Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, Account of a Journey in Wales; Perform’d in May 1778 By Two Fugitive Ladies

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When Eleanor Butler (1739-1829) and Sarah Ponsonby (1755-1831) landed in Milford Haven from Waterford in Ireland in May 1778 they were in search of a new life together. After travelling up through Wales, they settled on Pen-y-Maes cottage, which they later renamed Plas Newydd, in Llangollen. They never returned to their homeland. Over the next fifty years, the two women would become famous for their partnership and their house, and increasingly closely identified with the small town in which they lived.

Bound by close friendship since soon after they first met in the late 1760s, Butler and Ponsonby (fig. 1) had previously tried to leave Ireland together in March 1778. On that occasion, their families had stopped them at Waterford, and insisted that they return home. Both women were deeply unhappy – Butler was under pressure to enter a French convent, while Ponsonby (long an orphan) was enduring the unwanted sexual interest of her guardian. Finally persuading their families that they would not give each other up, Butler and Ponsonby left for Wales some six weeks after their first attempt, accompanied by the maid, Mary Carryl, who would live with them in Llangollen until her death in 1809.



Fig. 1. Susan Murray Tait, 'The Ladies of Llangollen' (1819), watercolour, National Library of Wales.

The two women recorded their first few weeks in Wales in a tour journal. Their initial impressions read like standard touristic practice for the period: Ponsonby notes reading churchyard inscriptions in Hubberston on Monday 11 May, and taking the ferry to Pembroke on Tuesday 12 May, where they visited the ruin of Pembroke Castle (f. 2r). In the following days they visited nearby Carew Castle, commenting on the effigies in the church, before moving on to Carmarthen, which receives the following verdict in their journal: '[it] is esteem'd the principal City of Wales but did not answer our expectations' (f. 3r) – an independently-minded spirit can be felt from the beginning of Butler and Ponsonby's Welsh experience.

As Fiona Brideoake has recently pointed out, their observations tend to be 'located within the discursive tradition of genteel domestic tourism', celebrating picturesque landscapes and country houses, aestheticised ruins, decorative detail and Gothic architecture.[1] This approach to travel is highly significant for the life that Butler and Ponsonby would go on to create in Wales, not least their refashioning of Plas Newydd (fig. 2) into a cottage ornée.[2] But it is

also evident in the material object of the 1778 tour, which is embellished throughout with Gothic script and baroque flourishes. The fair copy manuscript's dramatic visual appearance adds a sense of authority to this account of a flight from troubled circumstances; more prosaically it also functions as part of its meaning, as Butler and Ponsonby frequently deploy handwritten typography as, or instead of, other punctuation.



Fig. 2. W.L. Walton, after Edwin W. Jacques, 'Plas Newydd, near Llangollen: the seat of the late Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby' (1840), engraving, National Library of Wales.

The two women first reached Llangollen on the 25th May, though they appear not to have settled there permanently until 1780 when they leased Pen-y-Maes. The letters and diaries they wrote over the next half a century document their sociable, political and literary lives in North Wales. Reading, walking, gardening, farming and writing came to shape their time and locate them in their surroundings; they developed deep links with the landscapes and communities in and around Llangollen, and their network included shopkeepers, local poets and tradespeople, as well as gentry friends and acquaintances such as Thomas Pennant and Hester Piozzi.

However, this body of writing also shows how Butler and Ponsonby stood out, becoming not just part of the local landscape but an exceptional point within it. A life that began with a tour became in time a point on the tour: Plas Newydd, just off the main route between London and Ireland, was where they met curious strangers and passing friends and family. Some of their more famous visitors included Madame de Genlis, Anna Seward and William Wordsworth, who all later wrote in praise of Plas Newydd. Various manuscript tours in this edition (see, for example, Sophia Hoare in 1808 or Anne Lister in 1822) present alternative and less familiar perspectives on two women whose domestic arrangements were, and still are, the subject of considerable public interest.

