# Catherine Hutton’s Tour of Wales: 1796

1796

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*By Mary-Ann Constantine*



*Catherine Hutton at the age of 43 (Herald Press, Birmingham)*

Catherine Hutton (1756-1846) was one of the more perceptive and thoughtful writers of Welsh tours at the end of the eighteenth century. Her observations, as sharp as they are sympathetic, stand out for their easy elegance and their readability. The accounts of her travels in north Wales are preserved in National Library of Wales MS 19079C, a neat, hand-written volume with a carefully laid-out title page:

Letters from North Wales
Written by Catherine Hutton
To Thomas Hutton, her Brother
from 1796-1800
And printed in the Monthly Magazine
By Sir Richard Phillips, 1816
Catherine Hutton
January 4th, 1842.

Like many title-pages, it doesn’t quite tell the whole story. From the style of the handwriting and the ‘1842’ inscription at the bottom, it looks as if it has been drawn up several decades after the years of the letters it describes. The volume also includes, as an appendix, extracts from reviews and letters from friends responding to the publication of Catherine Hutton’s novels, a piece about female writers from the *Monthly Magazine* of 1821, and an obituary of Hutton, who died in 1846. The bulk of the volume, however, is indeed a copy of the letters from Wales, and these are written in an earlier form of Hutton’s hand. Various marks, deletions, insertions and notes suggest that it was her attempt at pulling all four tours together, perhaps in preparation for their serial (and partial) publication in the *Monthly Magazine* in the 1810s.

This rather complicated manuscript history matters because tours are in and of themselves historical documents, and can bear witness to lives and landscapes which have changed for ever; there is a world of difference between 1800 and 1840, and even between 1796 and the 1810s, and it helps to consider what kinds of editorial interventions may have taken place between the writing of the original correspondence (which has not been located) and this particular recension. Hutton was an assiduous letter-writer all her life, and her three novels (*The Miser Married*, *The Welsh Mountaineer*, and *Oakwood Hall*) all draw on the epistolary form. It seems likely that the text preserved here is close in tone, style and content to the letters received by her brother Thomas (and possibly other recipients) over the course of the Huttons' journeys through north Wales, but that some revisions have been made, and that the more personal comments usual to such letters— on friends, or family, or current affairs—have been removed. What is clear, however, is that the manuscript copy was itself edited, revised and considerably truncated for publication in the *Monthly Magazine* between 1816 and 1819. This in itself justifies the inclusion of Hutton's text in a corpus of unpublished tours in Wales; the nature of the revisions is discussed in more detail below.

***Catherine Hutton: writer and traveller***

Born prematurely in 1756 to the Birmingham bookseller and historian William and his wife Sarah, Catherine Hutton was, according to her father, 'perhaps the smallest human being ever seen', but grew up healthy enough in a comfortable town house in New Street; the family also built a country house, Bennett's Hill, just north of the city at Washwood Heath. William Hutton published the first history of Birmingham in 1781, and moved in Dissenting circles, attending the New Meeting house where Joseph Priestley preached. Catherine describes Priestley's visits to their home, and, like her father, wrote a vivid account of the 1791 Church and King riots, when not only Priestley's house, library and workshop were destroyed, but the properties of seven others—the Huttons amongst them. Both the New Street town house and Bennett's Hill were looted; the latter was burnt to the ground.

Sarah Hutton was an invalid over a long period, and her daughter, besides caring for her, took on many of the household responsibilities. The family visited Buxton in attempts to improve Sarah's health; and in the summer of 1787 they undertook a journey to Aberystwyth, a small coastal town just beginning to find itself on the tourist itineraries. Three of Catherine's letters from this visit were published in a later memoir compiled by her cousin Catherine Hutton Beale, and (judging from Beale's treatment of later letters) are likely to have been quite heavily revised before publication. William and Catherine Hutton would return to north Wales four more times after Sarah's death in 1796, and both father and daughter wrote accounts of their journeys. William's were published as *Remarks Upon North Wales* (1803); Catherine's appeared as a series of 'Letters' published in the *Monthly Magazine* between 1815 and 1819. The *Monthly*'s editor, Sir Richard Phillips, was a friend and correspondent of Catherine Hutton, and in 1821 she was included in the list of 'twenty four ladies of pre-eminent talents as writers in various departments of literature and philosophy' (a list from which Jane Austen, whom Hutton admired, is conspicuously absent). Besides her three novels, Catherine Hutton also published a *Tour of Africa* (1819–21), a compilation of travel narratives by other writers. Recent work on Hutton as a novelist, letter-writer and tour writer can be found in **Further Reading**, below.

Comparison between the published letters and the manuscript shows a range of different revisions. The published 1796 Tour is very close to the printed version, with the significant omission of only a few paragraphs in which Hutton describes a particularly irritating fellow-guest at their hotel in Barmouth. Thereafter the changes become more significant, as the 29 letters written out over 138 pages are condensed into a mere 18, often conflating accounts where the Huttons have taken the same road more than once: moreover, while the 10 MS letters of the 1796 tour fit comfortably into 9 printed letters in the *Monthly*, the equally extensive tours of 1797, 1799, and 1800 are squashed down to a mere three apiece. This has implications for the published tour as historical witness: for example, sections of Letter 16, dated 'Caernarfon 28 August, 1800' (which appeared in the *Monthly* for September 1818), appear in the manuscript version as Letter 23, dated from Ruthin a week earlier. One notable loss is the conflation of two separate journeys from Caernarfon through Bettws Garmon to Beddgelert; the first of these, fascinating because Hutton is deliberately following in Pennant's footsteps and cites him at length, leaves only the ghost of an impression in the published version, and omits the references to Pennant altogether (1799 Tour, MS Letter 13; MM (June, 1818, 387-99). It also omits Hutton's typically droll (and self-ironizing) comment on her preparations for the next stage of the journey, the notorious 'rock road' linking Beddgelert and Pont Aberglaslyn to the main coach road on the coast: 'Having armed myself with an unusual quantity of excellent cold roast beef, I rode to Pont Aber Glaslyn, and entered upon the celebrated road from thence to Tan y Bwlch.'

Publication in the *Monthly* certainly altered Hutton's voice, shifting the emphasis to objective, factual observations in the style of other published tours, and slicing away many of the elements that give her narrative its particular life and tone. These include details of her own struggles with the experience of travel in wild Welsh weather ('surely such petticoats were never seen!'), admissions of fatigue and illness, and spontaneous expressions of judgement or enthusiasm: the only woman wearing cotton (rather than the more laudable native wool) at a market in Cerrigydrudion in 1797 is described in the manuscript as 'a dirty trollop, who seemed the refuse of another country'; in the published version she is a 'dirty creature'. There are memorable pen-portraits, such as that of the landlady of the Cross Foxes at Llanarmon, or of the courteous and intelligent boatman, Richard Williams of Cwm-y-Glo. Occasionally a brief paragraph half-opens a door into another life, such as that of the Irish emigrée with whom Hutton and her father share the guest-house in Caernarfon in 1799, the summer of the aftermath of the Irish Rebellion:

I have made another acquaintance, directly opposite. Pity for her forlorn situation attaches one to her. She is an unmarried woman, turned of thirty, of a noble family in Ireland, whom the troubles there have driven into Wales. She has not been in any personal danger; but her brother's house has been plundered by the rebels, and his domestics threatened with instant death. Such is her terror at these proceedings, that she declared to me she would not have slept another night in his house for a thousand guineas; and I am told, that here she sleeps in her cloaths. She is at Caernarvon without either friend or servant. The people here have a notion she is a little deranged. This, however, is not the case. She appears to me not only rational but sensible. She is so grateful for my attention, and her manner is so affecting, that sometimes I can hardly refrain from tears. (Letter 19, 1799)

Hutton is also concerned with the impact of tourism on the culture and economy of Wales, restricting her 'good opinion of the people of Wales to those who have had little intercourse with the English' and noting the visible and rapid differences made by 'swarms' of tourists in recent years: 'the roads are improved; the farms are raised; money is introduced; and the people are rapacious.' A clergyman tells her that 'the English Mountain-hunters' have 'made his country so dear that he cannot afford to live in it', and she worries about the treatment of horses, driven to exhaustion on the new, frantic post-roads. (Letter 12, 1797)

Welsh landscapes bring out some of her finest qualities as a writer, and she is in turn vivid, passionate, and wryly humorous about her own responses to the various scenes encountered on the road, and to views of mountains in particular. She found the 'view from the hill above Harlech […] so stupendous it shook my whole frame', and took evening walks from the guest house in Caernarfon to gaze at the Snowdon range 'with awe, almost with reverence' (Letter 5, 1796; Letter 12, 1797). For someone who suffered as badly as Hutton did from vertigo, mountains are as fascinating as they are 'forbidden'; and even riding along coach-roads cut into steep hillsides can be enough to force her to dismount and walk. The Huttons travelled on horseback, with Catherine riding pillion; they were accompanied by a servant, John, who figures in some of William Hutton's poems on their Welsh tours. Hutton notes that this 'mode of travelling places us in rather equivocal light at inns', where guests in carriages, who could be charged much higher rates, were rather more welcome than riders on horseback, or, even worse, pedestrians (Letter 29, 1800).

Hutton's experiences in north Wales fed directly into her second novel, *The Welsh Mountaineer* (1817) which, making ample use both of letters and of travel narratives, develops Wollstonecraftian theories about female liberty by exploring two sharply contrasting women's lives, one metropolitan, physically weakened and trammelled by social mores, and one fresh from the mountains of Meirionydd, wilder, more energetic, if socially more naïve. There is no doubt where Hutton's sympathies lie. Another appeal of these tours, then, beyond their intrinsic merit, is the way they can be read in direct conversation with other texts, from Hutton's own novels (written as she was revisiting these Welsh tours for publication), to her father's *Remarks Upon North Wales*, a witty, more succinct, and more cerebral account of the same roads travelled. Accounts of north Wales by other writers in this digital corpus, both women and men, offer further material for comparison; and it is also intriguing to think of Hutton covering much the same ground as the young J.M.W Turner, at much the same time.

