

Huw Cae Llwyd

(flourishing 1431-1504)

Huw Cae Llwyd [1] was born in Llandderfel, Merioneth. His circuit included not only the wealthy families of Breconshire and Glamorgan but also the Vaughans and the Herberts. He was a court poet, composing at least nine *awdlau* and thirty-five *cywyddau*, comprising elegies, panegyrics and petitions. He was popular with patrons especially as his best poems gave thanks for various benefits. In 1475 he made a pilgrimage to Rome and recorded his impressions in song. He seems to have returned to North Wales later in life and by tradition is said to be buried at Llanuwchllyn. The following *awdl* poem to Sir William Herbert, the younger of the two illegitimate sons of the Earl of Pembroke of Raglan and Frond Verch Hoegyn, was probably composed between 1469 and 1490 [2], before his second marriage to Blanche Milborne.

To Troy, in praise of Sir William Herbert [3]

Ceidwad fo Duw dad, wedi dâm - Wladus *May the Lord our Father keep the flowers (i.e. descendants) of Dafydd Gam,*

Ar flodau Dafydd Gam

‘E geidw Mair, y gyda’i mam,

Enw a alwer yn Wiliam

After Dame Gwladus,

Mary (i.e. the Virgin Mary) shall keep, with their mother,

The (reputable) name that is called William.

Wiliam, dwf Wiliam filwr – O! Wiliam,

Ail Wiliam Goncwerwr,

Mae Wiliam yn ganmolwr,

Yn amlhau gwin mal y Gŵr.

William, of the same stock as William the soldier,

Issuing from William, a second William the Conqueror,

William is a praise-giver

(And) multiplies the wine like the Man (i.e. Jesus).

Y gŵr wrth y dŵr, wrth daro’n - gadarn

A gedwis Swydd Benfro,

Y dref a gedwis efô

A geidw ei fab gwedy fo.

The man by the water, by striking heavily

Defended Pembrokeshire,

The town that he defended

(Is the town) that his son will defend after him.

Efô, Iarll Penfro, pwy unfraint – â’r gŵr,

O Geri hyd Ddyfnaint?

Gwilym gŵr, geilw am geraint,

Gyda’i frawd a geidw ei fraint.

He, the Earl of Pembroke – who can equal him in honour

From Ceri to Devon?

Gwilym, a man who calls for loved ones,

Along with his brother shall keep his honour.

Ei fraint o Ddyfnaint a ddaw – dad i dad,

Hyd Owain mae’n gwreiddiau,

Iarll hydr fel Emyr Llydaw,

Iarlaeth a drig i’r llwyth draw.

His honour from Devon comes from father to father,

His root extends to Godwin,

A mighty Earl like Emyr Llydaw,

An earldom shall remain (in the possession of) the yonder clan.

Draw, er ysbeiliau y byd – o’i etifedd,

Y tyfodd cadernyd,

Dwyn gŵr, un Duw, a’n gweryd,

Rhoddi gŵr a’n rhyddha i gyd.

Yonder, although the world was robbed of an heir,

Might (again) issued,

Taking (from us) a man, the one God will deliver us.

(Yet) giving a man who will set us all free.

