgrade in evangelical Christianity. Daniel Owen here delineated, in a procession of colourful and complicated characters, some of the hypocrisy, respectability, cruelty, class-consciousness and playfulness that wove a conceptually rich image of the period, that the present libertarian generation might be shy of envisaging. Geraint Gruffydd, always at the core of the matter, took a borderline element—Daniel Owen’s preaching (and preaching was somewhat against Owen’s own grain); he had been theologically vague, and rather romantic. But Geraint Gruffydd demonstrated that actually this rather awkward feature had a way of explaining Owen’s strong individuality.

This second volume will also include Geraint Gruffydd’s bibliography for 1996–2015 by his former student Huw Walters. The first part of his bibliography (1946–95) was published in the Festschrift, *Beirdd a Thywysogion*, edited B. F. Roberts and M. E. Owen (Cardiff, 1996).

Organising the editing and republishing of this Bryntirion pair of volumes by someone else actually reflects his humility. The writings were selected from the more ‘evangelical’ sections of Geraint Gruffydd’s work—that is to say his writings from the modern Puritan and Methodist period, with some arising from personal ‘evangelical’ experiences and convictions; and therefore, in some ways, the choice of content may appear much too succinct. Much of the main material for 1650 to 1900 appears in the two Bryntirion volumes. But there is a greater mass of material in Geraint Gruffydd’s bibliography that still deserves an audience. It needs reappearing from generation to generation in one convenient place, as there is a permanence in its wholeness that still has a relevance. As we shall see, plans are in place (succeeding the Bryntirion pair) to extend the gathering of his disparate work in a further collection. Geraint Gruffydd possessed the rare gift of respecting the general non-academic reader; and this was reflected in the rich harvest of broadcast talks and public lectures he delighted in giving, visiting village halls and chapel vestries, as well as delivering more specialised topics to more academic gatherings at home and abroad. These ‘occasional’ works are very attractive to read. In his catholicity and versatility and broadness of spectrum, he in many ways touched more points in the history of our literature than anyone else.

One appropriate example of this broadness of audience is to be found around the time of celebrations to mark the fourth centenary of the 1588 translation by William Morgan of the Bible. Geraint Gruffydd led the national celebration of that significant major occasion for Welsh religion and literature. Two addresses were delivered by him in the little village of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant in 1985. Then, the main celebration was held in St Asaph's Cathedral in 1988 where William Morgan had been bishop, and where Geraint Gruffydd was invited to give the main address. These addresses are published in *Y Ffordd Gadarn*. The national committee organising the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Welsh Bible turned in search of the leading public figure, not to a cultured cleric but to a shy Calvinistic evangelical. He was already generally recognised as the major researcher in Renaissance Wales. He too edited the centenary celebratory volume, *Y Gair ar Waith* (The Word at Work), published by the University of Wales Press (Cardiff, 1988). He also presented the Annual BBC Cymru/Wales Lecture for 1988 on this topic, and took part in numerous celebratory services as in St John's College, Cambridge, where William Morgan had studied, and in Westminster Abbey. All this was 'popular' without being 'populist'.

In giving an account of Geraint Gruffydd's career, I want however to mention a fourth major work now being prepared to stand side by side with the three other main items I have already discussed: the Renaissance, the Poets of the Princes and the Bryntirion pair. I refer here to a comprehensive collection of articles, not unlike *Y Gair a'r Ysbryd*, though not centring on a particular period but on the whole gamut of Welsh literary history. For the next contribution that is significant in Geraint Gruffydd's career was the 'Panorama'. It was much more than simply a 'miscellany' if a 'miscellany' suggests merely a diversity without unity. The adoption of the 'brief studies' presentation allowed a continuous encounter with various points in the tradition. It was a deliberate way of probing into scores of key points that opened up the various developments in the Welsh heritage. The element of praise gave the maintained tradition a unity that was extraordinary. This was true too with the office of court leader (prince or nobleman) as an essential ideal symbol.

In reviewing Geraint Gruffydd's career, none of the first individual volumes already dealt with has reflected the particular unique contribution

he made, and that was first underlined when his name was put forward as a Member, and eventually as Chairman, of the Welsh Academy. He had touched more stops than any other Welsh scholar, so that his overview of every period was in itself phenomenal, from the sixth century to the end of the last millennium. As regards presenting this comprehensive collection to the general public, this is in progress. Some years ago, Professor E. Wyn James of Cardiff University prepared a splendid website on the life and work of Ann Griffiths, the early nineteenth-century mystic and hymn-writer. The detailed article describing the Ann Griffiths website by Professor James in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (90, 2 (Autumn 2014), 163–78), provides an excellent pattern for such a ‘Geraint Gruffydd website’. This website that gathers the ‘Panorama’ presented by Geraint Gruffydd will survey the whole range of Welsh literature and recent scholarship, and will be of great value. This gathering together of his multitude of articles, to be recorded in one place, reflects what twentieth-century literary scholarship had been doing in Wales about the Gamut—and that through one pair of eyes.