Catherine Hutton appears to have done much of the planning, and researched the itineraries of these journeys. In 1796 the Huttons were based at Barmouth, travelling there from Birmingham via Shrewsbury, Montgomery and Mallwyd and returning via Bala and Llangollen. Excursions from Barmouth included a memorable journey to Harlech castle, and a brief glimpse of Tan-y-Bwlch. In 1797, 1799 and 1800, they stayed at Caernarfon, travelling via Llanrwst and

Conwy, and making shorter journeys out to the Lakes of Llanberis, Anglesey, Clynnog and Beddgelert. In 1799 they returned through the mountains via the 'rock road' to Tan-y-Bwlch. Father and daughter seem to have felt comfortable making some of their explorations of the area separately: William Hutton was a tough and avid walker; in 1801, aged 78, he would become the first person to walk the length of Hadrian's Wall. He certainly climbed Snowdon and crossed the sands of Traeth Mawr on his own; but (though her use of first person singular and plural can be misleading) Catherine seems to have headed up from Barmouth to Harlech accompanied only by John the servant, and perhaps followed Pennant to Llyn Cwellyn by herself. She too was capable of covering impressive distances, writing to Thomas after her trip to Beddgelert:

Besides the usual types of observations on customs and costumes, language, food, dwellings, and Methodism, the Huttons witnessed two consecutive years of extreme weather conditions, and Catherine's account describes the aftermath of devastating floods in 1799, and a drought in 1800. She also catches occasional slantwise glimpses of people known better from other contexts in Wales, such as the schoolmaster and poet Dafydd Ddu Eryri, and the writer and vicar Peter Bailey Williams. Above all, what carries her through wind and rain and the everyday setbacks of travel as a tourist is an enduringly positive attitude to Welsh people and Welsh culture: 'who, that did not deserve reproof, would disparage the country to its natives; or who, that had eyes to see, and a heart to feel, would speak contemptuously of Wales at all'? (Letter 6, 1796)

There is an intriguing echo here of the well-known 'Triad' penned by the Welsh bard Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg, 1747-1826), who happened to be in Beaumaris in August 1799, and was another witness to the devastation of the flood that swept away bridges and livestock, and left the Huttons battered by wind and rain on the road to Abergwyngregyn (Letter 18, 1799). Williams claimed that a true poet required 'an eye that can see nature, a heart that can feel nature, and a resolution that dares follow nature'. Catherine Hutton—observant, sympathetic and determined — certainly possessed all three.

### 1796 Tour

Letter 1, Mallwyd, July 26th 1796; Letter 2, Mallwyd July 27th 1796; Letter 3, Barmouth Aug 4th 1796; Letter 4, Barmouth Aug 7th 1796; Letter 5, Barmouth Aug 12th 1796; Letter 6, Barmouth, Aug 18th 1796; Letter 7, Bala, Sept 2nd 1796; Letter 8, [Llangollen] Sept 3rd 1796; Letter 9, Shrewsbury, Sept 5th 1796.

### 1797 Tour

Letter 10, Llanrwst, Aug 24th 1797; Letter 11, Caernarfon, Aug 27th 1797; Letter 12, Caernarfon, Sept 13th 1797; Letter 13, Caernarfon, Sept 22nd 1797; Letter 14, Caernarfon, Sept 29th 1797; Letter 15, Denbigh, Oct 6th 1797; Letter 16, Chester, Oct 7th 1797; Letter 17, Nantwich, Oct 9th 1797.

### 1799 Tour

Letter 18, Caernarfon Aug 20th 1799; Letter 19, Caernarfon, Aug 30th 1799; Letter 20, Caernarfon Sept 10th 1799; Letter 21, Caernarfon, Sept 14th 1799; Letter 22, Bala, Sept 16th 1799.

### 1800 Tour

Letter 23, Ruthin, Aug 20th 1800; Letter 24, Caernarfon, Aug 28th 1800; Letter 25, Caernarfon Sept 2nd 1800; Letter 26, Caernarfon, Sept 12th 1800; Letter 27, Capel Curig, Sept 18th 1800; Letter 28, Capel Curig, Sept 19th 1800; Letter 29, Shrewsbury, Sept 21st 1800.

The *Monthly Magazine* can be accessed via the Hathi Trust Digital Library.

### 1796 Tour

Letters 1&2, vol 39 (June, 1815) 410-413; Letters 3&4, vol 39 (July 1815) 489-491; Letter 5, vol 40 (Oct 1815), 226-228; Letter 6, vol 40 (January 1816), 503-505; Letter 7, vol 41 (March 1816) 109-111; Letter 8, vol 41 (April 1816), 205-207; Letter 9, vol 41 (May 1816), 304-306.

### 1797 Tour

Letter 10, vol 41 (July 1816) 503-505; Letter 11, vol 42 (Sept 1816) 111-113; Letter 12, vol 42 (Nov 1816) 323-25.

### 1799 Tour

Letter 13, vol 44 (Jan 1818) 496-498; Letter 14, vol 45 (March 1818) 111-113; Letter 15, vol 45 (June 1818) 397-399.

### 1800 Tour

Letter 16, vol 46 (Sept 1818) 128-131; Letter 17, vol 47 (May 1819) 306-308; Letter 18, vol 48 (Aug 1819) 19-22.

- *The Miser Married* (London: Longman, 1813)
- *The Welsh Mountaineer*, 3 vols (London: Longman, 1817).
- *Oakwood Hall*, 3 vols (London: Longman, 1819) Catherine Hutton's *Tour of Africa* (1819–21), a compilation of travel narratives by other writers, was recently reissued in the series *Women's Travel Writings in North Africa and the Middle East*, Part II (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2015).
- Catherine Hutton Beale, *Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century: Letters of Catherine Hutton* (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers, 1891).
- William Hutton, *An History of Birmingham, to the End of the Year 1780* (Birmingham: Pearson & Rollason, 1781).
- William Hutton, *Remarks upon North Wales* (Birmingham: Knott and Lloyd, 1803)
- William Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton F.A.S.S, including a Particular Account of the Riots at Birmingham in 1791, to Which Is Subjoined the History of his Family, Written by Himself and Published by his Daughter Catherine Hutton*, 2nd edn (London and Birmingham: Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, 1816).

### Secondary

- Hutton's fiction is briefly discussed in Peter Garside and Karen O'Brien (eds), *English and British Fiction 1750–1820: The Oxford History of the Novel in English*, Volume 2 (Oxford: OUP, 2015), pp. 464, 472–75; and more fully by Cheryl A. Wilson in '"Something like mine": Catherine Hutton, Jane Austen, and Feminist Recovery Work', *The Eighteenth Century*, 56.2 (Summer 2015), 151–64. For her wide-ranging correspondence, see Bridget Hill, 'Catherine Hutton (1756–1846): A Forgotten Letter-Writer', *Women's Writing*, 1.1 (1994), 35–50.
- Hutton's Welsh Tours are discussed in three articles by Mary-Ann Constantine: '"The bounds of female reach": Catherine Hutton's fiction and her tours in Wales', *Romantic Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780–1840* , no. 22, 92-105 (Spring 2017)
- 'Celts and Romans On Tour: Visions of early Britain in eighteenth-century travel literature', in Francesca Kaminski-Jones and Rhys Kaminski-Jones (eds) *Celts, Romans, Britons: Classical and Celtic Influence in the Construction of British Identities* (Oxford: OUP, 2020) 117-139
- 'Consumed landscapes: coal, air and circulation in the writings of Catherine Hutton', *Romanticism* Special Issue: 'Change of Air' eds Erin Lafford and Rhys Kaminski-Jones (forthcoming, 2021). Hutton's work also features in Constantine's forthcoming monograph: *Curious Travellers: Writing the Welsh Tour 1720-1820* (Oxford: OUP, 2021).

*My thanks to Liz Edwards for patiently tagging this edition, and above all to Michael Freeman for introducing me to Hutton in the first place.*

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Letter 1 [1]

Mallwyd, July 26 1796.

My Dear Brother[2]

[----------]

I mounted my pillion, behind the servant, and set out on the romantic expedition of riding into Wales, you said nothing; but your looks threatened me with all sorts of misfortunes. May heaven avert your prophecies! May it keep our horses from starting and stumbling! [----] Fatigue I dread not, and bad weather I can bear. Before roads were made for wheels, a lady commonly travelled on a pillion; and can it be less safe, now roads are better? You are only unaccustomed to it. My noble and spirited animal, though not intended by nature for such double drudgery, has proved that your fears were groundless and has carried his burden with great propriety.

[Four lines of text erased ----------]

At Shrewsbury it was the Assizes, and a Bishop was to be tried for a riot [---]. The novelty of the case had filled every house. At the Lion we could not get beds; and met with the same fate, successively, at the Talbot, the Bell & Raven, and the Fox. At last we were fortunate enough to procure admittance into an Alehouse; or, more correctly speaking, a farmer's inn. Fatigued with having ridden twenty-six miles, I [was]^ desired to be shewn into a [---] bedchamber. It contained two beds, and I supposed ^ it was the dormitory of the maids of the house, but our landlady assured me it was

[2]

[p.2]

her own room, that she was clean and wholesome, her parents just and true and upright; and I might with safety lie down on her bed. She added that her temper was such that she could not bear to see people in distress; that she had taken me in out of compassion; would give us a broiled fowl and mushroom sauce for our supper, and procure me a bed in a private house. Further, she advised me to be patient, and submit to what I did not like, for she knew we could not do better. Her last argument we could not doubt, for we had tried [~~in vain~~] ^ our utmost to do better.

I took the counsel of my landlady; a morsel of her bread and butter, and a glass of wine; and lay down on her own bed. The decorations of the room amused me. I could not number the different articles, without removing what I had no mind to touch. It is sufficient to say that every ^ imaginable piece of female apparel was scattered on the floor, strewed on the chairs and chests, hung against the walls, and pinned to the curtains. My landlady frequently bustled in and out of the chamber, to fetch something she wanted, or deposit something she did not; and, as I shut my eyes, to avoid further conversation, I heard her say to one of the assistants, "the poor cratur's tired to death, and fast asleep."

At nine o'clock the provident care of M^rs^ Notable had got a vacant parlour, and I was summoned down to our broiled fowl. This parlour, about eight feet square, smelled so strong of tobacco that I feared it would overcome my inclination for my supper. But I opened the window; the air of the stables, which

[p.3]

rushed in, made it tolerable; and, with a dirty tablecloth, and knives that deserved to be chained, we made a hearty meal; to which laughter was a better sauce than even mushrooms.