Note on the source text:

The source text for this edition is a beautifully produced manuscript fair copy either in the hand of Eleanor Butler or Sarah Ponsonby. As noted above, the source text sometimes substitutes typography for formal punctuation. Unable to reproduce exactly the typographical features of the manuscript original, this edition includes formal punctuation where the transcription may otherwise be difficult to follow.

Further Reading

Further reading:

- Fiona Brideoake, *The Ladies of Llangollen: Desire, Indeterminacy, and the Legacies of Criticism* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2017)
- Elizabeth Mavor, *The Ladies of Llangollen: A Study in Romantic Friendship* (London: Michael Joseph, 1971)
- —— 'Butler, Lady (Charlotte) Eleanor (1739–1829)' and Ponsonby, Sarah (1755–1831), *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press)

Introduction Notes

[1] Fiona Brideoake, *The Ladies of Llangollen: Desire, Indeterminacy, and the Legacies of Criticism* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2017), pp. xxix, 72.

[2] For an account of Plas Newydd as a cottage ornée, see Nicole Reynold, 'Cottage Industry: The Ladies of Llangollen and the Symbolic Capital of the Cottage Ornée', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 51: 1-2 (2010), pp, 211-27.

[1r]

ACCOUNT OF
A Journey in Wales;
Perform'd in May
1778
By
Two Fugitive Ladies
And Dedicated to
her most tenderly Beloved Companion
By
The Author

[1v]

3

[2r]

South Wales
PEMBROKESHIRE

Sunday 10. Arrived at Haking ---
Monday 11. Walked to Hoberston , a Village prettily situated with an old Church, where are several tombstones with rustick Inscriptions – To Gallowswick a place belonging to a M.^{r} Allen, bleakly situated on the Sea Shore ——
Tuesday 12. Came in a Sail boat across Milford Haven to Pembroke Ferry. Walked from thence (about two miles) to Pembroke. Visited the Castle which was built by Arnolph de Montgomery - the Birth place of K. Henry VII: It is situated on a high Rock, & in tolerable preservation particularly one of the towns which has a Very fine Stone arch'd roof. Under the Chapel is a Cave call'd Wogan Supposed to have been a repository for Military Stores, as the Stairs still remain by which it communicated with the Castle. We observed an Ivy-tree by one of the Towers which appeared remarkable the Trunk being above 10 Inches in Diameter —— We went to a funeral at one of the Churches in the evening – a poor Building & in very bad condition ——
Wednesday 13. Walked to Bushe the seat of M.^{r} Merrick

[3r]

about a Mile from Pembroke. The Proprietor seems to have taking pains to conceal from this Place a fine view of the Castle which it might have commanded ——

Thursday 14: Went in the Evening to S.t David's Church – Ancient ——[4]
Saturday 16: Visited Carew Castle an ancient Building and Carew Church containing nothing worthy of Notice except a Monument of the Carew family with the effigies of one of them in Armour; his Wife Dame Southcote of very rude Workmanship – erected about the middle of the last Century, with their Children, five Daughters represented on the sides kneeling. [5] That of an Abbot which appears more ancient – of black Marble. Another of a Warrior with a remarkable large head, on a very uneasy posture with his hand on his sword,[6] Passed by a very beautiful Wood belonging to L:d Milford, & Lady Maude in our way to S.t Clears.

CAERMARTHENSHIRE

Lay at St Clears. - a Small Village.
Sunday 17. Came to Caermarthen which is esteem'd the principal City of Wales but did not answer our expectations.