We realise now that printed books are not the only path to publishing in the twenty-first century. Some of the core scholarly materials in Welsh are nowadays reaching the public electronically, as we see with the National Dictionary itself, the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym, Guto'r Glyn and others. By drawing together a complete review of Geraint Gruffydd's *oeuvre*, this website too will be presented as a critical unity between Taliesin and Aneirin in the ‘sixth’ century and Waldo and Gwenallt in the twentieth. Each step in that tradition reflects some relationship to all the others. There is a link between the parts and the whole, a link which is political, religious and metrically formal, and one that will be thus presented in this collection.

There still remains therefore in Geraint Gruffydd's hitherto uncollected essays a unified gathering of very important studies touching on all periods in Welsh literary history in a manner unknown elsewhere, that will soon be available on a website: ‘The Panorama’.

Let me describe the inherent chronological plan for the contents of this ‘Panorama’ in six parts—the Early Poets (y Cynfeirdd), the Gap, the Poets of the Princes, Medieval Prose, the Poets of the Nobility and the Modern Period:

Y CYNFEIRDD (The Early Poets, c.575–675)

The problems for studying the earliest poets (y Cynfeirdd) are notorious. With a tradition that was essentially oral for centuries before being recorded in manuscript, sometimes little definite can be said about what actually existed; and some scholars would then suggest that nothing should be said. Claims are made for 'reputed' sixth-century poems which survive in later manuscripts, and are now recognised by many as genuine early texts. For the most part these poets are related to Scotland and northern England. Debates about the swing from one conclusion to the other need to be examined carefully. But there is almost nothing recorded of the validly dated copies that we would recognise as genuine remains of our tradition until we reach the Book of Aneirin and the Black Book of Carmarthen that possibly contain some of these early materials. Then again, we have the Medieval Welsh prose tales, the 'Mabinogion', that have come down to us through manuscripts such as Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch and Llyfr Coch Hergest. The main copies of the tales have a relationship with other whole or bits and pieces of broken manuscripts. Most have been lost. Scholars will continue to work in this field, and use their usual but necessary scepticism to come to 'conclusions', but never reach a final solution for most of the problems. There is a leap of some 600 years from this projected period, The Early Poets (c.575–675), to the next 'literary period', the Age of the Princes, with a sparsity of material. That is the so-called 'Gap'. So we have an abiding problem.

The Early Poets period was one of the least dealt with in Geraint Gruffydd's published studies, but not ignored. Any period that challenges and has experienced diligent examination by scholars demands a thorough acquaintance with its whole background and the whole of the relative discussion that has already occurred. In 1996 he published two textual studies on the work of Aneirin: 'The *englynion* of Llyfr Aneirin (*Canu Aneirin*, lines 535–7, 1209–11), in *A Celtic Florilegium: Studies in Memory of Brendan O Hehir* (K. A. Klar, E. E. Sweetser and C. Thomas (eds.), Lawrence, MA, 1996), and 'The Strathcarron interpolation' (*Canu Aneirin*, lines 966–77) in *Scottish Gaelic Studies* (19 (1996), 172–8—a Festschrift for Professor D. S. Thomson). Although Geraint Gruffydd was to limit himself to a handful of poems alone—apart from those that were attributed to Taliesin and Aneirin—the whole background had to be researched by necessity.

The next three poems he discusses are usually dated to the latter part of the century *c.*575–675. The date *c.*634 is given for the first poem when king Cadwallon ap Cadfan from Gwynedd was warring victoriously against king Edwin of Northumbria. The second was ‘Mawl Owain’: six lines from 642. And the third was ‘Marwnad Cynddylan’, *c.*800.

The first is dealt with in a fine article in *Astudiaethau ar yr Hengerdd* (R. Bromwich and R. B. Jones (eds.), Cardiff, 1978). Inevitably, Cadwallon’s exploits became the stuff of myth as well as of history. But Geraint Gruffydd gathered all discussion and references to him, before and after the days of the antiquarian Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt (*c.*1592–1667), and demonstrated anew the significance the material had for this effervescent crisis in Welsh history. The poem celebrates the unity of Wales in the seventh century. It seems to be where the word *Cymru* (Wales) occurs for the first time in literature, according to Geraint Gruffydd, and it is used seven times. He adds: ‘it is a striking coincidence that here occur the first examples of the name *Crist* in Welsh’. He concludes with a modernised version of the poem, together with explanatory notes on errors of copying or difficulties in meaning.