The next morning, having declined a glass of brandy, courteously offered me by mine hostess, we rode about twelve or thirteen miles, and crossed Offa's Dyke.[3] It is Wales immediately: the country hilly, the views enchanting; the Breiddin Hills, mountains to

me, rising on the right. We passed the Severn on a wooden bridge, dined at Pool, and saw Powis Castle, with its terraces, overlooking the beautiful Vale of Montgomery.

The road to Llanfair is over barren hills. The town is surrounded by such; but is built on a smaller one, with a steep descent of rock and wood to the river V#rnyw .

To soften the ill impression of the uncouth assemblage of consonants in the Welsh names of places, I will give you a few rules for their pronunciation.

W is always oo

Dd is the same as th in that;

Ll is different from any English sound. It is formed by putting the tip of the tongue against the back part of the roof of the mouth, and forcing the breath outwards.

Ch has the same gutteral sound as in the Scottish dialect. It is very difficult to the English organs of speech.

The Welsh have, strictly speaking, neither V nor K; though Pennant frequently gives us both; but he is very slovenly in the orthography of his native tongue. [4] C is always sounded like K.

[p.4]

F is always sounded like V, and whenever our V is to be expressed, it is written Ff, as in Nant Ffrancon; #, thus marked, is sounded like u; thus f#nnon is pronounced funnon; y alone, as in Drws y Coed, is sounded as in French;[5]

At Llanfair, we saw a funeral. The coffin was laid on a bier, and covered with an awning like a tilted wagon, over which was thrown a white sheet. It was borne on the shoulders or four men, and attended by twenty or thirty persons, of both sexes, singing psalms. The singing, as well as the service, was Welsh. There were no signs of mourning in the apparel of any; but the behaviour of all was serious and devout. Those whom I imagined to be the relations of the deceased, ^ [together with] the bearers, knelt down in the aisle, around the corps. Instead of sculpture and flattering epitaphs, the walls of this church, the simple receptacle of <u>The</u> not <u>unhonour'd dead</u> [6]were stuck with lacquered plates, such as are placed on coffins, containing the name of each departed parishioner, and when he lived and died.

At Llanerfyl we crossed the V#rnyw on a wooden bridge, which I did not choose should carry me and my horse at the same time. We breakfasted at Cann Office, remarkable only for a tumulus, of which

[p.5]

nobody there can give any account, and the remains of a camp.[7] We had been apprehensive of rain at setting out, and had taken the opinion of every Welshman we met on the subject. Their predictions accorded with our fears, and the event verified both, for at this place I was obliged to dry all my cloaths.

From Cann Office we travelled by the side of the V#rnyw, till it dwindled to a gutter, and then disappeared. A moment after, we found, in its stead, a stream taking a contrary course. We had met the other all the way up from the Severn,

and we accompanied this down to the D#fi. The place where both spring up is rugged, wild, and barren. It is called the Dolmaen, or the Stoney Field.[8]

The Cleifion, our new found river, ran in a deep bottom, between two ranges of stupendous hills, to Mallwyd, originally Maenllwyd, Greystone, where we now are.[9] Our road was a terrace cut on the side of the northern range; generally fenced with a hedge, now and then without a fence; sometimes on bridges thrown over streams, which poured down from the mountains, across our road; and sometimes through them: while, swelled by the rains into little torrents, they tumbled into cascades into the river below. The sublimity of these scenes shook my nerves. The only way in which I could contemplate these towering hills, woody glens, and rushing waters, was on my feet. We sent the servant on with the horses, and walked nearly four miles before we reached Mallwyd; chiefly in the rain; always in the mire; but enraptured at every step we took.[10]

Letter 2[11]

~~My Dear Brother~~,

Mallwyd July 27, 1796

Mallwyd is a village on the confines of the counties of Montgomery and Merioneth, which consists of a few houses and church;

[p.6]

but it is situated at the conflux of the D#fi, the Clifion, and the Mowddû;[12] at the junction of four vales, and consequently the meeting of four roads; for here roads cannot get over the hills. The eastern road we had travelled. The western leads up the Mawddû to Dolgelly, and thence to Barmouth, where we are going; the northern up the D#fi to Bala; and the southern vale has two roads, one on each side of the river. That on the left leads to Machynlleth, and thence to Aberystwith; that on the right to Towyn and Aberd#fi, where the vale and river end in sea.

Mallwyd is the interior of Wales. Here the common people speak no English.

The dress of both sexes is entirely supplied by the sheep of the country, except the shirt and neck-handkerchief of the men, and two printed handkerchiefs for the women; one worn round the neck, the other on the head, crossed under the chin, and tied behind. Over this bulky head-dress, summer and winter, in doors and out, they wear a black hat, only distinguishable from the man's by a ribband tied round the crown. With garments of flannel and woolen, and this load on the head, shoes and stockings are a superfluity. They trudge along, bare-footed, and bare-legged, with as little inconvenience as the sheep that formerly carried the burthen. The female who fills the several offices of waiter and chamber-maid at the ^ inn, is distinguished by shoes and stockings, and a mob cap.

The diet of the common people, and even of the farmer's servants, is oat cake, or sour bread made of a mixture of rye and barley; butter and cheese without limitation; whey curds; stir-up, made of boiled whey, thickened with oatmeal; and the servants are allowed a small portion of salted meat or bacon on a Sunday. Their universal beverage is buttermilk.

[p.7]

The men are thin; but tall and athletic; the women healthy; ruddy, stout, and handsome; and the children, if possible yet more so. But I think an old woman looks older than in England. Perhaps the air of the mountains ^ may give health and strength while youth and activity enable them to breathe it uncorrupted; and the closeness of their huts may plant wrinkles in the place of roses, when age confines them more within doors.

The best farms in this country let at from ten to fifteen shillings an acre; and sell at about twenty ^ eight years purchase. There is a certain portion of mountain allotted to each, which never varies from generation to generation; and it is an established rule that no man shall send a greater number of sheep to the mountain in summer, than his farm will maintain in winter. The proportion of mountain belonging to the Hafod farms, in the adjoining county of Cardigan, is as follows:-[13]

Hafod farm 250 acres enclosed--- 600 acres of Mountain

Dolgwyn Farm 100 1200

Bwlchwater Farm 130 800

Dolgorse Farm 160 700

Bolecott Farm 60 600

The mountain part of one farm near Dinas Mowddû keeps 3000 sheep. It is divided into three distinct sheep walks. The commanding officer of a whole is a man; the acting officers are dogs, of which are kept from fifteen to twenty. The sheep walks are divided, not by hedges, ditches or stone walls; but by boundaries drawn by the eye. Such bounds as these the sheep might easily overleap, and not only

[p.8]

trespass upon each other, but upon their neighbours. It is the business of the dogs to take care they do not. Early in the morning the shepherd climbs the mountain, taking with him three dogs. He points out to each his walk, and they immediately go upon duty. They know exactly the confines; and, by always taking that side on which the sheep show an inclination to stray, they oblige them to remain in their proper pasture. But this post is so fatiguing to the dogs that two or three hours is as long as they can bear it. The shepherd then appears on his stand with three other dogs, one for each sheep-walk, to relieve guard. He calls, and waves his hand; they joyfully obey the summons; and each takes his turn till night sends the flocks to rest. [~~xxx~~] Invaluable would be a breed of dogs that could ^ thus restrain headstrong man within his proper limits! That would bite the heels of every sovereign that invades his neighbour, or instigated other sovereigns to do so![14]

This situation of Mallwyd is charming. The mountains which encompass it are so high that it is difficult to determine whether the white specks we see near their tops are stones or sheep, till we observe them change their place. On the sides are small patches of wood, or inclosed lands, with here and there are cottage. So remote are these dwellings from the haunts of men, that, on the approach of our servant,[15] ~~all~~ the women and children ran away in terror; nor could all his gestures prevail on them to return, when they found the man in the pied coat did no mischief. I entered one of their huts, which was miserably dark, with a small piece of turf mouldering to ashes on the hearth. The floor was in no danger; for nothing but an earthquake could destroy it.[16]

The range of hills on the Mallwyd side of the river look as if they

[p.9]

had been ploughed by the hand of Brobdingnagians,[17] and the turf afterwards suffered to grow. The waters have worn gullies, at almost regular distances, like the furrows of a plough, while the lands between resemble immense ridges. I ~~once~~ ^ formerly travelled by the side of the Wye, on a terrace road, cut near the base of such a range of hills, for some miles. Every gutter, at a distance, was a shining white ribbon; at hand, it was a small cataract. I was in a close

carriage, with four horses; and our road so narrow that not a horse, scarcely a cat, could have passed us. We were obliged to follow every prominence and recess in the surface of the mountains, and our carriage and horses were continually describing the figure of a bow.

Above Mallwyd, while there is yet a meadow between the D#fi and the Clifion, there is a bridge over each. The former river rushes over huge stones; while the latter, a deep and silent stream, moves slowly between two walls of perpendicular rock. Below Mallwyd is a bridge over the united rivers, which is generally visited by strangers, on account of the romantic situation. The water dashes over broken rocks, which, in one place, form a salmon leap.

In the churchyard of Mallwyd is a yew-tree, that, tradition says, is 700 years old; and it is not easy to imagine a spot where a yew-tree could ^ have witnessed fewer vicissitudes in the objects around, during that length of time.[18] The rivers, the rocks, and the mountains, are immutable. The woods are the lineal descendants of those that flourished when the yew was planted. The houses, probably differ little in number, and ^ but few of them in convenience. The roads are undoubtedly the same; for nowhere else could they be made to

[p. 10]

pass: they are only widened to admit a carriage. The yew-tree has nine distinct trunks, one in the centre, and eight that surround it; and the circumference of their united branches is computed at upwards of two hundred feet.

That you may not stand astonished at my prodigious knowledge of this principality, considering the short time I have been in it I will let you into the secret. The wind whistled all night among the mountains, by which Mallwyd is environed; the rain beat against my casement; and I requested my father to pass the day here. I have spent the rainy part of it in studying the inhabitants; and the fair, in acquiring some idea of their country.

Letter 3[19]

Barmouth Aug 4 1796

My Dear Friend,

Having crossed the two rivers ^ of Mallwyd , we turned the angle of a mountain, and went through Dinas Mowddû one of the poorest of British towns; though Dinas signifies city.[20] It speaks louder in favour of these Cambrians' ~~love of~~ propensity to liquor than religion; for they have two public houses of their own, but are content to go to Mallwyd to church. Our road, for four or five miles, was by the side of the Mowddû, and near the bottom of the mountains, till the one could no longer be discovered, and the others met at their base. Nothing shewed the hand of man, or the least token of his existence, but the road. We had here to climb what the Welsh call a Bwlch, which literally means a notch; but is used to denote a gap between two summits. Our road [------] was cut on the side

[p.11]

of one of the mountains, and ascended till it reached the pass; by which time it looked down a frightful precipice. The ascent was a mile, and without a fence. It is called Bwlch Oerddrws.