[4r]

The remains of the Castle which are at prisint [illegible]ted into the County Gaol inworthy of notice. The Church very neat with some pritty Monuments: an ancient one of a – Welsh Prince of the Tudor Family with the Effigies of him, his Wife and Children. Those of another in Armour are placed at the foot of this Monument: another of a Lady Vaughan Who is represented kneeling in a black Veil in which posture She was found dead in her Closet,[7] —— Sir Richard Steele is also interr'd in an obscure part of this Church under a plain Flag without any Inscription —— We visited some Ruins which we were told were those of an old Priory.[8] There are some good Houses and a handsome Town Hall in Caermarthen and leaving it we pass'd by a Bishop's Palace.
Monday 18. Dined at – Llandilo – before Dinner went to Newton the Seat of George Rice Esq: a very beautiful and extensive Demesne, the Park extremely well laid out. & ornament with very fine Old Oak & other trees a great variety of Grounds and a pretty Ruin of an Old Castle Situated

[5r]

on a high hill. The House is modern & appears from the outside to be a very good one, but does not command a view of the Castle – We saw Golden Grove the Seat of M:r Vaughan from M:r Rice's Improvements and desired to see no more of it —— Slept at Landovery ---

Tuesday 19. Went to see the House where M:r Rees Pritchard a Welch Poet lived in the beginning of the last Century. It is an Ancient Building with Gothick Cielings to some of the Rooms, rather Curiously pirformed, & a very few panes of painted Glass – The remains of an old Castle belonging to M:r Vaughan situated on an eminence, and two Churches neither of which are very well worth visiting – Llandovery is pleasantly situated Surrounded by Wooded Hills – it is rather a neat Village & a pretty Clear river runs through it.

[6r]

CARDIGANSHIRE

Wednesday 20th Breakfasted at Llanbedr a Small Village. Stop'd for a few minutes at Llanrhuisted a very mean Hamlet: & look'd at the Church which is a very poor one. Lay at Aberystwith a town Sitate on the River Istwyth 119 miles from London ——

Thursday 21st: Went to see the ruins of the Castle which appear very extensive, Situated on a very rocky Eminence close by the Sea. It appears to have been built for the purpose of Defending the Town which was once intirely surrounded by a Wall some remnants of which are still to be seen. As the Castle was intended more for utility than ornament We found nothing to be admired but its strength, its extent & the beauty of its situation. No Cut Stonework, & those of which the Walls were formed are very Unsightly, though not many Yards from the Sea

[7r]

a Well of fresh Water is to be found amidst these ruins. We walked on the Strand at Aberystwith which is a pretty one, but the Harbour extrimely dangerous excepting for any small Vessels. -------.

North Wales

MONTGOMERYSHIRE

Friday 22:nd Lay at Machynlheth 198 miles from London.
Saturday 23: Saw the remains of an Old Building which the Inhabitants call the Parliament House - [1 9] Nothing memorable except the Roof which is lined Mosaic work of Wood, very uncommon and well wrought. Machynlheth is beautifully Situated on the river Dovy. Surrounded by Hills finely wooded stopt at Malleenth a pritty Village part of which is in Montgomery - and part in Merionethshire. Surrounded by Mountains with an

[8r]

old Church on the Door of which were placed a very large head & a long Bone which we were informd had been the Head & Rib of a Shark[10] - In the Church Yard are some very Large Eugh Trees One of which measured ten yards, another Six round the Trunk. The longest one hundred Yards and the lessor, fifty round the Branches lay at Canons Office a single house in a romantick situation –
Sunday 24. Came to Welch Pool situated on the river Severn 169 miles from London, from whence we went to see Powis Castle Situated on an Eminence in the middle of an extensive Park about a mile from the Town. The Castle is built of a reddish Gritty Stone rather unsightly, The Apartments are low & ill furnish'd with very bad Tapestry, but there are a great number of them with large folding-doors of Carved Work. The Cieling of the first Apartment is painted & the Apartment ornamented with four clumsy Cupids on Pedestals – The Backs & Seats of the Chairs [illegible]