Geraint Gruffydd, in the same article, discusses the two other poems regarding Cadwallon, that are elegiac in quality and are written in the *englyn* and *cyhydedd naw ban* stanza forms. He suggests—rightly I believe—that these can be dated to the ninth or tenth centuries and that they belonged to a body of saga verse which is represented usually by the substantial collection of Canu Llywarch Hen and Canu Heledd of the ninth century. The truly fine (though popular) *englyn* poetry of this period belies the supposition that this time was bereft of any ‘important’ or ‘official’ verse; but the relevant Llywarch and Heledd groups of poems include most attractive examples of verse workmanship.

The next article Geraint Gruffydd wrote on these Early Poets was included in a Festschrift he edited in 1982 in honour of J. E. Caerwyn Williams, FBA, on the occasion of his retirement (*Bardos: Penodau ar y traddodiad barddol Cymreig a Cheltaidd*; Caerdydd). It deals with ‘Marwnad Cynddylan’ (Cynddylan’s Elegy), the third of the poems mentioned earlier. Often in Geraint Gruffydd’s articles, like this one, modern readers received a stimulation from his excitement in a rather remote though splendid corner of Welsh literature, only now appearing in a professional manner to modern scholars. Scholarship is fortunate in having such beautiful new territories to be reconnoitred.

This particular poem deals with the to-ing and fro-ing of the armies, their gains and losses, as between England and Wales *c.*800. And another

great theme for study is mentioned here, namely the striking difference in the ‘class-war’ within the realm of poetry, in the tension between the ‘chief poets’ and the ‘tribal poets’: a difference of audience and stature, style and stanza-form, and probably even the heritage itself amongst the ‘landed gentry’. The *pencerdd* seems to have adopted the *awdl* metres; and the *bardd teulu* seems to have adopted the *englyn* metres.

As the men who fought for their land and had to be felt so by descendants, the identifying and naming of battles and their location by the poet, within dates, was an authenticating factor of prime importance. Some notes and articles by Geraint Gruffydd are written entirely with that factual factor in mind, rather than dealing with the poetry as sources of aesthetic enjoyment. A note in English, ‘Where was Raeadr Derwennydd?’ (*Canu Aneirin*, line 114), in A. T. E. Matonis and D. F. Melia (eds.), *Celtic Language Celtic Culture: a Festschrift for Eric Hamp* (Van Nuys, CA, 1990, 261–2), is such a discussion. So is the O’Donnell Lecture delivered at Oxford, 22 May 1992—‘In search of Elmet’, published in *Studia Celtica* (XXVIII, 1994, 64–79). This again deals with the strained and complicated relationship between Wales and England, and we are reminded that these are propaganda poets—that is to say, poets who are looked to by their audience for encouragement and boosting morale in crisis.

A hardly discussed ‘Dark Age’ court poem, ‘Echrys ynys’ (Desolate is the island) is dealt with admirably in a Festschrift for Proinsias Mac Cana in 1999 (*Ildáach ildirech*; Aldershot).

THE GAP (c.676–1228)

The so-called ‘Gap’ between the seventh and the thirteenth century is a period of apparent sparsity between the body of Early Poets and the Poets of the Princes. During this period we find the attractive group of verses, edited by Geraint Gruffydd, ‘Cyntefin ceinaf amser’ from the Black Book of Carmarthen, a manuscript penned after 1211. In this mixed compendium we have a beautiful run of stanzas in praise of Summer. It seems that the Celtic year was divided into two contrasting festivals, Summer and Winter. The present poem was sung for the happy joyful season, as contrasted with the doleful toll of winter darkness. This was a Celtic custom, in so far as the same contrast is even more popular in Ireland. And it is noted that the first line in the Welsh ‘Cyntefin ceinaf amser’ (O! most beautiful Maytime) corresponds to the first line of an Irish song ‘Cétemain, cain cucht’ (O! Maytime beautiful in aspect). But in the Welsh

there is the somewhat raucous sound breaking across the delight of birds and meadow, sun and sea. ‘Cw’ cries the cuckoo, meaning ‘where?’ and is interpreted as a cry of longing.

This nature poetry, together with some emotional elegies and a lightness of touch, marks a type of verse that continued probably, underground as it were, throughout the following years when the heavy and scholarly *awdl* poetry of the Poets of the Princes seems to have more prominence. During this Gap period (discussed by Geraint Gruffydd), it was somehow appropriate that the short poem ‘Edmyg Dinbych’ (In admiration of Tenby) c.875–900, one of the first poems in praise of place in European poetry, was composed. This was discussed by Geraint Gruffydd in the first Memorial Lecture to J. E. Caerwyn Williams and Gwen Williams (*Edmyg Dinbych*; Cerdd Lys Gynnar o Ddyfed, 2001).