As we walked slowly up the mountain we were overtaken by a Welshman, on his poney, and a woman on foot, who was fully a match for him and his ~~keffil~~ horse.[21] It was a comfort to meet with our fellow creatures in so desolate the region, though we could not communicate our ideas to each other. The ideas of the woman, if we might judge by her

words, were very copious, for her tongue was never at rest. [----------] They accompanied us to Dolgelly, nearly six miles, keeping close to our horses heels; walking when we walked, and trotting when we trotted; the woman trudging barefooted; always talking, never out of breath or discovering the smallest symptom of fatigue.

The top of Bwlch Oeddrws is so tremendous on a stormy day, that horses have been frequently known to turn back, and could scarcely be made to pass it. On the other side the descent was not steep; but the face of the country was changed, and the sheep were become real stones, sprouting out of the scanty herbage. I saw a rill spring up under my feet; at Dolgelly it was navigable, and at Barmouth a sea. This was very fine, [---------] but not strictly true, for I have since found that it is joined by $^{an}$other river, both at and after Dolgelly.

Rivers are so numerous in this country that it is not easy to find out their names, or even to be certain whether the bridge one is now passing be over the same stream one crossed ten minutes ago.

[p.12]

If you apply to the common people for information they do not understand you; and if you meet with a man that can speak English, it is a thousand to one he does not know. Even at Barmouth they are ignorant of $\wedge$ $^{\text{the name of}}$ their river. Ask a sailor, and he will tell you it is the Dolgelleu river, because it comes to him from Dolgelleu. Ask a man more enlightened, and he will say it is the Avon,[22] because it is the general Welsh name for all rivers. You are very fortunate if you find a person who can tell you it is the Maw.

After travelling along barren and rocky moors, we found ourselves at the top of a steep and lofty hill, which overlooked the town of Dolgelleu, seated among rich meadows. A town, a fertile plain, a winding river, a handsome bridge, and neat white houses, it gave us the idea of a different world; while the mountains that hedged them in, among which was the mighty Cader Ydris, convinced us we were yet in Wales. From this bird's eye view we had a long descent to Dolgelleu.

At Dolgellau we again overtook the Assizes, and a clergyman was to be tried for murder; but, as our business was only to breakfast, it was of little consequence, and we were content with a window to ourselves in a public room, where the gentlemen of the county were conversing and promenading in different parties, as they had done the night before, when it was enlivened by fiddles, Welsh harps, and Welsh Ladies, at the Assize Ball.

From Machynlleth to Dolgelleu, and from Dolgelleu to Barmouth, are reckoned two of the finest rides in North Wales. The latter was our road. I had heard much at Mallwyd of billows foaming

[p.13]

at our feet, and impending rocks, threatening immediate destruction, over head; and I had conceived such a terror of these dangers that I actually formed the wise and prudent project of walking the whole way. But, as I could not walk ten miles at one time, I purposed to divide it into two stages, and, having atchieved one of them, to sleep in my cloaths at some cottage, and accomplished the other the next day. On further reflection, however, I thought I might as well not walk till I did not dare to ride, and we set out on horseback along a noble road, guarded by two stone walls.

Having reached the river Maw, a little below Dolgelleu, the road accompanies it to its mouth, and is certainly more charming than imagination can picture. It passes by farms, over bridges, and by one beautiful cascade. It deviates from the river, and goes behind the rocks and woody hills. It returns to it again, and affords a prospect of the opening sea. The last mile and a half before it reaches Barmouth, the mountain slopes to the water's edge; and the rock was blown up with gunpowder, before the road could be made. Expense was two guineas and a half a rood, and the Gentlemen of Merionethshire are justly proud of having completed such an undertaking. The road is $\wedge$ $^{\text{cut}}$ at different heighths above the water, with a precipice on the left, and masses and perpendicular walls of rock rising on the right. True it is [-----] that there is frequently no fence on the falling side. At such places I always walked; but, as for foaming billows, and

[p.14]

impending rocks, they did not happen to trouble me.

A gentleman who is at this place[23] is so delighted with the scenery of Pont-ddû, the waterfall I mentioned, that he has offered forty years purchase for the adjoining farm, besides paying for the wood. The rent is thirty one pounds a year; but the number of acres is neither know nor guessed at, for here they have no notion of measuring land. It is much covered with small oaks, the natural production of the soil, and has, here and there, a patch of grass or grain, but not one foot of ground where a house could be placed, without a very steep ascent to it. The owner has rejected the offer. The song does well to celebrate Our native oak, for in this country, where much is in a state of nature, every glen it is wooded, and almost all wood is oak.[24]

Till the road at I have described was formed, which is not twelve years ago, the way from Dolgelleu to Barmouth was over the mountains, and the descent to the town a steep zig-zag above the tops of the houses. It may be imagined that no stranger travelled it but from necessity. If by chance the carriage had occasion to approach the place, it was taken to pieces at Dolgelleu and sent down by a boat. [----------]

The old Welsh roads kept their undeviating line through vales, or over passable hills, as

[p.15]

they lay before them. They are sometimes stony, and sometimes present us with a piece of uncovered native rock, but they are more commonly fine hard gravel, and are excellent roads for a horse. The modern roads follow the course of the rivers, to avoid the hills; and are cut on their sides to avoid the floods. They are consequently terraces, and, as they are often unfenced, are more dangerous, notwithstanding their breadth than the ancient ones, that run over the hills.

Letter 4[25]

Barmouth Aug 7 1796

My Dear Brother

The shore of Barmouth is a fine sand, from which the sea retires about two hundred yards at low water. A mountain completely fills the angle between the river and the sea, which, as I mentioned before, has been cut to make a passage to the town. Having turned this angle, a slip of land, along the shore, affords room for a street. This is the grand thoroughfare of Barmouth. Here are the inns, the Cors y gedol Arms and the Red Lion, both in the hands of one person; and the latter occupied as a lodging house, by such as chuse to be quiet, that is, to hear the noise of each other, rather than that of tourists, who are here today and gone tomorrow. The remainder of Barmouth consists of eight rows of houses, one over the other, on the site of the mountain, which are inhabited by the Aborigines of the country. In general, one man's chimney is on a level with his neighbour's floor, so all have an opportunity of inhaling the smoak for nothing. When a visitor arrived at Barmouth by the old road, he might call in upon his friends, from one a perch to another, till he dropped down on those upon the shore.

Above all the houses of Barmouth a fine spring [----] issues from

[p.16]

the rock, which supplies this curious city with water, and where the bare-legged ladies wash their woolens and potatoes. To carry their cloaths to the water, rather than the water to their cloaths, seems the common practise of the place, for I have seen a spot on the shore, near a rivulet, [------] frequently occupied by these cleansers of woolen, with their beating logs, while their caps are stewing in a porridge pot over a fire of sticks. I believe it was so in the days of Homer.[26]

The Cader, or Chair, of Ydris is a noble mountain, and, like Saddle Back, in Cumberland, receives its name from its shape. I have been puzzled to find out who this ~~Ydris~~ gentleman was, who fixed upon the highest seat in the country, though felt assured his head must have been stronger than mine or he would have been content with a lower station. My wonder at this choice has ceased, now I have discovered that he was a giant, which the following well known legend puts beyond a doubt. He was walking by the Pool of three grains, at the foot of his chair, when he found himself incommoded by some stones that had crept into his shoe, he took off the shoe and shook them out, and there they remain to this day, three enormous rocks, which have given name to the pool.[27]

The Cors y gedol Arms is a good inn. The company dine at a public table, and are generally numerous enough to form an agreeable society.

[The most remarkable of my female associates, though I do not rank her amongst the most agreeable, is a lady from the remote part of England. I should despair of doing justice to her character, if I were to attempt it. I will only say that I am in a miserable situation with regard to her. She must talk, and talk incessantly; a young lady of eighteen, giddy, gawkey, and uncultivated

[p.17]

as the Merionethshire mountains, though sometimes stumbling on shrewd remarks, she considers as a child, beneath her notice: her own daughter, a pleasing young women, having heard her stories at least five hundred times, affords the mother little satisfaction as an auditor: a Welsh lady of high descent keeps her at a distance: I, poor I, am the unfortunate victim of her unceasing eloquence. I know all the relations, all the acquaintances, all the servants, all the disorders, and all the physicians she ever had in her life. She possesses the most perfect politeness; for while she is attentive to all forms, she makes herself the only object of attention. She insists upon the pleasure of breakfasting with me, and shows me how to make the coffee. She places me at the head of the table, and corrects my carving. All this I could forgive; but she talks to me while my horse is waiting at the door; talks to me till I have not time to dress; and never lets me escape from her without violence.

Among the male part of our company, we have a very great man; for he weighs twenty six stone. Last night he actually broke down his bed-stead. Another gentleman of our party had the reputation of being still greater; for the honest townsmen of Barmouth believed him to be the Prince of Orange, and would have set their bells a ringing, if they had any. What could be the reason? His servants wore liveries faced with orange colour.][28]

At all funerals in North Wales a wooden bowl is placed on a communion table; and, after the service in the church is ended, every person present drops money in it; the poorer sort, copper; the richer, shillings, half crowns, even guineas, and sometimes to the number of five. This offering is made from respect to the memory of the deceased, and the greater the

[p.18]

sum the greater the respect shown. But the poor clergyman reaps the benefit; it is his perquisite, and frequently exceeds the rest of his revenue.

After the service at the grave is ended, there is a smaller contribution for the clerk.

[Section pasted over and insert indicated to take its place [-------]. 2

2[In South Wales, when a poor person dies, the neighbours and acquaintance take each a large fluted mould candle, made on purpose for such occasions, called a burying candle, and, having deposited it in the house, they sit all night by the dead body, and join in singing psalms. This they call Waking the corpse, and they continue the practice every night till it is buried. Where the neighbourhood is populous, these midnight wakers fill the house, which indeed seldom consists of more than two rooms. Tea is made for their refreshment.]