Y mae’r byd i gyd yn gadael - eilwaith

Mae Wiliam yw’n gafaal,

Nid rhyfedd wedi’n trafael

All the world now accepts again

That William is our keeper,

It comes as no shock, after our trials,

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| Roi in y gŵr iawn ei gael. | <i>To be given the man who is just to behold.</i> |
| Wedi cael Iarll hael o'r llin I Ddwywent, Gweddied pob rhyw fin Ar i gadw eryr Godwin A'i frawd ef, ai ford ai win. | <i>Dwywent having received a generous Earl from the lineage May every lips pray For the keeping of the eagle of Godwin, And his brother, his table, and his wine.</i> |
| NOTE: From this point the manuscript is overlaid by later accretions and so is extremely difficult to read - although imperfect, it is hoped that readers can have an idea of the original from the following... | |
| Er tyb gŵr (?) rhoi or had, Ni chât fardd y Rhaglan roi yn (ganiad), Er i ollwng o a'r llong a'r bad Ni ellyngir ei glêr fel llongau'n gwlad. | <i>Although a...man thought...to give from the seed, A bard of Rhaglan was not allowed to give a recital to us, Although he was left to drop, and the ship and the boat... Not so his poets like or country's ships.</i> |
| Y gwin pêr yn llif pennill g(...ad) I bawb da, y gŵr i bob dyn a gad, Ni bu i wledd Rys heb lwyrywys (lai), | <i>The lovely wine in the coursing of a....('s) stanza To every goodly person, this man gives (so) to every man, No less (ever) went to (the Arglwydd) Rhys' feast (even) without a full</i> |
| <i>summon,</i> Ni bu'n ei oes dai i neb un ysdâd. | <i>Never was there in his time (any) houses for anyone of the same state as</i> |
| <i>his.</i> | |
| Ni bu lys Arglwydd Rys, er ei gwledd rad, <i>William's)</i> Nac unrhyw siwel nac un roesawad, Na mêns na fflwrens na phlad rhyw fawr, Na neb un, drysawr neu baun (...ad). | <i>Never was there (even) in the Arglwydd Rhys' court, although (it held) a blessed feast, (anything to better Nor any jewel, nor one welcome, Nor carts, nor (one) gold florin, nor any such large plate, Nor any one (guest), treasure or....peacock.</i> |
| Nid âi'n ddwyn tiroedd dan i ddein(turiad), Nid âi naw'n geyrydd dan un agor(iad), | <i>No lands would turn rotten under his indenture, Nor would nine (such lands) turn into fortresses under one opening,</i> |
| Nid âi rhyw longau'n y derw heling(ad), Nid âi rhyw nifer i'r dŵr i nofiad, (Ni)d âi, rhyw windai o hendad – brenn(o) | <i>No ships would not go under a covering of oak wood, Nor would any number (of souls) go into the water to swim, A wooden chest, some wine houses from the old man, would not go,</i> |
| Ond i ddyn gwrol i ddi Dduw gariad. | <i>Only a brave man receives the love of God.</i> |
| Yntau fu'r diolch, ein tir a'i (d)y-wad I Dduw, ei roddion a'i dda a'i w'reiddiad, Ennyn ei folyant yn un afaeliad, I Dduw 'n ysbrydol, ddawnus ei brydiad, Ennyn ym mhob tŷ'n nhâl y Tad teilwng, | <i>To him be the thanks – it is spoken by our land To God – for his gifts, his good and his civilised (nature), Inciting his praise in one tenure Spiritually to God, skilfully composed, Inciting (it) in every house that is in the pay of the worthy Father,</i> |
| Ei nawdd a'ch gostwng yn heddwch gwastad. | <i>May his patronage (incite) you to bow in constant peace.</i> |
| Ni bu o'i holl dir un mab well i dad, Nac un anrhydedd, nac yn un rhediad , | <i>Never has there been throughout his land one son better suited to (his) father, Not (from the point of view) of one privilege, nor of the same</i> |

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| Nac yn un osgedd, nac yn un wisgiad, Na'u gynau sedan, nac un osodiad, Nac un ffortun, un ynad - Dafydd Gam, | <i>Nor the same form, nor the same dress, Nor their silk gowns, nor the same assertion, Nor the same fortune, the same (man of) justice as was</i> Dafydd Gam, | <i>direction,</i> |
| Am arglwydd Wiliam, arglwydd a welad. | <i>As Lord William, (the) Lord whom you behold.</i> | |
| Efô fu Istus a fwriai'n wastad Ddeau â'i wÿs, Gwynedd y pysg g(y)niad, | <i>He was the Justice who constantly bore upon The Deheubarth with his summoning, (and) Gwynedd of the</i> gwyniard | |
| <i>fish,</i> Ei nerth o Raglan i'r north, orau gwlad, A wnâi roi'r goron ar wŵr o'i gariad, Tra fu'mysg Cymry y cad yr heddwch, Ac wedi'r undydd trwch heddwch ni chad. | <i>His power from Rhaglan to the north, greatest land, Would put the crown upon a man, through his love, While he abided amongst the Welsh peace prevailed, And from that day the peace has not been broken.</i> | |
| Nes dyfod eilwaith, (?ysdiwn) daliad, Y llewod ifainc yn eu holl dyfiad, Os arglwydd Penfro yn glo ar ein gwlad, Ystiward Penfro a geidw'n bro rhag brad, | <i>Until the young lions return again, we shall.....a payment, In all their glory, If the lord of Penfro is (a) lock on our country, (Then) the steward of Penfro shall keep our country safe from</i> treachery, | |
| Emyn, un Duw gwyn, da ganiad – a'i win, <i>wine,</i> Ar egin Godwin yrhawg yn geidwad. | <i>(Let there be a) hymn, one bright God, of great declaration - (along with) his To keep (safe and well) the seed of Godwin for a long time to come.</i> | |
| Ceidwad fo Duw dad wedi dâm - Wladus <i>of</i> | <i>May the Lord our Father keep the flowers (i.e. descendants)</i> Dafydd Gam, | |
| Ar flodau Dafydd Gam, 'E geidw Mair, y gyda'i mam, Enw a alwer yn Wiliam. | <i>After Dame Gwladus, Mary shall keep, with their mother, The (reputable) name that is called William.</i> | |

References

1. Biographical sources: Dictionary of Welsh National Biography.
2. Source: Peniarth MS 189, 91. According to Leslie Harries (editor *Gweith Huw Cae Llwyd ac Eraill*, University of Wales Press, Caerdydd 1953) the poem was composed c. 1463-1469. However, between 1469 and 1490 is a more concise rendering, which was given by William Gwyn Lewis (*Astudiaeth o ganu'r beirdd i'r Herbertiaid hyd ddechrau'r unfed ganrif ar bymtheg*, PhD. thesis 1982).
3. Translation and copyright Eurig Salisbury.