POETS OF THE PRINCES (twelfth and thirteen centuries)

This was the body of work, of broad proportions, that was adopted as the major and first programme for editing by Geraint Gruffydd as Director of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It has been thought of as his finest hour. But inevitably, working on these poems had already drawn his attention as a younger scholar. An anonymous eulogy for Cuhelyn Fardd was composed in south-west Wales, and Geraint Gruffydd suggested that although the vast bulk of the school of poetry by the ‘Poets of the Princes’ stemmed from North Wales, the starting point for the movement was from south to north. This movement foreshadows a similar movement amongst the ‘Poets of the Nobility’ (with their preponderant measure, the *cywydd*), from Dafydd ap Gwilym in the south to the great continuers in the north. The anonymous poet (says Geraint Gruffydd) had presented to Cuhelyn basically a begging poem, the earliest example of the *genre* in Welsh by perhaps half a century. Already, formally, there is a growth in certain technical usages (*cyrch-gymeriad*, a repeating of the final word of one sequence or stanza at the beginning of the next) and an enriching of the *rhupunt* metre, as metrics deepened.

In 1976, during his tenure of the chair in Aberystwyth, Geraint Gruffydd had presented in English, in *Studia Celtica* (X/XI, 198–209), a text of this poem with a modernised version, together with an English translation with textual and explanatory notes and emended readings of verse that was among the earliest in the work of the *Gogynfeirdd* (the Poets

of the Princes). At that time, he could not have dreamt that the long-awaited Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies would really be born, and the Poets of the Princes adopted as the first major project in 1985. Geraint Gruffydd was working quietly through various challenges in Welsh poetry. There had therefore been a preliminary run before the poem to Cuhelyn was edited and discussed later in the first volume of the Poets of the Princes series, *Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion* (The Work of Meilyr Brydydd and his Descendants: 1994, 25–44). It is intriguing to compare any changes between the two versions. The latter is longer, but in the earlier edition the references to some of the historical background are more numerous. He is in fact taking a fresh look in the latter edition and not carrying over the previous study completely. In the second version, a brief description of the Poets of the Princes is omitted. He has now adopted the team's regular editing plan, and has included a complete list of the eleven manuscripts, with an analytic stemma to show their relationship. The text itself is different also as occasionally an alternative manuscript has provided a preferable reading. But the editor maintains the backbone of the former analysis: he still edits in sequences in the later publication based on formal oral sound effects: 'The first sequence of thirteen lines rhymes in *-ad* and *-aid* alternately . . . The second sequence of fifteen lines employs *proest* rather than rhyme. . . The third sequence of eight lines employs rhyme and *proest* in an aabc pattern . . . And the final sequence reverts to *proest* alone.'

Geraint Gruffydd also extended, since undertaking the broader project in 1985, his earlier general conclusions regarding the description of 'The early court poetry of south west Wales' in *Studia Celtica* (XIV/XV, 1979/80, 95–105), a discussion at that time written in English. And during the years following the project, also, the interest was maintained in the same poets, as in 'A Welsh poet falls at the Battle of Coleshill, 1157: Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr's elegy for Bleddyn Fardd of Powys', in *Flintshire Historical Journal* (36, 2003, 52–8).

MEDIEVAL PROSE (c.1300 to c.1375)

Prose tales are what many foreign scholars are concerned with when studying Medieval Welsh literature. The poetry however was what won Geraint Gruffydd's attention from the beginning, right up to the Renaissance, though the emphasis changed with a different era in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries when prose theology and scholarly prose were predominant.

A brief note, however, in *Llên Cymru* (13, 1980/81, 289–91), written in co-operation with Brynley F. Roberts, is an exception. But even here, the content is not free from the Poetry of the Princes as it deals with the first branch of the Mabinogi only in so far as an anonymous poet uses playful hyperbole to eulogise a prince, with a reference to the phrase *gellaist borthant*, in a praise poem to Hywel ap Goronwy (king between 1102 and 1106). Thus the poet locates the prose story of Rhiannon and Teyrnnon in Gwent Is Coed: the note actually, here, is of more interest to readers of the poetry rather than of the prose. Geraint Gruffydd does not in any of his articles discuss Medieval prose, per se. There is actually a blank space in his work on our major literature from the beginning up to the Modern period, as if the prose of the Mabinogi had not worked their charm.

THE POETS OF THE NOBILITY

The poetry of the nobility now arrives with a definite flourish, particularly in Dafydd ap Gwilym. The work of Dafydd ap Gwilym is the central climax to the Gamut, and truly is triumphant. Here we have a late medieval poet of exceptional originality and energy being celebrated. This section is the one where ‘Geraint Gruffydd the Literary Critic’ is in the ascendance. It consists of a clutch of individual articles concentrated on the aesthetic examination of individual poems, and comes to a powerful conclusion with the 1987 volume in the *Llên y Llenor* (The Writings of the Writer) series.