Throughout the principality the common people constantly see corpse candles which are the forerunners of death. These are large walking candles, that pass by in the night, and these ^ see-ers can tell, by the colour of the flame, and the kind of noise it makes in walking, whether it be man, woman, or child.[29] [-----]

The courtships of the Welsh, in bed, with no other fence for the virtue of the woman than a flannel petticoat, are well known, and have scandalized them in the eyes of many of their English fellow subjects. But it is certain that proofs of incontinence are not more frequent among them than among the farmer's servants in England, who sit up all night by the kitchen fire; and for the same reason, that their courtship may not interfere with the labours of the day.[30]

Letter 5[31]

Barmouth Aug 12 1796

My Dear Friend,

To the great relief of my spirits, my loquacious companion is gone; [though the burden has been lighter, as

[p.19]

it has been was divided -------]

[This morning, after she had privately found fault with every item in the bill, and publicly disputed some of them, I saw her leave sixpence for the harper who plays to us at all our meals, and stepped into her carriage. The favour I stood in with this lady has made me rather shy to the rest. I find myself so very amiable, in other words, our party is so small, that it requires my utmost caution not to become an appendage to somebody. Though I wish for the good opinion of every living soul, I think my time too great a sacrifice to obtain it].[32]

Three days ago I desired our man to put a sandwich and a cruet full of wine in his pocket, and I set out to take a peep at Harlech castle, ten miles from hence. The road is all the way near the shore, and the country sufficiently populous, for I passed five villages with parish churches, a number of scattered cottages, and a Methodist meeting house, with green shutters. The first church, at two miles distance from Barmouth, is that of Llanaber, to which Barmouth belongs for it has no church of his own. At four miles, on the hill on the right, is the house of Cors y gedol, with its woods shaven to a straight line by the sea breezes. It formerly belonged to the Vaughans, but is now, by marriage, the property of the Mostyns, who have left it to servants; I dare say wisely, for they must be very unfortunate if they have not a pleasanter place elsewhere.[33]

I passed, in my road, two large upright stones, called Druid stones. I am told they are scattered all over the country. I also passed the entrance into Glyn Artro, the opening to the Cwm Bychan (small hollow), where is situated the secluded domain of Pennant's Mr Evan Lloyd, whose family has resided on the spot seven hundred

[p.20]

years. I longed to visit his romantic territory, and his hereditary oatmeal chests; but the road was unknown to me, and I feared it might not be safe footing for my English horse. I do not mention my being a stranger as an objection, for such is my opinion of Welsh hospitality, but I have no doubt that circumstance alone would have procured me a welcome, especially in a place so unperverted by intercourse with the world.

The view from the hill above Harlech is so stupendous it shook my whole frame. On the right, wild mountains, heaped one upon the other; on the left, far below me, the sea. Before me, the yet loftier mountains of Caernarvonshire, with Snowdon at their head, inclosing a vast bay, & the estuaries of two rivers, Traeth mawr and Traeth bychan, and under my feet the town of Harlech, and its noble castle. As I descended the hill on foot, an old man came out of his cottage, uttered the word castle, and shewed a key; I answered Yes, and followed him.

Harlech castle is a strong square building, with a round tower at each angle, and one on each side the entrance. Besides these are four turrets, smaller and higher, which rise above the towers at the angles, and are in a more ruinous state. The entrance is a pointed arch, which formerly contained six gates, one behind the other. Though the castle is every where unroofed, undoored and unwindowed, it has not a dilapidated appearance. There are broken stone staircases in every tower, which led to the top of each; and there is one ^ still entire, in the area which now leads only to the top of the walls. Pointed, arched fire places are visible in all rooms, though the rooms are no longer divided from each other. Window

[p.21]

places also remain; and those in the state apartment three on a row, and spacious; the others a tolerable size within, but narrowing to a chink without.[34]

Harlech castle stands on a rock, which rises abruptly, not from the sea, but from a marsh called the Gamlas, nearly a mile in breadth, which lies between it and the sea, and is so level that it probably was once covered with the water. On this side the rock is almost perpendicular; at either end it is extremely steep; in front it is on an equal heighth with the town, from which it is separated by a deep ditch, and the mountains within land of soar high above it. The castle occupies the whole platform of the rock, except a space of about four or five feet in breadth, which forms a beautiful, verdant path around it, on the brink of an abyss.

Having rewarded my guide for his “Three shemney”, “Room”, “Strong wall” and “Centry box”, which was all the information he could give, and all the English he could utter, I sat down on a rock and ate my sandwich, regretting nothing in this world but that I could not see Snowdon, here called Y Widdfa, or, the Conspicuous, whose head was hid in the clouds. I then walked back through the town of Harlech, the county town of Merionethshire, where the Member of Parliament is chosen, though the Assizes are held alternately at Dolgelleu and Bala.

Harlech consists of one small street of poor houses, and might pass for a pretty village in England. There are two inns, without provisions or accommodations; and a Dealer in Tea, without a shop. The only person I met with in the place who could speak English was the guide that conducts travellers across the Traeths;[35] and it is certain that there was

[p.22]

no stable door high enough to admit my horse; though the owner of one insisted, by signs, upon his shoulder being measured (a pig having previously been turned out), to prove it. [--------][36]

[3x. Dolgelleu, Barmouth, and Tan-y-Bwlch, form a triangle. From a bridge over the Maw, where the roads to Barmouth and Tan-y-Bwlch divide, which is a mile on this side of Dolgelleu, it is about nine miles to the former of those towns, and seventeen to the latter. From Tan-y-Bwlch to Barmouth is about eighteen. The space which these roads enclose is wholly filled up with mountains untrodden, and undescribed by any English tourist. The only place where they can be crossed is Bwlch Drws Ardudwy (the gap of the door of the district of Ardudwy), the natural pass in the mountains; and Pennant is the only traveler I know who has seen it.] His description of it is so remarkable that I transcribe it.

" I was tempted," says he, " to visit this noted pass, and found the horror of it far exceeding the most gloomy idea that could be conceived of it. The sides seemed to have been rent by some mighty convulsion into a thousand precipices, forming at their tops rows of shelves, which the peasants, comparing to the ranges in a dove-cote, style Carreg-y-Clommenog, or the rock of the Pigeons. The bottom of this passage is covered with a deluge of stones, which have streamed from the sides; and along it is a narrow horse path, on the slippery rock, formed by the removal of a few of the fragments which in other places disposed into form of most steep and hazardous flights of steps."[37]

Between this mountainous tract and the sea, in the way from Barmouth, to Tan-y-Bwlch, is a slip of land which I believe, is never a mile in breadth [38]

This I rode along in my way to Harlech; and this must necessarily be well inhabited, if men existed at all in the country, for beyond it nothing could live but a grouse.

Letter 6[39]

My Dear Brother Barmouth Aug 18 1796

When I had finished my last letter, not feeling disposed to join the company at supper, I strolled down to the sea-side alone. A piece of Quixotism I should not have ventured upon in my native part of the island of Great Britain; but I believe the Welsh too honest to either attack my purse or my person. It was between eight and nine o'clock.

When I reached the sands I heard a loud hallowing and laughing, and seven young girls, about fifteen or sixteen years of age, made their appearance. They undressed to the last petticoat, amidst the highest mirth and gaiety, when one of them stopped suddenly, fancying she heard a noise. While we were all listening, three sailors ran towards us, and three of the girls dressed, and declared they would not bathe, as the sailors would steal their cloaths. The other four, still undressed, were hesitating to struggle with their disturbers, when I offered to be the guardian of their apparel. They made up each her bundle, while my presence scarcely kept the lads from interrupting them. I sat down on one, and laid my arms over the other three, and the damsels ran into the sea, whither their pursuers did not choose to follow them, at the expense of wetting their shoes and trowsers. They were however, so daring that I had need of all my vigilance to prevent their snatching away some of the cloaths. [p.24]

When the lasses had played and jumped some time in the sea, they ran out and, squatting round me, each put on her flannel chemise, and dropped her wet petticoat. All care about their appearance was now at an end; a scene of romps ensued between young men, who plundered, and girls, who recovered, their different pieces of apparel; till, their toilette finished, they formed into five couples, and began an English country dance. One of the lasses supplied the music, though it was beyond my English ear to distinguish any tune. The dancing was tolerable, and the dancers as ~~pleased and happy~~ ^ delighted as ever was lady at a ball. After two dances they gave over. Two of them came to me with offered arms, and the spokeswoman told me that they were the daughters of poor people in Barmouth; that they worked and spun all day, and at night they bathed and danced, that they were happy and merry; and that it was a long established joke of the young men of their acquaintance to follow them when they bathed, and to hide their cloaths. Though tired with the labours and amusements of the day, they had the good nature to offer to walk with me as far as I pleased, and one of them actually carried ^ me through the splashes I could not cross.

The sight was new to me, and altogether, one of the most striking I had ever seen. It something resembled a pantomimic dance at Astley's.[40] The scene was the black outline of the mountain, the inequalities of its side not being discernable, and under it the lodging houses of Barmouth, illuminated at almost every window. The stage, a fine even sand, with the moonlight playing on a calm sea. The performers handsome ruddy young girls, who, with streaming hair and half a covering, might well be taken for sea nymphs; and sturdy lads, whose clumsy dark

[p.25]

blue jackets and trowsers, uncouth noises, and rude assaults, qualified them to represent monsters. The piece concluded with a dance by the characters; but the whole was as much superior to pantomime as nature is to art, or reality to imitation.

I have already said that the Welsh women are stout,[~~xxx~~] healthy, and handsome; besides this they are honest, open, and friendly, and will render one every assistance in their power. The better sort, I believe, are proud, heedless of shewing their dislike, where they take any, and kind to those they fancy. They are partial to their country, and resent any reflections upon it with a warmth that one of them ingenuously called,^ when speaking of it to me, the Welsh fever.[41] But who, that did not deserve reproof, would disparage the country to its natives; or who, that had eyes to see, and a heart to feel, would speak contemptuously of Wales at all.

Of the Welsh men, I can say but little. They are not, in general, so handsome as the women; and those of the common sort, I believe, to be lazy; while the women are drudges.

The distance between the gentry and the peasants is great in England. It may be compared to our hills and valleys. In Wales, it is still greater. Perhaps I should not err if I said, as great as between their [~~xxx~~] mountains and [~~xxx~~] glens. In Wales, as in England, there is a middle class, inhabiting the towns; but these approach much nearer the lower than in England, where commerce has raised numbers, and enabled some to put themselves on a footing with their neighbours, who have inherited large estates from their ancestors.