[9r]

with Black Velvit & silken tissue with Black & silken Fringe. We pass'd from this through an Enfilade of Rooms – to the Gallery which is Very low & narrow, furnish'd with Family Pictures very coarsely done. there were some Busts in it which seem'd Palatable, but being placed on the ground appear'd to the utmost disadvantage. there is an Apartment joining the Gallery which was fitted up for the Reception of King Charles II. The Bed of Crimson Velvit (rather scanty) with a Gilt Balustrade across the Alcove. on the Windows, Door and Chimney are Cyphers of [11] The Stair Case very broad, of Black Oak as are all the Floors – the Walls & Cieling of the Hall and Staircase are painted & the Bannisters are of Oak curiously carved – the Eating Parlour very low and dark with some Pictures particularly one of Lord Castelmaine & his Secretary.[12] went afterwards to see the Church at Welch-Pool Nothing remarkable. the the Powis family

[10r]

have a Vault here, with a Brass Plate on it, under the Communion table ——

ENGLAND

Shropshire

Monday 25: went to Oswestry 172 miles from London. went to see the Church which was formerly a Monastery with many Monuments in particular a very ancient one – belonging to the Family of Yeale in which an Husband and his Wife are represented kneeling in very old dresses on each Side of an Altar, with Books before them All of Pointed Stone. There is also another very Curious Monument (inclosed with an Iron rail) in which the Inscription figures &c are rendered totally illegible by time. on all the Pillars, & round the Church are Marble Tablets – with

[11r]

with Inscriptions shewing what Family they belong to. In particular a very neat one of the Kynaston's. The Gate of the Church:Yard is an handsome & Spacious one of Iron painted White. the Ornaments about it of the same (representing Angels, foliages &c &C Painted in different Colours ——

North Wales

DENBIGHSH:

Lay at Llangollen a pretty Village on the river Dee over which there is a Bridge esteemed one of the wonders of Wales. Built upon a solid rock, in 1395, went to See the Church Which contains nothing remarkable, except the tomb of a Knight of the Owens Family with a Banner over it ——

[12r]

Tuesday 26 Walked in the Morning to see Crowe-Castle Built before the Birth of CHRIST – Six hundred yards perpendicular from the tower, and two miles in ascent from the foot of the hill on which it is situated. the Stones with which it was built were quarried on the Spot, but it is nevertheless Wonderful how so vast a pile as it appears to have been, Cou'd be erected on so high a Situation. Part of a Gateway & some of the Towers are still to be seen and there is a very good Well of fresh Water among the Ruins. It is surrounded by Mountains particularly one extending Seven miles, & Consisting of a series of Rocks call'd Trevor Rocks & Commands an extensive Prospect over the Beautifullest Country in the World. Went in the afternoon to see the remains of an Abbey call'd Valede Crucis two miles from Llangollen

[13r]

belongs to M:[r] Lloyd of Trevor-Hall There can Scarcely be imagined a more beautiful Situation than this Abbey by the River side & surrounded in all sides by Mountains mostly Wooded. the Me^adow in which it is placed is perfectly sublime & there are some ancient Monuments[13] near it supposed to be of the Abbot or Monks to whom it belong'd. Went in the Evening to see Chirk Castle the Seat of Richard Midleton Esq. A very large & ancient Building with six Towers which are low & broad, it is built round a Court & by an Inscription over one of the great [illegible]. half of the Building was executed in the year 1635 by a Lady Middleton. A large Hall with Pillars – A Very Handsome Geometrical Stair-case with

[14r]

Iron rails round the Landing Place,[14] the Saloon and Antichamber to it; very handsome Apartments particularly the Saloon the Cieling of which is beautifully painted in Compartments (formed by very fine Stucco) of the Heathen Gods & Goddesses with their Attributes a fine Chimney Piece of Italian & Egyptian Marble[15] – the Eating Parlour (joining the Saloon) painted Pea Green ornamented with a very light Stucco done in a pretty pattern with Medallions which had a pleasing effect. the Breakfast Parlour furnish'd with Indian Paper A Working table of inlaid Woods & a Picture of the King on Looking Glass - - - - the State Bed Chamber are furnish'd with Crimson,[16] another with Yellow Damask Very old-looking – The Gallery a very fine Room, Hung with Family and other Pictures –