Dafydd ap Gwilym (*fl.* 1330–50) was the brightest pioneer and experimenter in the whole of Welsh literature; and the salient method for examining his work was simply through careful and balanced analytical investigation. The basic discussion would aim at enjoyment and a search for values in reading and studying. But this discussion would open out to a variety of considerations.

A useful preamble to open up such an examination in this case was the brief survey by Geraint Gruffydd, ‘Contemporary scholarship in the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym’, in *Poetry Wales* (8, 1973, 56–64) or again in ‘A reading of Dafydd ap Gwilym’, in *Origins and Revivals, Proceedings of the First Australian Conference of Celtic Studies* (2000). Then we have in 1977 in the series *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* (X, 181–9), an examination of the *cywydd*

poem, 'Offeren y Llwyn', which celebrates 'The Grove Mass', where characteristically Dafydd ap Gwilym treats the experience of the free natural beauty of the countryside as a profound spiritual vision. Here, with a careful reading, Geraint Gruffydd reveals how the thrush's priestly dress of flowers is so appropriate, how the building of leaves is superior to the man-built structures of stone and glass and the leaf is lifted up as the wafer; and with the praise of the nightingale, all come together, not as a criticism of the orthodox Faith itself, but solely as a judgement of an aspect and strict interpretation of the Medieval Church that itself needed revision. Then he moves on to see the poem in the context of poems such as 'La Messe des Oiseaux' by Jean de Condé. Among Dafydd ap Gwilym's *oeuvre*, this celebrating of the wonder of natural creation is a major theme.

The poem 'Yr Adfail' (The Ruin), examined in 1979 in *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* (XI, 109–15), visits another spiritual theme in Dafydd's work—the fall of man symbolised by a home in ruin. This is related not only to the Welsh tradition of 'ruin' poetry seen in the ninth-century work of Llywarch Hen, but also to the work of Latin poets (such as S. Venantius Fortunatus) and Old English. The Welsh poem is in dialogue form, where the building is addressed bitterly by the poet with his greeting, 'Tydi y bwth tinrhwth tw'n' ('You, cottage, with a ruined open backside'), leading on to the wind cutting down to the bare roof and ribs. Geraint Gruffydd draws attention to the storms beating on the stones in their anger, contrasted with the quiet reply accepting death. He points likewise to the levels of ambiguity within the poem: the real ruin on the hillside where Dafydd and Morfudd retreated to make love (ruins were frequent, following the Black Death), the tyranny of death turning the personified ruin into 'Dafydd in his dotage', haunted by a reference to otherworld dark spirits of whom Dafydd was very aware, but paradoxically ending on a happy note recognising that the goodness of life that had once been there is indeed in itself an efficacy that had been a part of the complexity of existence. The critic draws attention appropriately to Dafydd's levels of meaning.

Then, in 1980, in a collection of fifty essays by five contemporary scholars (A. Llwyd (ed.) *50 o gywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym*, Swansea), celebrating Dafydd's work (ten each), Geraint Gruffydd examines ten very difficult poems. Here Dafydd ap Gwilym, a serial adulterer and something of an ashamed fool, is able to be a self-conscious repentant man of the church whose beliefs were genuinely solemn.

In 1985 Dafydd ap Gwilym's triadic poems were reviewed. Then, in the *Llên y Llenor* book *Dafydd ap Gwilym* (Pantycelyn, 1987), Geraint

Gruffydd spreads his wings and outlines the best picture we have of the vital years immediately preceding and during the poet's life, politically, religiously and socially. He also traces the relationship he had with other poets—particularly the poets Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu o Hiraddug—who also represent the beginnings of Welsh literary criticism. Mainly using the poetic texts themselves, he builds a convincing biography of the poet, particularly dating some of the poems and delineating his love affair with Morfudd. In two sections, he discusses the poetry of praise and the religious verse and comes to the conclusion: 'In reading Dafydd ap Gwilym's work we are conscious of being in the presence of genius. He was undoubtedly one of the great poets of Europe during the late Middle Ages and one of the greatest ever of the poets of Wales—perhaps the greatest of all.'

In two lectures of 1990 and 1992 he made a general survey of Dafydd ap Gwilym's life and he traced the ways he remains as a poetic icon to the present day. Then, in 1996, we have 'A glimpse of Welsh Medieval court procedure in a poem by Dafydd ap Gwilym', in a Festschrift for Edmund Fryde (C. Richmond and I. Harvey (eds.), *Recognitions: Essays Presented to Edmund Fryde*, Aberystwyth, 1996, 165–78). In 1997 he published a paper on 'Englynion to a mill attributed to Dafydd ap Gwilym' (*Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 49/50 (1997), 273–81). The last public lecture delivered by Geraint Gruffydd was at the annual general meeting of the Ceredigion Historical Society in April 2008, and it was on 'Dafydd ap Gwilym and his patrons in Ceredigion'.