The Welsh gentry all learn the language of the country from their nurses, before they learn English; but they seldom speak it after they grow up, except to their servants, and the peasants, who understand nothing else.

[p.26]

In the last generation, a gentleman of Wales kept open house at Christmas for a month. All his friends were welcome, and all the friends they chose to bring. A gentleman, in the neighbourhood of Barmouth, has entertained a hundred persons for a week together, at that season, besides servants.[42] It is not to be imagined that he could lodge them all at one time; but some slept, while others drank or danced, and each took his turn to rest. One of the domestics was a harper, who wore the family livery, and had fifteen guineas a year wages, when no other servant had more than five. [He played in the hall constantly during the times of breakfast, dinner, and supper, even when the family was alone].[43] The cost of stringing a harp is twenty three shillings; and the annual expense to supply those ^ strings that break is about five guineas. The Christmas hospitality is no longer to be found in Wales; but the harper is still retained in the great families, and is introduced in the great inns. At Aberystwith, and at Barmouth, the company eat to the sound of the violin, as well as the harp.[44] It is the only time I do not like music; I cannot attend to it, [~~xxx~~] amidst the clatter of knives and forks, and the bustle of servants, and it only adds to the confusion.

That the spirit of hospitality is not extinct in Wales, I am a witness. The son of the gentleman above-mentioned invited the whole company at the Cors y gedol Arms, to dinner, at a summer-house [---] bordering upon the sea. His own grounds supplied mutton, [---] his farmyard poultry [---] in abundance, and grouse the adjoining mountains. Beef is a luxury not always to be met with in this country. It happened ^ that an ox was killed in the neighbourhood; the gentlemen mounted his horse, and rode after it, and was fortunate enough to secure a sirloin. The cook sat up all

night, ^ with proper assistants, roasting, boiling, baking, potting; and a cart was loaded next day with baskets of provisions, hampers of wine and beer, and every requisite for setting out a table; for the table

[p. 27]

only, and a set of chairs, was all the building afforded towards the repast. Escorted by two maids, and two men, the cart marched to the summer house, which was three miles distant from the mansion. We sat down, fourteen to dinner, and eleven servants afterwards dined upon the grass.

Dec^t 26 1815

See p 23 for ????

Letter 7[45]

My Dear Brother Bala Sept 2 1796

You will see by the date of this that I have left Barmouth; but I shall not allow you to leave it till you are acquainted with another excursion I made from thence.

A Welsh lady,[46] an open, frank, kind hearted woman, with who^ m I had been on intimate terms at the Cors y gedol Arms, pressed me much to accompany her, when she returned home; and esteem for the lady, curiosity to ~~see~~ ^ observe the domestic economy of a Welsh mansion, and an opportunity it would give ^ me to see Tan y Bwlch [-------], determined me to go.

In my opinion of ^ the lady I could not be mistaken. I received all that kindness and hospitality could bestow, during four days. With regard to the style of ^ living I found little originality. The better sort among the Welsh procure all their furniture and all their cloaths from London, or Chester. The only difference I saw between this family and one of the same rank in England was, that the art are spinning their own beautiful chamber and bed linen was still practiced here, and that the inferior servants spoke nothing but Welsh. I will now give you an account of my ride to Tan y Bwlch in which I was accompanied by a Welsh clergyman, carrying his wife behind him, his sister riding single, and a young lady behind a servant. I assure you my

[p.28]

style of travelling is that of people of very great fashion in Wales.

At a short distance before we should have reached Harlech we turned to the right, and after passing over high, uncultivated, uninhabited moors, we descended the side of the mountain, and entered a charming Woody glen. About three miles from the place where we quitted the Harlech road, we passed by Maesyneuadd, the house of Mr Nanny,[47] built on the steep side of a mountain, but near its base. Behind it rise woods, above these, cornfields; and, still higher, the sterile summit, incapable of culture. Before it, are lawns, which the steep descent of the ground has obliged to be cut into terraces; then the road; then a mixture of wood and pasture, hill and glen. From a lake at top of the mountain issues a small river, which, passing near the end of the house, forms a dozen cascades in its way to the sea, rushing down a dell of rock and wood, and making an opening, through which the sea is seen.

The road beyond Maesyneuadd and the grounds about it, make me fancy I was in a gentleman's park, though it is the public road from Barmouth to Tan-y-Bwlch, [---] Ffestiniog, and Caernarvon, for those who do not choose to ford the Traeths. Having passed the small lake, LllynTegwyn issa, and admired the village of Llantegwyn, scattered on the

side of a verdant hill before us, and in the hollows or cwms about the bottom, we came to a horseblock, an infallible sign on an old Welsh road, like the Put-on or Put-off on ours, that a steep hill is at hand. It is not in going up the hills that the Welsh make use of the horseblock; we therefore passed it, though I pitied my horse for carrying me up; but in returning we found the advantage of it, for few choose to ride down their hills, especially

[29]

if the horse carry two.

Near the top of the hill is the church of Llantegwyn, with a Methodist meeting house for its neighbor.[48] Perhaps its envied neighbour, for the Methodists in this country are very numerous, and have pervaded every nook and corner. I passed it on a Sunday; and, though no Methodist myself, was affected, to hear their voices raised, in sweet and solemn concert, to sing their Maker's praise; and, as I returned, in the interval between morning and evening service, to see a crowd of decent rustics, too far from home to go and return again making a frugal meal on the grass; or, having made it, soberly conversing with each other.

After a descent, we came to Llyn Tegwyn ucha, or the upper lake of Tegwyn, the Fair and Lovely of Pennant.[49] It is larger than the lower, being more than a mile in circumference; but it is, otherwise, neither so fair or so lovely, having neither woods, fields or habitations, in view. It is very deep, embosomed in lofty naked mountains, and, except by a road, just wide enough for a carriage, and without a fence, cut along one side, and from five to fifteen yards above the water, is inaccessible to man - unless, indeed, he be a Welsh man.

I walked along this road under as hot a sun as ever shone in Wales; and, fainting with thirst, I caught the water that distilled from the rocks in the hollow of my hand, and warmed the delicious beverage in my mouth before I durst swallow it. A little further ride brought us to summit of a steep hill that overlooked the vale of Ffestiniog and Tan-y-Bwlch.

Fertile meadows; a winding stream; a bridge; an inn, encircled by rocks and woods, out of one of which rises a noble mansion; and these again encircled by stupendous mountains, Snowdon among the number – such

[30]

is the celebrated vale of Tan-y-Bwlch; and such were the beauties I came to see. As I stood contemplating the vale, I considered that I had a better view of it than if I were there. I might, indeed, have seen a waterfall about half a mile from the foot of the hill; but waterfalls had lost much of their consequence, owing to the dry weather; the hill was nearly a mile to the bottom; to ride down it was impossible; and to add it to my walks, in such intense heat, was risking my life. So I bade farewell to the vale of Tan-y-Bwlch, and returned the way I came; for nothing but the birds of the air could have found another.

This morning, early, we quitted Barmouth, and breakfasted at Dolgelleu. [----------] I was told at Barmouth, that I had entered Wales by a back way. Desirous to see the highway, which my informer said was through Bala, Corwen, and Llangollen, we turned to the left at Dolgelleu, and are come eighteen miles to this place.

We followed the course of a river about nine miles: I believe the Onion; but, in a matter of such uncertainty, I will not positively affirm it. Many of these miles the road ran on the sides of steep hills; wooded high above us, and down to the water's edge. At first the vale was wide enough to admit of fertile pastures, on the other side of the river, before the opposite barrier of mountains rose. These vanished by degrees. At five miles we walked down to a crazy wooden bridge, above which the river forms a beautiful cascade. At eight miles we come to Drws-y-Nant, the Door of the Valley, where Howel Dha an old Welsh legislator, is hung out to inform travellers that they are at liberty to enter a decent house. If they do, they may find eggs

[31]

and bacon for themselves, and corn and hay for their horses. We declined the invitation, but we had done wiser to have accepted the corn and hay part of it, for 18 miles was an unmerciful stage for our horses.

From Drws-y-Nant the country assumes a ruder form, the river vanishes, and the road is cut on the sides of lofty barren mountains. It then goes over a long, though not a steep, hill, and reaches the upper end of the pool of Bala, the largest lake in Wales, being three miles and a half in length, and from half to three-quarters of a mile in breadth. [----] We travelled by its side; and at about half a mile before we arrived at the lower end, we passed the church of Llanycil, to which the town of Bala belongs, having, according to the custom of the country, no church of its own.

Standing at the lower end of the lake, and looking up this noble sheet of water, the view is singular and romantic. The Pool is enclosed on three sides (the only open one being that where we stand) by a range of hills, shooting down to the very brink of the water, and either cultivated or covered with a wood. Behind these rise rude and lofty mountains; and, at the upper end, the fence is triple, for above, and beyond the rest, at the distance of twenty three miles, towers the Cader Idris, in all its majesty.

The town of Bala is about quarter of a mile from the foot of the lake. It is a flourishing place, the prettiest I have seen in the country, with one broad straight street, and two good inns. Bala is the centre of North Wales, and roads lead from it to Dinasmowddû, to Pool, Llanfyllin, to Corwen, to Llanrwst, to Ffestiniog, and to Dolgelleu. Bala is the staple for knit woolen stockings, of which every woman in the country, whether sitting, standing, or walking, is a manufacturer. In this

[32]

land of knitting, the women knit mechanically, without trouble or attention, and so quick that one of them will make a stocking in a day worth half-a-crown. This, after deducting a shilling, the value of the yarn, would make her daily earnings eighteen pence, if it were not for the profit of the Bala merchant. I saw,^ however, good coarse knit stockings, in a shop at Bala, at fifteen pence a pair; and was told they ^ were to be had [---] as low as nine pence.

I have frequently seen the women at Aberystwith carrying a large pitcher of water on their heads, and a child in a piece of woolen wrapped round their waists, and knitting at the same time as they walked along the streets.[50]

Letter 8[51]

Sept.3.1796

My Dear Brother

From Bala to Corwen, a distance of eleven miles, we found hills in the place of mountains. The country is no longer romantic, and the road is rugged. Though we follow the course of the Dee the whole way, it is never visible (except at its coming out of Bala pool) till we cross it, a mile before we reach Corwen. Spiteful hills intercept from our view the delicious vale of Eidernion, through which it runs. We saw the entrance and the exit of a road that would have led us through the vale, but, strangers as we were, we durst not attempt it.