[15r]

particularly the Beauties of Hampton Court done in Still Life, Water Colours. King Charles I in Armour on Horseback. Fair Rosamond with a Bowl of Poison. Picture of Jane Shore in the Dress of the times She lived in; with a Veil over part of her Face, or transparent Gauze, vastly well done. a set of Pictures of Inlaid Marble in Ebony Frames – There are several Cabinets, some of inlaid Wood, one of Tortoiseshell with Silver Escutcheons &c. another inlaid with Painted Marble representing the History of the New Testament ornamented with Silver & another very Pretty one, with Paintings on Ivory of Ovid's Metamorphoses also done with Silver. at the end of the Gallery was a folding door to a tribune in the Old Chapel – We cross'd the Court which is a very spacious one to the Old parts of the Building – In the Hall of Which there is a

[16r]

complete suit of Armour. An Iron [illegible] Shaped like an hunting [illegible]. a Very Ancient Hat of Russet Leather. We walked on the Leads intirely round the Building - - - which is Encompass'd by a very handsome Balustrade – there is an Iron door from the Court leading to a Place calld the Dungeon which is an almost totally Dark, Very deep & extensive Vault. the Grounds are very handsomely laid out & kept in the Modern taste, the Lawn very extensive, & Ornamented with very pretty [illegible] the Porter's Lodge's particularly well fancied & executed & very handsome Iron Gates.[17] the [illegible] adorned with the Midleton Arms.

Wednesday 27:th Dined at Ruthin a Town in the Vale & on the River of Clwyd 203 miles from London. It had once a Large Castle now in Ruins Which we visited but scarcely any of it remains at present. Went in the Evening to Denbigh - - - 209 miles from London on a Branch of the River Clwyd. The Town is on a hanging Rock & had been formerly a place of

[17r]

great Strength fortified by a Castle the Walls of which were a mile in Circumference, & from the Advantage of its Situation it was thought to be Impregnable: The Ruins which we went to see are very Magnificent Some Towers & one Gateway remain almost intire, Several of the Vaults are in good preservation. there is a very pretty Bowling-Green made of the first Court which commands and extensive Prospect over the Vale of Clwyd of Several Gentlemans Seats particularly a very fine one [18] lately purchased by M:r Fitzmaurice from Sir Robert Cotton. Over the Gateway was an Image of one of the English Kings –

Thursday 28:th Breakfasted at Abergæly a very wretched & dirty town near the Sea the Church Yard very full of tombstones but none of any Consequence. The Church though appearing neat at the outside with a Steeple & a ring of Bells – seemed very mean from the Door through Which We look at it. -

[18r]

CAERNARVONSHIRE

Dined at Aberconway 229 miles from London at the mouth of the River Conway went to see the remains of the Castle (which was ^built by K: Edward I. & infinitely exceeded any we had hitherto seen. the Great Hall, the Governor's & General's Towers, are particularly handsome, especially the Governor's Tower which has a Good Window – .
We also saw a House built by Queen Elizabeth in 1585 and given to one of the Wynne family an ancestor of Sir Roger Mostyn's Lady. And is now let to poor people. there is a Statue of Queen Elizabeth & a Tablet with a Latin Inscription & the date of the Year 1585 over the Door. the Hall which We saw has an handsome Cieling & Chimney Piece, of Stucco Work, the Arms of the Wunne Family are represented in the Chimney piece. The Whole House is built & Floord with Oak, is large but of a Ruinous Appearance.

[19r]

Came by Pen Maen Mawr & in the Evening pass'd through Bangor to CAERNARFON Situated on the River Mænai 251 miles from London.