Other individuals among the Poets of the Nobility that followed Dafydd were discussed in various essays by Geraint Gruffydd—such as Watcyn Powel, Meurig Dafydd, Siôn Cent and his ilk—but particularly in one of his best pieces of criticism on the famous elegy to Lleucu Llwyd by Llywelyn Goch Amheurig Hen (*Ysgrifau Beirniadol*, I, 1965, 126–37).

Most noteworthy was his profound interest in Medieval Welsh literary criticism, particularly in his Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture to the British Academy in 1995 ('Wales's second grammarian: Dafydd Ddu o Hiraddug', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 90, 1–28). This lecture reminds us that we can now recognise a notable line of Welsh language and literature scholars as Fellows in the Academy: Sir John Rhys had been the first in the lineage, and that had passed on through Sir John Morris-Jones, through Sir Ifor Williams and Sir Thomas Parry, and more recently to J. E. Caerwyn Williams, and so on to R. Geraint Gruffydd himself.

MODERN LITERATURE

In these various sections I have been outlining the plan of a single website, gathered together, and encompassing the whole gamut of Welsh literature studied by Geraint Gruffydd in his uncollected essays. My aim is to outline a substantial electronic volume so that the entirety reflects his lifetime achievement in scholarship. Previously I began this survey of his academic work by referring to his singular volume on the Renaissance and Reformation, then the series of volumes on the Poets of the Princes (and the Nobility), and further the more popular work in the two Bryntirion volumes that paid a great deal of attention to the Methodist Revival and heritage, including the last two centuries. Now, within the 'Panorama' of the whole of our literature, remaining items from the Modern period also must have their place.

This will include occasional essays on the Reformation quite apart from his single volume about that period. There is a rich mine of material particularly on Humphrey Llwyd and William Salesbury. But other great figures, such as Siôn Dafydd Rhys, are there, with Edmwnd Prys ever before us. An important article on *Llyfr y Resolution* and other pastoral literature appeared in Ceri Davies (ed.), *Dr John Davies of Mallwyd: Welsh Renaissance Scholar* (Cardiff, 2004). Two well-known Renaissance scholars, Maurice Kyffin and Huw Lewys, are discussed in the O'Donnell Lecture of 2007 ('Dau lenor Cymraeg alltud: Maurice Kyffin y Huw Lewys', *Llên Cymru*, Cardiff, 30 (2007), 144–60), besides lesser-known people such as Rolant Huw; all this in a powerful series of articles he penned between 1969 and 2007.

In the Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century which stemmed from Puritanism, preceding Thomas Charles, Ann Griffiths and Lewis Edwards, we have the massive figure of William Williams, Pantycelyn. Each of these is discussed by Geraint Gruffydd. But Williams was a special case. Between the seventeenth and twentieth century, Geraint Gruffydd accounted Williams in some ways as the foremost writer. He was, of course, Wales's major hymn-writer. Considering hymn-writing as a respectable *genre* in poetry is not universally the custom for critics, but it is obviously foremost in the history of Welsh and other languages such as Latin, German (Luther, Neander, Rinkart and others) and Danish (N. F. S. Grundtvig); and Williams Pantycelyn's work is still a weekly portion of the Welsh diet. For Geraint Gruffydd himself he was much more than

that. Geraint Gruffydd wrote profusely not only on Williams's prose and epic works and of course on his hymns, but also on the psychological and spiritual experience of revivalism. Williams for him was Wales's foremost religious writer.

On the whole—besides Daniel Owen—the nineteenth century and the evangelical influence had been a spectre to be avoided by Welsh literary critics (apart from Saunders Lewis and Gwenallt). Strangely, it was not a century that stimulated much of Geraint Gruffydd's criticism, apart from the popular discussion of the 1530–1880 period in his *Llenyddiaeth y Cymry* (vol. 2, 1989).