At a modest little inn, with the interesting sign of the Druid, we entered the great road of North Wales, leading from London to Holyhead, which will carry us to Shrewsbury.

Corwen is a poor village between the Berwyn mountains on one hand, and the mountains of Yale on the other; the Dee running in the vale. Its situation on the high road maintains a tolerable inn, the sign

[33]

of Owen Glyndwr, the scite of whose habitation is still pointed out, on the banks of the Dee about three miles below.

At Corwen my eyes were gratified with the sight of a steeple, a low square tower. All I had seen in the interior of Wales resembled a chimney; and the principal mark of distinction between a house and a church was, that the chimney of the one was open at top to emit smoke, while that of the other was open on the sides to shew a bell.

From Corwen to Llangollen, we followed the windings of the Dee, between two ranges of mountains;^ frequently on [----] a high terrace, cut on their side. The scenery was noble, and perpetually varying; but there are not words to vary it on paper. I could tell you of approaching mountains, wooded hills [---], verdant pastures, and a winding river; and of each of these you could form an idea. Of their combination you could not. A very fine point of view is where a tall, insulated, naked rock, with the ruins of Castle Dinas Bran on its top, seems to stop up the end of the vale. The bed of the river is altogether the most rocky I ever saw, and nowhere more so than at Llangollen, where it is paved by nature with huge flat stones.

After a long descent, we reached Llangollen, where is a bridge over the Dee, that must be crossed by those going to Ruthin. Llangollen is a low disagreeable town, in this scene of enchantment. Its only inn displays the bloody hand of Sir Watkin.[52] In Wales ^ this gentleman has no other name. The master of the house - I was going say - but I will rather call him the man of the house - is a melancholy warning tohim who standeth, to take heed lest he fall [53]. For the first six-and-thirty years of his life he drank nothing but water, and, though never industrious, was decent in his manners. I should now depreciate a respectable name of Beast, if I were to call him

[p.34]

by it. Drunk as often as he can get liquor; mad when he is drunk, and abusive when sober; his wife commands him, the waiter treats him with contempt, and the maids return openly the curses he mutters between his teeth.

It is impossible to be at Llangollen without saying something of the ladies of Llangollen Vale; though, if you have seen an account of them published in a news-paper I never saw, or read a poem of Miss Seward's on this same subject, I never read, you probably are better acquainted with them than myself.[54]

All I have heard of the ladies of Llangollen Vale is, that they were too young Irish women of noble families, who entered into a solemn renunciation of the male part of the species; vowed an eternal friendship for each other; eloped from their friends; and, after roving about some time in search of a situation to their mind, settled in the vicinity of Llangollen. The cottage they found built to their hands, and they rent it at £20 the year; but they have expended a great deal of money in improvements. The neatness of the inside is such as exceeds belief, and every part of it is ornamented in a manner that could only be contrived and executed by an women of the most elegant taste, who had no other employment.

No man is ever admitted to speak to the ladies, but their relations, and their gardener, who is a married man, and does not live in the house.[55] They frequently receive visits from female friends, and Miss Seward has been of the number; but they never lodge anybody. Their domestics are two women servants, besides one they brought over with them, who is their housekeeper, and on whom the ladies bestow such portion of their esteem, that to affront her is to offend them. They are fond of their garden; and an idea of their neatness maybe formed from its being confidently asserted, though it is not true, that their walks

[35]

are swept with a hair broom.

I was told by a gentleman who went over the house, some years ago, that a curious box, covered with white sattin and embroidery, was seen in the dining room; and on undrawing a curtain, an old fat lame lap-dog appeared, as the inhabitant: and I am now informed, that Fidel has paid the debt of nature, and his tomb is shewn to strangers, in the garden. Persons who have families, and live in the world, laugh at this: to me it is very natural. Women must do something with their affections; and what the ladies had to spare from each other, and their maid, could not, in their situation, be better bestowed, than on an animal that was sensible of their caresses, and returned their attachment.

Here the ladies have lived fifteen years, and scandal has not dared to say, that they have ever repented their vow.

The outside of the cottage I saw; it is exquisitely neat and elegant, and beautifully situated on an eminence, rising out of the vale and sheltered by the mountains. The inside I might have seen; but I was told, that the frequent exhibition of their house to strangers, had become troublesome to the ladies; and I did not think it right to intrude upon them for my own gratification.

My next walk was to the ruins of the Abbey of Llan Egwest, perhaps better known to you, if you know it at all, by its Latin name Valle Crucis. It is a mile and a half from this place. I was very minute in my enquiries concerning the road; as my father chose to visit the castle of Dinas Bran instead of the Abbey. My instructions were, to go along the Ruthin road, till I came to a barley field, opposite a cottage, when I must turn to the right, and was assured I could not miss my way. [---] I found the cottage, saw the barley field,

[p.36]

turned to the right, and began to mount a steep hill. I was ^ certain I should have to go down again, as I never knew a set of monks in my life that did not settle in a valley; and, after toiling up more than half a mile, and seeing mountains still before me, I began to doubt whether I was right. Fortunately there was a farm house near; I sent the servant to inquire the way, and found I had to descend to the Ruthin road again, and search for another cottage and another barley field further on. I went back faster than I came, vexed at having spent my strength for nought, and soon found the right barley field, which led me to a wood, and a steep winding path ^ down its side led me to the Abbey.

It was not without reason that I judged well of the taste of monks. Of all the situations I ever saw of the kind none has equalled this. A large level meadow, as luxuriant as nature could form, or art improve it, intersected by a running stream, skirted by rising woods, and surrounded by lofty mountains. There may be, and, as part of the Abbey is converted into a farm house, I suppose there is, a road into it for a cart, but no such thing appears. The very path by which I entered is not visible, and there seems no transition from it but to the heavens.[56] I never saw so delightful a retreat for religion, love, or friendship, or any kind of enthusiasm or romance; and during the time that the good fathers must necessarily wait before they could reach those heavens, the auxiliary aid of the fertile soil was not a contemptible object.

I could scarcely admire, as they deserved, the ruins of the Abbey, for contemplating the beauties of its situation; though the ruins are considerable, and the broken arches and Gothic windows, ^ half hidden by trees, are very picturesque. The only building in this sequestered Vale, besides the farmhouse above mentioned, consists of two rooms in a barbarous taste, erected by the proprietor;

[p.37]

who occasionally retires to them to smoak his pipe. He should have made them a grey [----] cottage, covered with ivy.[57]

Letter 9[58]

Shrewsbury Sept 5th 1796

My Dear Brother,

From Llangollen the road still follows the course of the Dee, and still runs along the sides of the mountains. The vale is narrow, sometimes little more than the breadth of the river; beautiful and fertile, though not quite so romantic as above Llangollen. Having travelled through it about four miles, the hills enclosed it at the bottom, the river wound between them, and the mountains on the left took a northerly course towards Chester. Our road turned suddenly to

the right, became an ordinary highway, and I lost, in a moment, the magnificent scenery of Wales. How striking it must be to enter the country on this road, and burst upon its beauties at once.

Before we turned, we had a view of the house and woods of Winstay, the seat of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne; and, when we had turned, of Chirk Castle, the seat of the Middletons. But, after rivers, rocks, and mountains, stone and mortar interested me little, and even a park had lost much of its effect; I looked at it now and then, as its beauties were pointed out to me, but my mind rested on what I had left behind. About six miles from Llangollen we passed through Chirk, a large handsome village; but an assemblage of red houses disgusted me. From thence we walked down a steep hill, crossed the river Ceriog, on an elegant stone bridge, and set our feet in England.

You know me too well to suspect me of affectation. My disgust at brick buildings, and my indifference for stone, were real; but I will own to you

[p.38]

that my feelings might have been influenced by circumstances. Place me, in a dark night, in one of the terraces of the Vale of Llangollen, or, in a thunderstorm, on the top of Bwlch oer Ddrws, and I should undoubtedly prefer the meanest brick house in Chirk.

[When our intended expedition was first mentioned to you, alarmed for the safety of our father, who had not, of late, been accustomed to ride on horseback, and whose horse had been more accustomed to harness than the saddle, you said, we should curse Wales : Though I have little faith in modern prophets, the expression sunk deep into my mind, already weakened by the recent loss of my other parent. If I saw a stone in a road at which a horse might stumble, or an object at which he might start, I thanked God that my father had passed it, regardless that I had yet to pass it myself. [xxxxx] Having had this dreadful load upon my mind during the whole journey, I was ready to go down upon my knees, as I saw his horse take his last foot from the bridge, to thank God that I should not curse Wales.

The prediction having thus, happily, passed over our heads][59], we now trotted on to Oswestry, where we dined; and, after riding 10 miles further, through a pleasant country, we stopped at the Old Pigeons, at Nescliff, which, but for the Pigeons, could not have been distinguished from a farm house.[60] Here the grand difficulty was to procure beds; but, by the ingenious arrangements of the mistress of the house, and our consenting to share one of the apartments with the malt and cheese already in possession of it, it was at last got over. It was pleasant now to see the good woman looking out at her best tablecloth, airing her best sheets, and taking down, from her corner cupboard, odd china plates and figured jugs, whose general business in the house was only to be looked at.

While our supper was preparing, we walked up a steep, red, sandy rock, the cliff from which the place takes its name. It rises alone out there plain, and seems as if Nature, when she had been sowing rocks and mountains in Wales, having an odd one left, dropped it here. It commands a noble prospect into England and Wales. We mounted to Kynaston's Cave, which is twenty-five steps, besides the ascent before we reach them.

Kynaston's Cave is cut in the rock; a hole in the roof is all the chimney, and the door admits all the light; it is now the comfortless dwelling of a labourer and his family, but it is said formally to have been the retreat of Henry Kynaston, a noted robber, whose name it bears, and whose cipher, H. K. with the date, 1594, cut into the rock, are still shown, in evidence of the tradition. From his elevated nest, Kynaston watched the plain below, and when any traveller appeared, he pounced upon them, and subsisted on their spoils. An inner apartment, which just holds the bed of the present inhabitants, is said to have been Kynaston's stable. I will not presume to dispute the fact, but his horse must have been very docile, as well as very sure-footed, to have walked in safety up and down the twenty-five steps. The rock rises considerably above the cave, and on summit is Kynaston's garden, but night coming on, we did not climb so high.