Went to see the Parish Church calld Clænbiebricke Situated about a Quarter of a mile from the Town in which is a very fine Monument of the Wynne Family representing – Sir John Wynne in Armour Lying down his Lady by him and their Children Kneeling round it. this Monument is of White Marble veind with a very fine Red. it is extremely well executed and finely polished Sir John's Armour minutely and curiously wrought. and a Mat on which he lies part of which is rolld up to serve as a Bolster appears as neat as if real as does the Cushion in which His Lady's head rests. the date of the Year 1275 is carved on this monument but though it seems to have suffer'd considerably from the effects of time it appears of much more modern Workmanship. There are no more remains of Antiquity in this Church

[20r]

except a Plate fixd in the Wall with an Inscription in Ancient Characters, which We did not understand –

June

Wednesday 10. Went to see the Castle built by --- King Edward I. where He has often Held his Court & is famous for being the birth place of his Son Edward II The first English Prince of Wales. The Gateway is very handsome with a Tower on each Side, over the entrance In a Niche is a figure of Edward I with a Canopy over it very well executed, the Castle is a very great Pile of Buildings Consisting of Six Towers, besides the Principal, calld ^the Eagle Tower in which the Prince was born; with watch Towers on each. The Principal Tower is Octagonal Crown'd with three Turrets on

[21r]

the Battlements of each of these, as well as on those of the Great town are placed alternately Busts of King Edward & Eagles very roughly performed & much defaced by time. We Ascended the highest of these Turrets which command a Prospect of the County Town & Bay of Caernarvon and Island of Anglesea. This Building is in better preservation than any of the kind we had hitherto seen & some of the Towers are almost intire. They are faced with a Grayish Stone which makes a tolerable Appearance, but in places where this has fallen off, nothing is to be seen but a ragged heap of roundish Stones & Gravel. there are Galleries of Communication by the Walls from each Story of every Tower to the next, all round it and round the Towers are Dark passages which seem as if Scooped within the Walls lighted only by Spike-Holes. the Stairs are every where quite intire & on each Landing place are

[22r]

Rooms most of which are extremely small. In Each Tower are Deep Holes the Use of which We cou'd not learn. In that near the Sea there is one with a passage Wide enough for a Man to go into it. But its Depth is not known though it has been tried frequently to be fathomed it is supposed to have been made use of for Criminals – As the way to it is Arched – long Dark & narrow, & the little light it receives being only from Double Spike Holes.
There are ten Arches to the great Gate, Six [illegible] Arches to the Seventh which is the principal, and three to the third.
The Whole Town of CAERNARVON is surrounded by Walls which are flanked with six towers The Quay; Custom House; & Dock are outside this Wall on the Side near the Sea from which there is a very Handsome Gate ^way with a tower on each Side & four Entrances. Another Gate opposite this but at the other side of the Town has also two Towers and the Exchange

[23r]

where the Exchequer was formerly kept, is over this Gateway -- The only place of Worship in this town is S:^{t} Mary's Chapel which is within the precincts of the Castle ----
The family of – Thomas – have a Plas-issa - with the Date of the Year 1608 & W.T. over the Door. they have also a very pretty Country place about half a mile from the Town calld Coadallan – The House of which is small & out of repair but the Demesne is Capable of being made very beautiful – .

There is another House still more Ancient but ruinous, at present belonging to M^{r} Smyth M.P. for CaernarvonSh. and call'd Plas Maure. ---
These are at some distance from the present town, remains of the old one which was calld Segontium consisting only of some ruins of Walls very ill built & scarcely worth notice.
The Town appeard to great advantage from a Hill calld Tute Hill

[24r]

about a quarter of mile from It – This Hill is a very pretty one Consisting almost intirely of One Rock, but Coverd with Herbage.