The twentieth century, however, was of great significance. Once again Geraint Gruffydd faced it head on, and embraced its complications. Throughout the centuries, Welsh literature had been for a number of recent observers, for instance Saunders Lewis and Gwenallt, and even Waldo Williams (in his own way), a Christian literature. This had been formerly a unifying factor and a tradition that fostered values and purpose. And Geraint Gruffydd, more than any other literary historian or critic, coming to this from a philosophical and therefore (to some perhaps) seemingly eccentric evangelical viewpoint in a twentieth century context, wrote a great number of articles on Christian writers in Wales. In mid-century, the most telling poets who were centre-stage were Gwenallt, Saunders Lewis and Waldo. I have already mentioned his very close relationship with Saunders Lewis; but now I must draw attention to the abundance of his essay work on him—particularly dealing with some individual religious poems of his, such as 'Mair Fadlen', 'Awdl i'w Ras Archesgob Caerdydd', 'Pregeth Olaf Dewi Sant' and 'Emmāws'—four directly Christian statements. But Geraint Gruffydd also discussed a war poem 'Haf bach Mihangel 1941' in *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* (XXV, 1999), and a note in 1996 on the autobiographical sonnet 'Mabon' by Saunders Lewis wherein Mabon represents Lewis's incarceration in 1937. (Lewis (1893–1985) was incarcerated, with two other nationalists, for a symbolic burning of materials and buildings in 1936, in the Bombing School in Penyborth, Caernarvonshire.) These partake of Geraint Gruffydd's renewed interest in Saunders Lewis in latter years, while editing and preparing the volume of criticism, *Meistri'r Canrifoedd* (Cardiff, 1973) by Lewis for the press. Of the three Modernists I mentioned, Gwenallt seems to have been the first writer that had attracted Geraint Gruffydd to question, analyse and challenge, in print, the concept of Modernity. He never isolated Modernism, nor had he ever been blindly negative nor dogmatically affirmative in his approach to it, as witnessed by his discussion

of Gwenallt's volume *Gwreiddiau* (1960), followed in 1961 by his analysis of the poem 'Jezebel ac Elias', and by his review of the collection of poems, *Y Coed* (1970). In the journal *Barddas* in 1981 he published his appreciation of another poem by Gwenallt, 'Ar gyfeiliorn'. Both Gwenallt and Saunders Lewis had been immersed in Aquinas, although both had experienced different but definite touches of the evangelical tradition or traditions, and Geraint Gruffydd had embraced the challenge of seeing this in its Catholic contrast, as a contemporary challenge.

The third Modern poet, Waldo Williams, was a lone standard-bearer of social-gospel, Quaker and pacifist convictions. In some ways, he represented the common retreat from pietism. But Waldo, though so much a part of a general liberal trend in Wales, was the strangest Welsh poet of the twentieth century. Waldo's very positive attitude to life attracted Geraint Gruffydd, and even Waldo's religious persuasions directly opposite to his own were responded to by him positively. Waldo was not only widely read and intellectually gifted, but his energetic imagination and notable mastery of language meant that many Welsh people have now come to think of him as the greatest poet of the twentieth century. (He has been translated and discussed by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams: *The Poems of Rowan Williams*, Oxford, 2002.) His own suffering and imprisonment for his beliefs, together with his full-blooded humour and passions, have made him an icon in Wales. Geraint Gruffydd has a sensitive discussion of several of his abstruse poems such as 'Oherwydd ein dyfod' in *Y Traethodydd* (1971), and 'Mewn Dau Gae' (during the Waldo Festival organised by the Academi Gymreig in 1986), and in 'Waldo Williams (1904–1971)' in *Y Patrwm Amryliw* (1986).

But Waldo had a greater meaning for Geraint Gruffydd than as a literary giant. In his second year as assistant lecturer in Welsh in Bangor, a young Geraint had been suddenly confronted by a producer from the BBC, Dyfnallt Morgan, who invited him to review Waldo's collection of poems, *Dail Pren* (1956). This was the first review of Waldo's volume, and Waldo happened to be in a friend's house to hear it. (Waldo was always in a friend's house.) Geraint Gruffydd said later of this review, 'I managed to say at the time that I believed Waldo was a very great poet.' Ever after, whenever he met the poet, 'Waldo would grasp my hand, look me straight in the eye and say "My first reviewer".' That remembered handshake always overcame Geraint Gruffydd. He knew a sort of presence.

If we go backwards beyond the generation of Saunders Lewis, Gwenallt and Waldo, back to their predecessors—R. Williams Parry and

T. H. Parry-Williams—both of these, as well as recognising the romantic word ‘pagan’ as fair nomenclature for themselves, also had some sort of Modernist tendencies in their work; but this was very much a Welsh Modernism. There still remained in it a sprinkling of guilt and irony in their negative religious attitudes. They felt they had somehow lost their loyalty to their forebears. A number of critics, such as Meredydd Evans and Robert Rhys, have noted that Parry-Williams in particular had a yearning because of a loss of more than just pietism when this neutral ‘sophistication’ set in. Geraint Gruffydd has referred to this as a kind of ‘diversion’ or ‘closing-down’ in the tradition. But he does this with affirmation, and gives thanks for the true riches of their creative energy. He does this in a memorial lecture to T. H. Parry-Williams, *Taliesin* (Academi Cymreig, 61 (1988), 7–20); also in a study of ‘Dwy Gerdd’, in *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* (VII, 1972); and in ‘The lecture to open the Literary Tent at the National Eisteddfod’ (Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru, 1975). Likewise, with the other ‘pagan’, R. Williams Parry, Geraint Gruffydd has a brief study of the poem ‘Ple mae Garth y Glo?’ in *Barddas* (1984), and he republishes translations by Williams Parry of the work of Lutheran hymn-writers in *Y Casglwr* (17, 1982). He reviews a book on the same poet in *Taliesin* (99, 1997). And in 1999 in a Festschrift to Per Denez (*Breizh ha Poblou Europa Pennadoù en enor da Per Denez*, Rennes, 1999, 331–8), he writes an analysis of Williams Parry’s ‘Breton Poem’. Both of these poets, in lieu of doctrine, had adopted a rather otherworld feeling regarding the effect place consciousness had on them.