On our return, the mistress of the Pigeons sent us in an excellent dish of peas and bacon, a pot of hoarded sweetmeats, and a bason of cream. Here I saw the first scarlet cloak since I left Llanfair; Blue is the colour of Wales.

How little avail our resolutions! Whom should ^ I have believed that had told me six weeks back I should go again to our inn at Shrewsbury? Impelled by gratitude to the woman who took us in, when all else denied us admittance, to stop ^ there now was my own proposal; but the motive for going was as fallacious as the resolve to go no more; for we have only breakfasted, and we have eaten so heartily, and been charged so moderately, that I verily believe she has lost by our bread and butter.

You will now set me down where you took me up. The rest of the way you will know too well to need any description of it from me. Whether the account of my journey may have amused or interested you, I know not; at any rate, I will not allow you to call me an idle traveller, for I have omitted nothing in my power to accomplish.

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## Editorial Notes

[1] Published in the Monthly Magazine (June, 1815), 410-11.

[2] Written on a pasted-in strip of paper. This first page has been considerably edited by pasting in order to rewrite or remove phrases. It is not now possible to recover the earlier phrasing. The transcription indicates these erased sections thus: [------], and words crossed out on the page thus: [~~xxxx~~]

[3] In their earlier crossing of the Dyke near Bishop's Castle in 1787, Catherine's father William Hutton 'leaped out of the chaise' to examine it, expressing 'a wish which will never be gratified, to travel from end to the other'. Later he would consider it a 'monument of iniquity', promoting 'blood instead of peace'. William Hutton, *Remarks on North Wales* (Birmingham: Knott and Lloyd, 1803), 2 and 222-23. For other travellers' responses to Offa's Dyke see Constantine, *Curious Travellers* (forthcoming).

[4] Hutton was a great admirer of Pennant but could also be a sharp critic; in fact both 'v' and 'k' were sometimes used in the period, especially following the lexicographer William Owen Pughe's attempts at orthographical reform.

[5] That Hutton chooses these two striking Snowdonia locations to illustrate her point about orthography may indicate that this section was added after the 1796 tour, with a view to publication; she visited these places in 1797.

[6] Thomas Gray's poem, *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (1751) evokes the 'th'unhonour'd dead'.

[7] The Cann Office earthwork is thought now to be medieval, possibly associated with a motte. See here.

[8] The source of the Vyrnwy is now a large lake of that name created by damming in the 1880s.

[9] There is no evidence for 'maen' in earlier forms of this name; 'ma' is more likely to mean simply 'place'.

[10] Hutton's general fear of heights is often expressed as a particular anxiety about roads which drop away on one side. This appears as a striking leitmotif throughout her tours (see, e.g., her comments on 'new' and 'old' roads between Dolgellau and Barmouth below).

[11] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (June, 1815), 411-13.

[12] Mallwyd sits at the confluence of the Dyfi, the Cleifion and the Cerist; Hutton's 'Mowddû' seems to be a projection of the name of the commote of Dinas Mawddwy onto the Cerist or another river. There is no historical evidence for this usage, but it not uncommon as a phenomenon and may reflect local practice; see Hutton's general remarks on river-names below.

[13] Despite slightly idiosyncratic spelling (which may reflect local pronunciation) all of the farm names can be plausibly identified with places mentioned in the Hafod Collection (Accession 1301, Ceredigion Archives), a corpus of documents relating to the land-holdings of the Hafod estate, which in the late 1790s was being famously 'picturesqued' by Thomas Johnes, who also acquired and developed farmlands and sheepwalks. Dolgwyn may be Dolwen (often coupled with T# Gwyn); Bwlchwater is Bwlch Gwalter (Bwlchgwallter); Dolgorse is Dol-y-Gors and the curious Bolecott seems likely to be Botcol.

[14] Napoleon’s campaign in Italy had begun in April 1796.

[15] A servant named ‘John’ appears in William Hutton’s comic verse account of their journey from Birmingham to Caernarfon in 1799. *Remarks on North Wales* (1803), 107.

[16] See William Hutton’s description of entering a cottage near Mallwyd. *Remarks*, 22-24.

[17] The Brobdingnagians are the giants in Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726).

[18] A selection of tourist descriptions of this yew group, which still stands in the graveyard of St Tydecho’s church, can be found here.

[19] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (July, 1815), 489-90.

[20] This is a trope in various descriptions of the village of Dinas Mawddwy; Joseph Cradock makes great play of its ‘civic’ institutions and attractions in *An account of some of the most Romantic parts of North Wales* (London, 1777) 9-14; as does William Hutton, *Remarks*, 16-17; Pennant explains that it was an administrative hub for a wide area, *Tours in Wales* (1784) II, 91-92.

[21] ‘Ceffyl’ is Welsh for horse; Hutton often uses the term to denote a Welsh pony.

[22] I.e. the Welsh word 'afon'.

[23] The Huttons were staying at the Cors-y-Gedol Inn at Barmouth, described further below.

[24] This may be the song ‘Ye Mariners of England’, which has the line ‘With thunders from her native oak/ She quells the floods below’. Or it may more simply refer to the better known ‘Hearts of Oak’.

[25] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (July, 1815) 490-91.

[26] For images of Welsh women washing clothes, see here.

[27] Henry Penruddocke Wyndham mentions ‘this ridiculous story’ in *A gentleman's tour through Monmouthshire and Wales, in the months of June and July, 1774* (London 1781), 114-15. For a contemporary image of the 'Pool of the Three Grains' by S. H Grimm see here.

[28] This revealing section, a snapshot of the complexities of seaside sociability, is lightly scored through in the manuscript, and omitted from the published version of this tour in the *Monthly Magazine*.

[29] It is not clear what has prompted this reflection on funeral customs (although it is a common trope in tourist writing); nor why the customs and superstitions of ‘South Wales’ should be invoked here in an insert. It may indicate a later revision for the published version (see discussion in Introduction). Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, A Gentleman’s Tour (1781 ed.) 177-79, has a similar, if less sympathetic account of the payment to the clergyman (he also mentions five guineas).

[30] If this was written in 1796, it is, as Michael Freeman notes, very early to be referring to the custom of ‘bundling’ or ‘caru ar y gwely’ as something well-known to English readers (see here). The anonymous author of *Letters for Snowdon* (1770) rather coyly refers to pre-marital sex as a way of testing fertility, but does not describe the practice of lying clothed on the bed. Hutton’s refusal to see this as scandalous is typical, acknowledging as it does that the labouring classes have little private space for courtship.

[31] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (October, 1815) 226-28.

[32] Section lightly scored through, as above, but (perhaps erroneously?) included in the *Monthly Magazine*.

[33] The last male representative of the Cors-y-Gedol Vaughans was Evan Lloyd Vaughan; when he died in 1791, the estates passed to his niece Margaret, wife of Sir Roger Mostyn.

[34] Hutton’s responses to Harlech castle are further discussed in Constantine, *Curious Travellers* (forthcoming).

[35] Traeth Mawr and Traeth Bychan – sands needing guides. Paul Sandby.

[36] Section pasted over and replaced with paragraph marked ‘3x.’

[37] *Tours in Wales*, II (1784) 122. Pennant in fact has *Carreg y Klommenod*. (Modern spelling: *colommenod*, doves or pigeons).

[38] Word cut off at edge.

[39] Published in the *Monthly Magazine*, January 1816, 503-05.

[40] In an early visit to London in 1780 Hutton wrote, ‘On Tuesday evening we were at Astley’s, where we saw such tumbling as would have astonished you. You could not suppose the human frame capable of such agility’. *Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman*, 24.

[41] Cf William Hutton, ‘To a Welchman, every thing belonging to Wales carries in it the first excellence, and a little contradiction will give, what they call the Welch fever.’ *Remarks upon North Wales* (1803), 29.

[42] The Vaughans of Cors-y-Gedol Hall were until 1791 noted patrons of Welsh poets and musicians. William Vaughan (1707-75), M.P. for Meirionydd was a friend of the Morris brothers and the first President of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion See here However the direct line ceased in 1791, so they are unlikely to be the gentry family described here, whose son organizes the convivial dinner at the summer-house.

[43] Inserted on strip of paper.

[44] For accounts of the harp playing which became standard fare at many tourist inns during the period see Michael Freeman's account here.

[45] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (March, 1816), 109-1.

[46] At present unidentified.

[47] Either a reference to the recently-deceased William Wynn (d.1795), who changed his name to Nanney for the purposes of inheritance; or his son the Reverend John Nanney (d.1838). See here.

[48] Unidentified.

[49] Pennant, *Tours in Wales* (1784) II, 136.

[50] Hutton was in Aberystwyth with her invalid mother in 1787, and uses almost the same phrase in a letter written then (*Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman*, 52). Many tourists comment on the industrious knitting of Welsh women, most especially in the Bala area.

[51] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (April, 1816) 205-07.

[52] This is presumably now the Hand Hotel. In 1796 ‘Sir Watkin’ was the 5th Baronet of that title (1772-1840), and had sat as Tory M.P. in the House of Commons for 2 years.

[53] A quotation from I Corinthians, 10:12: 'Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall' (KJV).

[54] A newspaper report about the Ladies entitled ‘Extraordinary Female affection’ appeared in the *St James Chronicle*, 17-20 July 1790, with a shortened version in the *London Chronicle*, 20-22 July 1790, and an article entitled ‘Extraordinary Affection’ in the *General Evening Post* 24 July 1790. (Information courtesy of Michael Freeman; see here.) See also Elizabeth Edwards (ed), E*leanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, Account of a Journey in Wales; Perform’d in May 1778 By Two Fugitive Ladies* ( here ). For Anna Seward’s poem ‘Llangollen Vale’ (1796) see Elizabeth Edwards, *English-Language Poetry from Wales 1789-1806* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013).

[55] This is overstating the case; the Duke of Wellington was among several male visitors to Plas Newydd. See here.

[56] J.M.W. Turner's picture of the ruins in 1794/5 nicely captures this ethereal quality and the farmyard (complete with pigs): see here.

[57] Note in a later hand – 'Inserted in April Mag.[e] 1816'.

[58] Published in the *Monthly Magazine* (May, 1816) 304-306.

[59] Section pasted in on separate sheet.

[60] 'At Ness-cliff, a cottage stands under the hill / Where you with good chear, and good nature may fill, / The landlady treats with the best in her power, / You think it abundant – she wishes 'twas more.' Hutton, *Remarks on North Wales* (1803) 105.