Tuesday 24 June Left Caernarvon. Stop'd at Bangor saw the Cathedral (which is universally allow'd to be the oldest in Britain) and Bishop's Palace. The former a Venerable Building, with a very long Aisle – it was new roof'd in the Year 1600 (which Date is on the Cieling) and the Inside, is ornamented with Roses &c. of Carved Wood.[19] The Choir is very handsome, the Communion Table Covrd with Crimson Velvet with Gold lace & fringe. The Altarpiece – of Crimson Velvet embroider'd with J.H.S surrounded with Gold Lays and on each side are Gilt Punnets also hung with Crimson Velevet. The Organ is very old, Curiously painted & Gilt.[20] within the Choir is a handsome white Marble Tombstone – In the Aisle is a Monument of Black Marble without any Inscription

[25r]

The Pedestal of a rough Stone with the Years 1750 & 1578 engraved upon it. There is a White Marble Tablet in the Wall with a Latin Inscription, & a frame of Different Coloured Marbles & Gilt Marble Oak leaves in a pretty Border like Bronze. there is a very Old Brass Plate on the Ground. the Palace is an old House with a Good Garden prettily Situated the Saloon [illegible] a pleasant Room with a great deal of Old Carved Work over the Chimney Piece – Went over Penmanmawr to Conway where we Dined & heard that excellent Harper John Smythe walked about the Castle cross'd the River &

Flintshire

Lat at S.^{t} Asaph --------
Wednesday 24th went from S.^{t} Asaph over Pentrasco Bridge on the River Elwy in

Denbighshire

[26r]

pass'd through part of the Vale of Clwyd to Denbigh where we Went to see the Castle & saw the traces of the Well in which the Son of Hugh Lacy Earl of Lincoln (Who Built this Castle) ^was drown'd The Headless Image over one of the Gates (which we once Understood to be K: Edward I) is of this Lord – the Arms of the Mortimers are over the Great Gate – went to the Bowling Green – from whence the Vale of Clwyd appear'd vastly beautiful particularly Llewelly^Lleweny (Mr Fitzmaurice's)
Stop'd at Ruthin & proceeded to Langollen.

Shropshire

Thursday 25

Went to Oswestry and in search of Lodgings to Llanwmyneck a Small Village disagreeably situated, on each side of the road, & in the neighbourhood of Lime kilns.

Editorial Notes

[1] [illustration: 'Benton Castle Milford-Haven']: A coastal watercolour depicting Benton Castle, with boats and seascape in the foreground and rolling hills in the background, either by Eleanor Butler or Sarah Ponsonby (the painting is signed 'S.P.' and 'E.B.' in the bottom left corner).

[2] St David's church – Unidentified. The St David's Church at nearby Hundleton was not built until the 1930s, though there may have been a church on this site previously. See here.

[3] For images of this monument, see here.

[4] Probably a reference to this memorial tomb.

[5] For an image of the memorial to Lady Vaughan, see here.

[6] Priory – St John's Priory, founded in the twelfth century; see here and here.

[7] Butler's note, written in the right hand margin

[8] For an image of these bones above the porch of the church, see here.

[9] IMAGE IN TEXT

[10] For an image of this painting, Roger Palmer, 1st Earl of Castlemaine (1634-1705) and his Secretary (1664), attributed to Sebastiano Bombelli, see here (p. 19).

[11] Probably a reference to the Pillar of Eliseg, which dates from the ninth century; see here.

[12] See here for an illustration of the staircase.

[13] For an illustration of the saloon, see here.

[14] Possibly a reference to this four-poster bed.

[15] For an illustration of the gates at Chirk Castle, which date to 1719, see: here.

[16] A reference to Lleweni Hall, sold by Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton to Thomas Fitzmaurice c.1776. For an image of the house from Pennant's extra-illustrated Tour, see here.

[17] For a modern photograph of the aisle and ceiling, see here.

[18] For a history of the organ at Bangor Cathedral, see here.

Authorial Notes

[1] 'Owen Glendower held a P^{lt} there