Geraint Gruffydd was turned to by compilers of standard reference books such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography from the Earliest Times to the Year 2000* either for co-editing or contributions (2004, thirteen items); again in John T. Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: a Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA, 2006, seven items).

I need to draw this outline of the ‘Panorama’ to a close. This section began with a statement claiming that R. Geraint Gruffydd, during his career, had left a treasure-trove of broad but close-studied essays surveying the centuries. This ‘Panorama’ now will be stored in a permanent website—a fitting memorial to a very gifted scholar.

During his time at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, Geraint Gruffydd never complained to me of the weary duties of administration. He undertook such duties with vigour and readiness. In his Chair at the

University he was either a member or chairman of some sixteen committees—buildings and maintenance, health and safety, and so on—including being Dean of the Faculty of Arts. He was an admirable administrator because of his inherent and supportive gift of co-operation; and the committees held great admiration for his wise ability to move forward. He was Secretary to the Board of Celtic Studies, Chairman of the Welsh Books Council, Chairman of the Academi Gymreig and Warden of the University of Wales Guild of Graduates, also a member of the Central Services Committee and of the Joint-Committee of Planning and Resources for the University of Wales. He was a member of the Gwasg Gregynog Editorial Committee. He was Chairman of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, Editor of the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* and a member of its council, and received an honorary DLitt (Wales) in 1987, as well as being elected Fellow of Bangor University in 1993. In 1995 he was elected President of the International Congress of Celtic Studies, and he also became Vice-President of the University of Aberystwyth.

He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1991, and an Honorary Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, in 1992. The final honour he received was the Medal of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, a completely Welsh honour, the highest that could be bestowed upon him by a grateful nation for his services to Welsh culture.

Throughout this diversion into public activities as it must be considered, his concurrent abundant variety of short academic works put him in the front rank of Welsh scholars. Geraint Gruffydd's personal charm was another absolutely central trait. His pastoral care for his students was, I believe, phenomenal. A number of former students reminded me of his care and concern about students' health. Every student became a friend. And this was noticed particularly in his visits to them during illness or prolonged absence. During the last fortnight or so before final exams in particular he would visit every Honours student individually in hostel, lodgings or at home to check their well-being. Examinations were of course a critical time for students in those days. Letters received from students after his death revealed hidden good deeds that were second nature to him.

This diligence was inclusive and encompassed all members of his staff. They would find a ready ear for their academic pursuits, whatever the field, and a preparedness to read and discuss drafts of articles and books. Staff ailments provoked a kind and heartfelt response. Even for years after moving on from the college, his enquiries and visits would be a real

comfort to a number of the staff. This was a period when the department at Aberystwyth was (for that time) a fairly complicated organisation: the languages taught were Welsh, Irish (with a chair and assistant), Scots Gaelic, Breton and Cornish, as well as the whole range of Welsh literature and creative writing. The department at that time had a greater number of students in Celtic and Welsh studies than any other department in the UK. The various aspects of Celtic Studies throughout were organised (at least for the first two years) in three streams—beginners, second language and first language—and at the end of these streams we had a higher number of researchers than any other Celtic department in the UK.

Geraint Gruffydd's uncompetitive and generous disposition, in his voluntary availability to advise others, was reflected in his inherent tendency to put other scholars' work before his own. Half-way through his own project, he would put aside his own run of thought in order to assist a colleague. He would always find time to examine a PhD or to review a book or to reply copiously to queries from fellow scholars. Through him, many other academics are now enabled and inspired to follow in his footsteps. He was truly a great beacon in Welsh scholarship, and leaves a broad legacy of rich diversity for which we are all forever grateful. He died on 24 March 2015.

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Fellow of the Academy

Note. I am indebted to a number of friends for their assistance. The late J. E. Caerwyn Williams, Dafydd Johnston, E. Wyn James, Dafydd Ifans, Huw Walters, as well as Luned Gruffydd have been most helpful, as well as a number of former students in private letters.